

**RELIGION AND IDEOLOGY —
AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF CHRISTIAN
YOUTH IN THE
PRETORIA - WITWATERSRAND -
VEREENIGING
AREA**

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RELIGION AND IDEOLOGY — AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF
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The thesis focusses its research on the processes of ideological change amongst Christian Youth in contemporary South Africa. The relationship between religion and ideology is generally a contentious one and the subject of particular debate in a society like South Africa in the throes of change and consequently ideological flux. Through utilising the main tools of research, the in-depth interview complemented by participant observation, ten major subject discourses were identified which are key in explaining why Christian youth did or did not undergo ideological change. Furthermore through analysing the range of six possible ways in which Christian youth either integrated or failed to relate their religious and politico-ideological discourses, it was possible to uncover and explain the ideological roots behind different conceptions of what being religious means for people. While the research into this area is both new and hence experimental, the results nevertheless allow for a preliminary outline of the possible implications this may hold for the church as a site of struggle.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Name

Gladie

Date

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PREFACE

Conflicts are escalating in South Africa such that more and more people's lives are being directly affected. The churches as one of the institutions in civil society which command considerable support are by no means unaffected.

In such a context the KAIROS DOCUMENT, a statement by leading theologians, has expressed what is increasingly becoming clear "we are a divided church and there is only one way forward to unity and that is for those Christians who find themselves on the side of the oppressor or sitting on the fence, to cross over to the other side and be united in faith and action with those who are oppressed". Whether this will in fact happen or not however, depends largely upon how those catalysts within the church understand the objective conflicts and furthermore, how they go about organising the masses of the church people including those who are either on the side of the oppressor or sitting on the fence.

The present crisis in South Africa has made social relations which are usually fairly stable far more fluid. In such situations the dominant ideology is thrown into question and ideological struggles over which side will eventually gain hegemony are consequently thrown open. These conditions are highly conducive to doing empirical research into how in fact ideological changes actually occur. Young people in particular are a key grouping for such a study since they find themselves in a stage of growth where they are no longer children but not yet adults. This personal state of flux combined with social state of flux makes Christian youth groupings one of the most volatile within the Church and hence a suitable constituency for research into how ideological changes are actually taking place within the Church.

I have had an extensive experience of such youth groupings, as both a member and leader for the past fifteen years. This has equipped me to focus on questions suitable for uncovering some of the deeper dynamics involved in such processes of ideological change. It is from understanding these processes of ideological change as they have occurred amongst Christian youth thus far, that effective methods for transforming the consciousness of Christians more broadly in the future may be formed.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
AZASO	Azanian Students Organisation
BC	Black Consciousness
CASA	Catholic Students' Association
CLG	Christian Life Group
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
IMCS	International Movement of Catholic Students
IYY	International Year of the Youth
NCFS	National Catholic Federation of Students
NIR	National Initiative for Reconciliation
NP	National Party
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
PAAG	Pupils Action Awareness Group
PFP	Progressive Federal Party
SACBC	Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAYCO	South African Youth Congress
SAUJS	South African Union of Jewish Students
SCA	Students Christian Association
SCM	Students Christian Movement
SJA	Students Jewish Association
SMA	Students Moderate Alliance
SOSCO	Soweto Students Congress
SRC	Students Representative Council
SUCA	Students Union for Christian Action
UDF	United Democratic Front
YCS	Young Christian Students
YMCA	Young Mens Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

METHODOLOGY

Over the past fifteen years I have been an active participant of Catholic youth groupings. At high school I was a member of the C L G (Christian Life Group) and also the parish-based youth club (although not simultaneously). At university I was a member and leader of the Catholic Society as well as the Young Christian Students. For the last three years I have helped to co-ordinate the Catholic youth ministry, particularly in the parish-based youth groups in the Johannesburg diocese. Through this process my own beliefs and commitments have been transformed in a manner which parallels and corresponds with the progression from one youth group to the next. This fairly intense involvement in Christian youth groupings, combined with a desire to understand more clearly its dynamics, has been the motive behind the main research questions of this M A thesis.

The major research questions of this thesis are:

- i) To identify and analyse those subject discourses which are relevant in explaining how and why Christian youth undergo ideological changes or not (chapters three and four).
- ii) To focus the analysis upon the inter- relationship between religious and politico-ideological discourses by illustrating the range of possible ways of relating these two discourses to one another (chapter five).
- iii) To apply the theoretical conception of ideological change developed by E. Laclau and C. Mouffe (chapter one) to the religious sector historically (chapter two) as well as clarifying the implications that the findings of the research hold for the religious sector as a site of struggle today (chapter six).

I have no doubt that my own social context and consciousness has had an important influence in defining WHAT I considered needed to be researched and WHAT purpose this research will in fact serve. In this sense it would be naive to claim that this research is neutral, impartial or 'objective' in the strict sense. The methodology nevertheless attempts to be rigorous in that it must and does set out to discover what the objective reality is. It is only upon this basis that people will be able to discern how to effectively transform it to what they desire it to be. Hence

what is necessary is the scientific honesty to admit one's assumptions and to make use of a methodology which will prevent one's perspective and partiality from concealing those aspects of reality relevant for the proposed aims, that we nevertheless consciously pursue.

Since ideological change is the central theme which unites this thesis, it was necessary at the outset to review in some depth, the theoretical literature on ideology in classical and contemporary Marxist theory. This theoretical research helps to highlight the most central research questions for the later fieldwork, and further provides an abstract conceptual framework which serves to guide the thesis. In applying this abstract theory to the religious sector, I have discovered certain deficiencies in classical Marxism, although the more recent discourse theory approach developed within this broader framework allows for some of the gaps to be responded to. In this sense, the literature relating to the sociology of religion as well as liberation theology which was reviewed complements the Marxist theory of ideology. This facilitates an analysis of the church as a site of struggle on a more macro scale, prior to uncovering a more detailed analysis of the micro dynamics that emerge in the body of the thesis on christian youth.

Fieldwork

Participant observation is one of the most common tools of fieldwork and because I, the researcher (in this context), had an especially privileged access to the interviewees, I was able to use this approach with that of situational analysis whereby detailed data of a particular kind was able to be collected. This method incorporates the structuralist school (in anthropology) "where individual variations are smoothed away in favour of structural regularities"(1) but attempts to integrate the accidental and exceptional with the general since this gives a greater depth to the total processes going on within the structure. Situational analysis is especially useful in dealing with a situation where individuals can choose from a variety of possibilities, those relationships which will serve their aims better. This method is also relevant in situations where there are discrepancies between people's beliefs and professed norms and their actual behaviour. Van Velsen concludes that situational analysis is most likely to satisfy the demands of rigour when "a synchronic analysis of general structural principles is closely interwoven with a diachronic analysis of the operation of these principles by specific actors in specified situations."(2)

While Van Velsen is writing on ethnographic studies (within the school of social anthropology) this theoretical approach was found to be equally helpful in this thesis. Here a Marxist theory of ideology sets out a synchronic analysis of the general structural principles of ideological change, but this is closely interwoven with a diachronic analysis of the practices of Christian youth. The diachronic analysis is compiled from an extensive experience of participant observation as a leader of these Christian youth groupings, as well as a comprehensive use of the depth-interview. Whilst there is a fairly rigorous theoretical literature on ideology, the same cannot be said of research into people's practical experience of ideology, and this thesis on its effects amongst Christian youth is essentially exploratory. For this reason the thesis has a greater emphasis on qualitative rather than quantitative data. Hence the limitations of the research must be recognised in that it would be difficult to draw statistical inferences about the population from which it was drawn.

Participant observation can be placed upon a continuum from passive participant observation to active. Whilst my general observations through years of experience with the Christian youth could be considered more of the passive type, during the depth interviews I would intervene in a far more active way. At times this meant consciously intervening and raising deeper questions on themes that were sometimes merely hinted at. In this sense the interview schedule was consciously designed to encourage maximum flexibility. A delicate balance between involvement and detachment was nevertheless necessary since it was vital that the respondents perceive me as objective and sympathetic to all viewpoints, if they were to feel free to answer questions honestly. In this sense I needed to create a dual role for myself as insider and outsider. Although my involvement with the people and the area have been close, I needed to be able to step in and out of the setting under study, to participate, and then to reflect on the data gathered.

A). The Depth Interview

This, the primary research method used in this thesis, falls into the category of the 'schedule standardised interview' where the format is identical for interviewed respondents. Hence the results are comparable and where variations in responses occur, they can be

attributed to differences in the actual responses and not the tools used. The construction of the interview schedule deserves some attention and explanation.

interview Schedule:

Each interview was introduced with a brief synthesis of the aims of the research so as to maximise the interviewee's participation, particularly in including additional information which they perceive to be relevant but which the questions may not point directly to.

SECTION A of the interview schedule focusses on data related to the individual's family background. Here questions attempted to elicit data which revealed the parents' class background, racial attitudes and broader political consciousness with the aim of helping the interviewee to express how these and any other of their parents' attitudes influenced them as young children.

SECTION B focusses on data related to the individual's first major choices in life which most commonly featured during adolescence or their high school years. The final question here attempts to elicit whether there were already at this stage any experiences which began to raise questions in people's consciousness.

SECTION C focusses on the period when people began to undergo changes in their consciousness. This most commonly occurred when young people completed their schooling but political interventions often had a similar effect upon youths still at school. Here the questions attempt to elicit what the most significant factors were which facilitated or prevented these changes; where they occurred; what had they changed from and what they changed into.

SECTION D focuses on the present stage of their lives in an attempt to elicit the effects of these changes have been upon their lives.

SECTION E seeks to unravel the role religion played throughout their life changes and how they integrate it with their present political discourses and furthermore whether there are any tensions in this relationship.

Finally **SECTION F** seeks to uncover if there may be any further information which the interview schedule has not elicited but which is nevertheless relevant to understanding their changes in consciousness, or lack thereof.

The duration of each interview was scheduled to last roughly two hours and a one to one interview format was used. These factors facilitated the comprehensiveness required, the confidentiality needed, as well as the flexibility necessary for the interviewer to follow areas of particular interest as they were raised. It was also important to ensure that questions were well understood before proceeding to record the answers. Since English was not always the first language of people, as well as other factors, it was often necessary to change the wording slightly once the interviewer had ascertained that the meaning was unclear. This occurred even though the interview schedule was developed and tested upon a pilot grouping to validate whether the questions were simply worded and generated the right kind of responses. Although tape-recording the interviews may have been optimum, owing to the scale of field-work, time and cost constraints meant that a written record was used.

To limit the researcher's influence and to check any possible bias, three mechanisms were employed. Firstly, the individual-interviews were complemented by group-interviews (which covered roughly the same ground) but were aimed at uncovering whether the individuals' responses correlated with those of the group as a whole; recognising that a slight variance was to be expected since the group interviews hindered the same openness possible in a one-to-one situation. Secondly a validation process was organised whereby a select number of youth leaders from the various types of youth groupings were able to analyse the generalisations made by the researcher after completing the interviews. At this stage leaders were able to check the observations upon which these generalisations were based and were encouraged to criticise them for any inaccuracies. Thirdly the research record is presented in the body of the thesis, quoting the actual words that people used in the interviews, wherever it is possible.

B. Representativity of the Research

Since the researcher's period of research was limited to three years it was necessary to limit the area of research to three particular types of Christian youth groupings (which the researcher was most familiar with) and which are in some ways typical of a broader range of Christian youth groups. This definition of the smaller unit of study while facilitating a qualitative and more intensive research of these mostly Catholic groupings, nevertheless lacks the quantitative emphasis which would make it representative of the larger entity of Christian youth groups of which this sector is but a part. The sample was drawn from Christian youth who were for the most part active in these groupings, based on the Witwatersrand. Over half of the interviewees were drawn from Y C S groups based both in the suburbs and the townships, since the individual members of these groups had changed most and this bias suited the aims of the thesis. A quarter of the interviewees were drawn from N C F S and C A S A with somewhat more N C F S students interviewed in this sector. Just under a quarter of interviewees were drawn from the parish-based Catholic youth groupings.

The overall racial breakdown was roughly equal between white and black youths but there were a few more males than females interviewed. There was also a higher proportion of school-leavers interviewed as opposed to scholars since the older youths had often experienced greater changes in their consciousness and this suited the aims of the thesis. So while interviewees ranged in age from fifteen to thirty, the bulk of those interviewed were between sixteen and nineteen. The size of the sample needed to be fairly large, forty-five interviews, since this enabled the thesis to illustrate clear trends and furthermore more easily facilitated the verification of the results.

Finally while the overall method utilised is perhaps open to the criticism of being empiricist, the innovative and experimental nature of the research made it difficult to approach this subject in any other way.

CHAPTER ONE

MARXIST AND POST-MARXIST CONCEPTIONS OF IDEOLOGY

Within the current Marxist debates the relationship between ideology, politics and class has been subject to a constructive criticism which has encouraged a re-conceptualisation of both the concepts and the way that they are articulated with one another. We analyse these developments from Marx to Lenin and Lukacs; from Gramsci to Althusser; from the more contemporary literature by Hirst and Thernborn to Laclau and Mouffe in an attempt to develop a conceptual framework adequate for the study of current ideological struggle waged in the church.

Marx attempted to give a materialist explanation of ideology by indicating how different people belonging to different classes would relate differently to the relations of production and hence acquire different ideologies on the basis of their different experiences. This did not however mean that all members of the same class (e.g. working class) would have a uniform ideology and allowed for two possible alternatives. In CAPITAL he shows how the actual relations of production could not be equally visible to all members of the same class. Hence those who recognise commodities as having a predetermined value on the basis of appearance of things (fetishism of commodities) would develop a false consciousness. While in the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO on the other hand, he argues that the effect of capital accumulation (especially the socialisation of production) would be to increasingly expose the real relations of production to the working class which would then encourage the development of a revolutionary proletarian consciousness.

So while Marx saw the class position (of the proletariat) as a necessary condition for the development of a socialist consciousness he recognised that this alone was not a sufficient condition. Nevertheless this experiential mechanism which Marx saw as articulating the relations of production with the superstructure has been criticised for being both economistic and empiricist in denying the importance of ideological institutions and practices in the constitution of subjects who it is further

assumed (through humanism) have the necessary faculties for perceiving and cognising their experiences in certain desired ways. (1)

Before developing these critiques however, it is important to recognise that both the meaning of the concept 'ideology', and indeed the context within which it was developed have been the subject of numerous transformations since Marx's time. It does not make sense then to debate a concept across time (as was done above) without recognising that the different meanings given to the concept in question may have little more in common than a name. A rigorous study of the meaning of ideology will then need to trace the genealogy of this concept and the particular meanings it has been given in different historical contexts.

Marx's basic thesis suggests a critical and negative concept of ideology where its effect is described in terms of the objective concealment of contradictions. But "although ideology is (seen as) the reverse of and conceals the essential relations, it is not an illusion, without any social basis." (1a) This is important in that many authors have incorrectly confused Marx's idea of a critical concept of ideology, with the particular notion of false consciousness. Nevertheless Marx's essentially negative conception of ideology is made evident when he says that ideology will disappear under a communist mode of production, since once all contradictions have been eliminated, ideology will lose its social base and would no longer be able to exist.

While this was the gist of Marx's conception of ideology, Marx and Engels did sometimes interchange the concept of social consciousness with that of ideology and in other writings hint at a more positive conception of ideology. This meant that there was a certain amount of ambiguity surrounding Marx's conception of ideology, after his death. For example Marx wrote in the 1859 Preface

"A distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of a natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic - in short ideological forms, in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out." (2)

Here it seems that ideology has become the superstructural sphere where people reach consciousness and fight out the basic contradictions of society. This statement clearly supports a more positive conception of ideology.

Larraine argues that a significant reason for development of a positive conception of ideology had to do with the fact that an important writing on ideology 'The German Ideology' was not available to the first generation of Marxist Theorists. (3) The negative conception (of the masking of contradictions) may however have been displaced for the more neutral or positive conception (of class political ideas) more as a result of the development made by later Marxists to a more rigorous political theory (and in particular their developed analyses of the state) as they added to what was merely hinted at within Marx's own limited political theory. It can however, be strongly argued that this new concept of ideology was most influenced by the ever changing contexts upon which the struggle for socialism took place.

Lenin and Lukacs conceived of ideologies as expressions of different class interests in struggle with one another and hence Marxism is seen as the 'ideological expression of the proletariat'. (4)

Lenin argues further that the ideological subordination of the proletariat seems to originate in the fact that the bourgeoisie has more powerful means of transmitting ideas which have been produced outside of working class experience. So with Lenin and Lukacs this positive conception of ideology becomes firmly established within Marxism for Lukacs proclaims: "Anyone who sees ideologies as the mechanical, passive product of the economic process at their base simply understands nothing of their essence". (5) Here it is clear that Lukacs was reacting to the mechanistic interpretations of ideology current in his day. The following quote suggests however, that he may have overbent the stick in an idealist direction in an attempt to rectify this problem. "The reform of consciousness is the revolutionary process itself." (6)

While this positive conception of ideology was a development on the basic Marxist political theory of the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, Lenin in particular makes this development by suppressing the cultural or ideological content which is the object of politics. His version of the ideology/science dichotomy is presented in its most closed form where

the content of ideology matters little since it may swiftly be reduced to its class character:

"People will always be the fools of deception.....
until they can learn to seek out the interests
of some class or other, behind all moral, religious,
political and social phrases." (7)

In this conception of ideology "the main absences are the force of belief or conviction since it is not beliefs that move people but interests." (8)

Antonio Gramsci finally jettisons any negative conception of ideology and expands its positive conception in a way which adds something qualitatively new to the Marxist science of politics, even though his primary writings are limited in form as prison notes. Gramsci's theoretical innovations significantly contributed to filling some of the key flaws and ambiguities which were part and parcel of a pre-Gramscian Marxist science of politics. Gramsci's central innovation was to place civil society within the super-structural moment (compared with Marx where civil society is structural, i.e. relations of production) and to emphasize that it is this moment that represents the active and positive factor in historical development. (9) In addition to this inversion of orthodox Marxist theory where the primacy of the ideological super-structure is emphasized over the economic structure. Bobbio has argued that Gramsci emphasized the primacy of civil society (consensus) over political society (force). (10) Here Gramsci attempted to explain the consent that production enjoyed among the subordinate classes. He questioned whether the traditional answers of force or the logic of capitalist production could adequately explain this and argued instead that the explanation for this lay in the power of consciousness and ideology.

On this terrain he distinguished between four degrees of ideology, namely: philosophy (intellectual); religion (belief of the masses); common sense (most widespread form of ideology although incoherent and inarticulate) and folklore (incoherent collection of disparate elements from various world views). He furthermore identified the agents of ideological development as the intellectuals where the major distinction is made between traditional (i.e. status-quo) intellectuals and organic intellectuals (who are created in class struggle). And finally he identified the material institutions through which ideologies are

produced and disseminated i.e. the institutional framework, including education, media and religious institutions. This analytical breakdown of what exactly it is that constitutes the ideological moment suggests that Gramsci's theoretical contributions should not be restricted only to advanced capitalist societies, but are equally applicable in the divergent contexts of the third world as well. Gramsci inherited the concept of hegemony from Marx and Engels (in **The German Ideology**) (11) but he developed upon it such that it became clear that the dominant class uses its political, moral and intellectual leadership to establish its view of the world as all inclusive and universal and upon this basis, shapes the interests and the needs of subordinate groups. Hence he incorporated this conception of hegemony into both the state and civil society, thereby expanding it beyond the Marxist-Leninist conception of the state as the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie and so identified the state as a primary rather than secondary variable in understanding capitalist society.

Gramsci adds:

"In the sense that one might say that State equals political society and civil society, in other words the hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" (12)

From this it can be argued that hegemony should not be seen as a pole of consent in contrast to another of coercion, but rather as the synthesis of coercion and consent. Here Carnoy contributes the valuable insight that

"hegemony is everywhere, but in different forms: the state becomes an apparatus of hegemony encompassing civil society and only distinguished from it, by the coercive apparatuses pertaining only to the state" (13)

Here Gramsci's general thrust is from economic necessity (which dogged earlier attempts at a Marxist politics) to an ethico-political moment, from the structure to the super-structure, from the objective to the subjective, from a necessity to a freedom, which Gramsci calls catharsis. (14)

Gramsci nevertheless maintains that the state with its hegemonic functions is rooted in the class structure as defined by the relations of production:

"For though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leadership group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity." (15)

Hence Gramsci stresses the intimate interconnection between superstructure and structure and not their separation, yet emphasizes that control of consciousness is as much or more an area of political struggle as control of the forces of production.

The particular form that the relationship takes is well illustrated in Gramsci's understanding that a crisis in hegemony is not the result of an economic crisis but rather that economic crisis could merely create the conditions for a crisis of hegemony:

"Ultimately though crisis could only lead to action if mass consciousness was there, and ready to go into action - so it was the development of this consciousness that would produce revolutionary change, not the declining rate of profit." (16)

So whereas economic impoverishment was a key factor for raising a revolutionary consciousness with Marx, a crisis in bourgeois hegemony would be a more important criteria for Gramsci.

Moreover, the oppositions between spontaneous consciousness and socialist ideology and between philosophy and common sense remained dichotomies which Lenin and Lukacs were unable to (dialectically) solve. With Gramsci however the separation between the lucid world of science and the incoherent world of spontaneous consciousness is bridged by clarifying that the aim is not to develop from scratch a science but of renovating and making critical an already existing activity. This sentiment challenges and develops upon Lenin's idea that a socialist ideology comes solely from without.

This has great implications for a Marxist theory of state power since Gramsci adds that mere control of the state is insufficient to ensure the passing of power to the new fundamental class. To successfully both seize and hold state power, he emphasized that the new state would have to develop a counter-hegemony that competed with and replaced the dominant bourgeois values and norms. This he termed a 'war of position' (which would need to be waged within the civil society until the central state was surrounded) and without which 'a war of manoeuvre' (i.e. a frontal assault) would have less chance of succeeding. In conclusion Gramsci's invaluable critique of economic reductionism as well as his developments to the Marxist conception of hegemony and the state, have been central to our present understanding that consciousness itself is a key aspect of the proletariat's struggle to revolutionise both the state and the relations of production, but furthermore that it is the lack of this proletarian consciousness that is one of the principle cause of its inability to achieve this.

Louis Althusser's seminal contribution refocused attention onto Gramsci's insights (which had been largely ignored) and in so doing greatly developed our conception of ideology. His shortcomings nevertheless help to focus attention on what needs further explanation. He reiterates Gramsci's major innovations in recognising that ideology is the social relations, which are as real as the economy rather than ideas or 'consciousness' (which were hitherto seen as merely a representation in thought of the social relations). Furthermore he attempted to break with empiricism and economism by showing how subjects are in practice formed in a materialist yet non-economistic way. From the perspective of his structuralist framework he attempts to illustrate this by making use of what he terms ideological state apparatuses which interpellate subjects. While this conception made evident that the material ideological apparatuses should be recognised as sites of struggle, and hence re-emphasised the importance of the super-structural level, the particular way in which this was conceived requires criticism.

The strength in Althusser's work lie in his granting to ideology and the superstructure a rationality of their own, however the weakness lies in the fact that he has not been able to integrate the substance of this with his acceptance of class reductionism in explaining the necessary primacy of the class struggle. This is exposed when in IDEOLOGY AND IDEOLOGICAL STATE APPARATUSES his stress on interpellation as the central mechanism in the formation of subjects (where experience is

subordinate to ideology) is reversed in the appendix, where he stresses the class struggle as the context within which the ideological state apparatuses function (where experience once again dominates ideology).

This tension between discursive practices and subject position in the formation of subject, is stumbled across rather than clearly articulated by Althusser, and so instead of identifying HOW these factors combine to form subjects, his dualistic conception of the base-superstructure relation forces him to simply fluctuate from the one position to the other.

Hirst has criticised Althusser for being forced to conclude that while ideological relations are as real as the economy

"they are placed in a hierarchy of instances having different relative weights." (17)

Hence Althusser's conception of ideological apparatuses would recognise that both the factory and the church reproduce ideology but that the church exists only because of the surplus value created in the factory and hence the church and religion remain in the final instance a product of class conflict and hence explicable by class. In conclusion while it is from criticisms of Althusser's work, that the central question of this thesis as well as current Marxist debates on ideology revolve (of how subjects are in practice formed), it is important to recognise that it was Althusser who placed this question so squarely on the agenda.

Goran Therborn builds upon Althusser's work and his central contribution is to critique the dichotomies in Marxism which have tried to explain the organisation and maintenance of political power through the problematics of force/consent, legitimacy, and true and false consciousness. He instead shows that there are at least six important ideological dominations outside of the force/consent dichotomy which are responsible for the maintenance of political power, namely:

a sense of representation, accommodation and fear,
on the one hand and of inevitability, deference and
resignation on the other.

The force/consent dichotomy is then criticised for being too simplistic since it says nothing about different kinds of non-coercive acquiescence and fails to see that consent is largely governed by the constellation of force. From this it follows that interpellating a subject with an ideology should not be seen as a process of subjection-guarantee, but rather subjection-qualification since (for example) subjects will qualify what might be desirable, with the pragmatic questions of the costs involved in achieving these aims.

This lays the basis for a second contribution where Therborn attempts to expand the universe of ideological interpellations since people have beliefs which relate not only to their class position but also to the nation or religion they belong to; not only to their gender and age but also to the meaning of life and death. On this basis he attempts to illustrate that since ideologies are multi dimensional a crucial aspect of ideological struggles will be the articulation of a given ideology with others. Without directly challenging a class explanation of how these various ideologies articulate with one another, Therborn argues that these (other) non-class ideologies cannot be reduced to class ones yet they nevertheless do articulate in some way with class ideologies. This would imply that a class consciousness could be encouraged on the basis of symbols already present in non-class ideologies. Here he is clearly echoing sentiments expressed much earlier in Gramsci.

While Althusser refocussed attention on the central questions and Hirst, Therborn and Richard Johnson (to list a few) (18) attempted to clarify the ambiguities related to 'ideology' in Marxist theory, none of the above introduce any fundamentally new displacements. In fact subsequent to Gramsci's two basic innovations: (i) Materiality of ideology (ii) political subjects are not classes, but collective wills, Marxist conceptions of ideology have remained unaltered.

Laclau and Mouffe in their most recent book **HEGEMONY AND SOCIALIST STRATEGY**, question some of the most basic assumptions implicit in Marxist conceptions of ideological struggle, and in the process move beyond Gramsci and perhaps, orthodox Marxism itself.

Their starting point is to consider "the openness of the social as the constitutive ground of the existing and diverse 'social orders' as precarious," (19) and by rejecting the conception of society as the

founding totality of its partial processes. The category of ARTICULATION, so central for hegemonic struggle,

"is any practice which establishes a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice we call DISCOURSE. The differential positions insofar as they appear articulated within a discourse we call MOMENTS. By contrast we will call ELEMENT any difference that is not discursively articulated." (20)

What makes articulation possible then is the fact that no discourse (i.e. regularity in dispersion) is ever a sutured totality and hence the transformation of elements into moments is never complete. From this it follows that

"society and social agents lack any essence and their regularities merely consist of the relative precarious forms of fixation which accompany the establishment of a certain order...." (21)

The practice of articulation can result in the construction of NODAL POINTS which are stable subject positions which can partially fix meaning but are nevertheless not naturally permanent.

Gramsci was foremost in emphasizing the fluidity of social relations by illustrating that ideological elements do have a relational identity achieved through the articulatory practices of intellectuals. Here he was attempting to move away from economic determinism, in asserting that it was not the economic base that assures the working class of its ultimate victory but rather its capacity for hegemonic leadership. Gramsci further maintained that when a crisis in the capitalist order occurred there would only be two possible options and a failure in the hegemony of the working class could only be followed by a reconstitution of the bourgeois hegemony. This he, in class reductionist terms interpreted to mean, that within every hegemonic formation there must always be a single unifying principle which can only be that of a fundamental class.

Laclau and Mouffe criticise this assertion that hegemony must always correspond to a fundamental economic class since it would assume that the economic space is not itself hegemonic i.e. it is a homogeneous space unified by necessary laws. Furthermore it is based upon the assumption that the working class' fundamental identity is constituted in a terrain different from that in which the hegemonic practices operate; that in fact hegemonic articulations can be conceived only as mere contingency but that the political centrality of the working class at this level of hegemonic struggle, is still nevertheless assigned to it by the economic base.

In their critique of Gramsci's assumptions they argue instead that the space of the economy is itself structured as a political space and that hegemonic practices are as operative at this level as in any other. Furthermore they question the assumption that the workers identity around common interests is derived from their class insertion in the relations of production, by pointing out that the workers resistance to certain forms of domination will depend upon the position they occupy within the ensemble of social relations (e.g. sexism and racism) and not just those of production. Hence they conclude that if the agents of hegemony are not exclusively constituted by the economic sphere then the ultimate core of the hegemonic subjects identity cannot be constituted at a point that is external to the space that it articulates.

After making this, their central critique of classical Marxism they add that hegemonic articulations can only take place in contexts where there are the presence of antagonistic forces and there is an instability of the frontiers which separate these forces. The presence of a vast area of floating elements and the possibility of their articulation to opposite camps is what further constitutes the terrain upon which hegemonic practices can work. Drawing from Gramsci it is clear that there will be a proliferation of these floating elements in a conjuncture of organic crisis and hence the logic of articulation and the political centrality of the frontier effects will be emphasized. Laclau and Mouffe further critique Gramsci's conception of a war of position which

"supposes the division of the social space into two camps and presents the hegemonic articulation as a logic of mobility of the frontier separating them. However..... the existence of two camps may in some case be an effect of the hegemonic articulation but not its a priori

condition - for if it were, the terrain in which the hegemonic articulation operated would not itself be the product of that articulation." (22)

So whereas both Gramsci and Althusser did emphasize the material character of ideology it remained nevertheless part of the super-structures and as such was limited to being determined (albeit dialectically and only so in the final instance) by the economic base. For Laclau and Mouffe however articulation has become a discursive practice which does not have a constitution prior to or outside the dispersion of the articulated elements. The important result of this break with the discursive/extra-discursive dichotomy is the abandonment of the thought/reality opposition and hence a major enlargement of the field of those categories which can account for social relations. Every social practice is therefore in some sense articulatory.

The object of articulation is the 'subject' and here they attempt to rectify some of the key problems associated with this category prior to redefining it. The first problem relates to the pre-discursive character of the subject which is illustrated by the fact that both rationalism and empiricism have been uncritically made use of, as though they were innate qualities of human individuals. Instead Laclau and Mouffe made use of the category of subject in the sense of subject positions within a discursive structure, which means that subjects cannot be seen as the origin of social relations. Hence the concept of 'free will' will have no meaning to (for example) a feudal serf who has instead been interpellated with a discourse which portrayed the hierarchical feudal order as being of divine origin. This leaves unanswered the question of from whence cometh the roots of resistance when the ruling ideology is hegemonic?

Notwithstanding this Laclau and Mouffe assert that while the concept of the working class is acceptable as a name for subjects who occupy a certain subject position within capitalist society it cannot be used to define the subject position that those agents will adopt in the relations of production. This would suggest, for example, that class-struggle is first of all a struggle about the constitution of class subjects before it is a struggle between class subjects.

The core of Laclau and Mouffe's thesis on hegemony could serve to expand and make more effective a socialist strategy, when unfolded

onto the theoretical terrain of classical Marxism. But while their creative innovations have definitely moved the debate onto a new terrain, certain critical questions must be clarified before the creative impact of their contribution can be fully received. One question relates to their rejection on the one hand, of the base-superstructure metaphor while on the other hand maintaining that hegemonic practices are operative at all 'LEVELS'. One might wonder what distinguishes one level from another in their new framework and whether hegemonic practices would need to change in form from one level to another. The LEVEL of abstraction of their theory however, gives no hint as to what these strategies so vital for the achievement of socialism, might be.

Flowing from this criticism there is the obvious political question of whether a practical socialist-theory of hegemonic struggle focussing on the organisation of the working class at the level of the economy, could possibly afford to discount all validity to what is perjoratively termed class reductionist analyses. When they claim that the task of building socialism has ceased to have a necessary link with class and that its identity is given to it SOLELY by its articulation within a hegemonic formation, one wonders whether they are not attempting to bend the stick too far in the direction of fluidity and in the process risk the danger of falling once more into the trap of the Utopian socialists (prior to Marx) who lacked only the force to achieve socialism.

in a similar vein Jessop has criticised Laclau (in an earlier work) for, on the one hand emphasizing that discourse is not just ideological elements but rather the production of social meaning, while on the other hand focussing upon ideological discourse to the exclusion of economic, legal, military and other discourses. This he argues "seems to reduce hegemony to an effect of various interpellative mechanisms considered in isolation from their conditions of production or reception." (23) For while discursive interventions may be an effective part of hegemonic struggles, these depend also upon specific forms of political representation and organisation, economic and military conditions. Jessop concludes by calling attention to the fact that hegemonic struggles are promoted through a combination of means that include not only moral persuasion but also material inducements and bodily repression. This is part of Gramsci's conception of state power as 'hegemony armoured by coercion' which seems to be neglected in Laclau and Mouffe's later work.

Some interpretations of Laclau and Mouffe's contribution would even perceive their conception of hegemonic struggle having moved outside of the tension between objective and subjective realities and into the field of idealism. A closer reading will reveal, however that they have merely displaced this objective-subjective tension and would recognise the limits to change in the existent structure of subject positions. The major distinction being that this would now be seen as the product of intra-discursive practices rather than an extra-discursive economy. In other words Laclau and Mouffe have attempted to revert the basic Marxist thesis that experience determines ideology, by illustrating that structural place does not equal subjectivity but rather it is the product of discursive practices that accounts for subjectivity.

While the gist of their thesis seems like it could make a socialist hegemony more feasible the thrust of the criticisms of their thesis suggests that structural place nevertheless does hold certain clues to an effective socialist strategy. For although one accepts that no nodal points are naturally permanent, it would seem that as long as certain structures (e.g. classes) persist, within a given social order (e.g. capitalism) certain corresponding nodal-points (e.g. class consciousness) are LIKELY to recur. Hence a rigorous use of their approach would need to explain the relative efficacy of different articulatory practices not only by referring to the existent structure of subject positions but also to the causes thereof.

So our criticism of Laclau and Mouffe's thesis would rest with the fact that they attempt to separate structural place from discursive practices and on this basis encourage that it is necessary to choose between the two in explaining subjectivity. If we were to explain why the bourgeoisie is not likely to identify with a socialist discourse however, we would recognise that while their structural place does not on its own explain their subjectivity, there is some relationship between their structural place and the discursive practices they are likely to engage in. And while Laclau and Mouffe's approach would recognise a greater flexibility in the paths open to the bourgeoisie, they could still recognise that within each discursive formation, each subject position does set limits on the possible range open to these members. The bourgeoisie in Britain for example might be Thatcherites, Keynesians or democrats.

Furthermore, although the dominant discourse might say that all citizens are equal and free and (in a relatively smooth period of growth) even the

working class subjects might accept this. There will still be differences in the experiences of different classes which will make for a subtle difference in the perspective of the ruling and working class. For example certain objective experiences of the working class will still rub uncomfortably against the dominant subject discourse even when it is expressed in the resigned terms of "but such is life!" This would suggest that although different subject positions all accept the dominant ideological discourse, it is possible to identify certain fault lines and frictions within those current discourses which if developed sufficiently could become cracks and breaks with the dominant discourses and ultimately lead to the development of counter-hegemonic discourses capable of challenging the dominant discourses.

The aim of this research is to identify how this has in practice taken place amongst Christian Y. groupings on the Witwatersrand. In the process, the abstract conceptual framework introduced here will be clarified.

CHAPTER TWO

A CRITIQUE OF CLASSICAL MARXIST APPROACHES TO THE RELIGIOUS SECTOR

THE CHURCH AS A SITE OF STRUGGLE

The abstract theoretical frameworks discussed in the previous chapter could have varying implications when applied to the overall terrain of struggle being waged within the religious sector. At the outset of this chapter we will want to critically analyse the divergent ways in which classical Marxism has been applied to contexts where non-class discourses have predominated. For the purpose of this thesis we are particularly concerned with classical Marxist accounts of religion. Upon the basis of this critique we will develop an account of the church as a site of struggle, historically, scripturally and later on specifically within the present conjuncture in South Africa

Economic Reductionism In Community Struggle

Classical Marxism has often been applied to the terrain of community struggle in an economically deterministic fashion, which thoroughly ignores the specificity of the broader historical conjuncture. In a brief critique of a purportedly 'Marxist' text, aptly entitled **COMMUNITY OR CLASS STRUGGLE** (1) some of the central flaws which have for so long hamstrung a progressive politics in areas other than the workplace, are highlighted. Once these basic, yet sometimes major stumbling-blocks have been tackled, we will be able to uncover a more thorough appreciation of, amongst other areas, the church as a site of struggle

As the title suggests many contributions in this book tend to pose issues in a way that makes it appear as an either/or question, i.e. either community or class struggle. This perspective on community struggle arises out of a crude economic reductionism where it is assumed that for class to become the central contradiction "all community issues.....(must be defined) as class issues." (2) Here a mechanical jump is being made from the level of abstract theory into the field of strategy and tactics, in a way which fails to appreciate the specific historical context in which it is working. Hence 'calls for 'community control' or 'power to the people' without the immediate seizing of the means of production (3) need not

necessarily be merely reformist or populist rhetoric, as is assumed by Cowley. Indeed without a rigorous analysis of the historical conjuncture in question, which would shed light upon factors such as the balance of forces and the potential for actually gaining political and ideological hegemony, Cowley's theoretical formulations can be criticised for being static, ahistorical and quite simply moralistic.

These criticisms open up a central weakness in the book where there is a failure to analyse the state independently of Capital and instead it is assumed that it is merely Capital's tool. A more thorough account of the state could have freed many of the writers from their obsessive economism which has severely limited the choice of strategies and tactics open to them. The root of this problem lies in the incorrect assumption that the fundamental dichotomy which characterises all social struggles, must fall along class lines. This is an assumption which our earlier theoretical discussion (in Chapter one) has shown to be clearly untenable.

Margaleeno Repo, in a chapter entitled "The Fallacy of Community Control" (4) focusses on particular case studies where attempts to organise a cross-class community resulted in middle class opportunists grabbing the leadership and developing the organisation in a reformist direction. From this she concludes that community struggle is doomed unless

- i) the community is a homogenous working class community, and
- ii) it has a clear socialist theory which can prevent it from remaining at the level of a reformist working class consciousness.

The weaknesses with these mechanical deductions are that they create the impression that the middle-class co-option of a cross-class social force is a foregone conclusion. Repo's theoretical framework is however not sufficiently rigorous to explain why other examples (especially in successful third world revolutions) have shown that communities can be organised in a cross-class form with a clear working class leadership and socialist direction.

It seems as though the theoretical framework of the authors of this text blocks what their empirical analysis at times reveals and here lies the crux of the problem with an inadequately developed Marxist theory of ideology. Cowley defends the political gains made through limited political action where people have at least overcome their fatalistic attitudes and realised that they can 'influence the course of events'. (5)

He further argues that consumer oriented organisations are important as bridges between the more and less politicised members of the community since even under socialism these structures are necessary in for example, street committees. Yet while recognising this, it is clear how class-reductionism has severely limited all the writers' conceptions of community struggle since they all fail to perceive how a cross-class community organisation with demands which are not explicitly class ones could seriously contradict the dominant ideology and challenge the state politically. This in turn could have direct implications for the struggle to transform the economy, especially when the working class is well represented in these cross-class community organisations.

In conclusion then the key weaknesses in **'Community or Class Struggle'** it is argued, flows from the inability of its authors to

- i) integrate the tools of analysis inherited from Marx into ever new social contexts and
- ii) both sharpen these tools of analysis and
- iii) furthermore develop new ones out of the dialectical interplay between theory and the novel forms of political practice that are developed in dynamically changing social contexts.

An Alternative Interpretation in the South African context

A more sophisticated use of classical Marxism (which integrates some of the above criticisms) is however made use of in describing the South African context as being characterised by a colonialism of a special type (C S T) (6). The basis of this description is that national oppression and capitalist exploitation have historically been inextricably interlinked in South Africa. Briefly then, the most effective means for transforming a society (like South Africa for example) which is centrally characterised by national domination is seen to be through a national democratic transformation, aimed at achieving national unity, national independence and the basic democratic rights which are presently denied the vast majority of South Africans.

What is thoroughly appreciated in this model is that although class is not the central feature of a national democratic struggle (N D S) it is nevertheless 'around these basic national democratic demands (that) an alliance of social forces can be assembled that, in the medium term has the capacity to create the necessary conditions for meaningful change in South Africa. But within this alliance, in order to ensure that

the national democratic struggle also creates the sufficient conditions for substantial transformation (socialism) we need to build the correct balance of forces (physically, organisationally and ideologically)." (7) In this conception of C S T it is both possible and advisable to mobilise, organise and educate South African Workers

"simultaneously as

1) oppressed blacks needing to lead a national liberation struggle alongside other classes and strata and

2) as exploited workers needing to ensure that such a national liberation struggle creates the necessary and sufficient conditions for the rapid, uninterrupted transformation of the mode of production." (8)

In conclusion Cronin admits that there are no guarantees, but that this line of thought is advanced as the most effective strategy to achieve meaningful transformation. In arriving at this conclusion Cronin has recognised with Hudson that the formation of social identity, that is the way people perceive themselves, "enjoys a degree of openness and fluidity" (9) and that black workers are constituted with both an oppressed black identity as well as that of oppressed proletarians. Marxist theorists have thus been able to illustrate how using the tools of classical Marxism one can fully encourage a form of ideological struggle which although, is not itself centred upon class, nevertheless recognises class as an important concept.

Classical Marxism's difficulties with Religious Discourses

Marx's conception of ideology as expressed in his analysis of the fetishism of commodities has been earlier criticised (in Chapter One) for being both empiricist and economistic, since it appears to determine a set of necessary perceptions and experiences to social agents depending upon their places in the relations of production. But since experience is always subject to interpretation and contains a wide range of possible meanings the 'immediate experience' in terms of which Marx tries to conceptualise ideology and science clearly does not exist. Laclau and Mouffe's thesis as discussed (in Chapter One) furthermore makes it clear that the subject-position of social agents can simply not be derived from the agent's place in the relations of production.

What is of particular concern here, is that although our understanding of the formation of social identity remains incomplete, it is clear that 'the social' does indeed "enjoy a degree of openness and fluidity which

Marxism finds very difficult to acknowledge"(9a). In attempting to uncover the particular role that religious discourses play in the formation of social identity, Marxism's stress on the primacy of class and its theory of ideology with its deep sense of dichotomy between ideologies which recognise class and those that don't, meant that within Marx's thesis the role of religion could only foreseeably be conceived of in negative terms. So although Marx's opiate thesis would suggest that there is no possibility of integrating the progressive potential of religious discourses within a Marxist framework, the errors implicit in the framework which he used to come to this conclusion make this a premature conclusion.

Laclau and Mouffe's attempts at recasting Marxism by developing on post-Saussurian discourse theory (notwithstanding its shortcomings discussed in Chapter One), illustrates that the rules of social behaviour are discourse produced. What is implicit here is the recognition that people have a particular relationship to reality which is mediated by language. Therefore, since people identify themselves in and through discourses, they would hold that experiences are enclosed by discourses. This framework's sense of a radical and plural democracy emphasizes that a socialist project must engage with all the antagonisms existing in a society and would thus logically flow into a national democratic strategy under conditions where national oppression is central. More importantly for the purposes of this thesis however, would be the full integration of religious discourses within such a national democratic strategy based as it is upon a rigorous criticism of classical Marxism's apriorism. With this in mind we re-explore the concept of people's power particularly in relation to a people's church and theology.

People's Power and the State

Political power while being centralised in the state is also reproduced through a wide variety of decentralised structures, (what Gramsci termed civil society), and it is here that the relations of power are further reproduced on a daily basis. There is a dialectical relationship of struggle between the state and civil society and the state continues to govern to the extent that it is able to control and or co-operate with the greater balance of forces within civil society. Particular to the state, however, is its control over the coercive apparatuses and it will rely most heavily upon these in periods when its ideological hegemony is most threatened within civil society.

So while it is true that without "control over CENTRAL STATE POWER, the democratic say and participation that millions of South Africans have over their lives, will always be limited...We must (nevertheless) begin to place power in the hands of the people, in all spheres - the economy, education, culture, crime control, health, IN FACT, WHEREVER IT IS POSSIBLE" (IO). Hence the struggle for people's power is primarily a struggle for power within civil society and subsequently and on the basis of this struggle, a struggle for centralised state power. The Isizwe article further makes it clear that the task of building organs of people's power cannot occur passively outside of the ongoing struggle nor can they further the struggle if they are not democratically organised under political discipline. Finally it is made clear that "the services that people's organisations offer can always only be partial and poorly funded" (II) and hence should not be seen as ends in themselves but must contribute to the basic political and economic goals rather than be co-opted as reformism.

Building upon the above we would want to suggest that within this civil society one can define four main types of structures:

- 1) The centralised ideological and repressive structures which fall strictly under state control.
- 2) The structures which fall under the control of big capital which rely for their very survival and growth upon capital accumulation.
- 3) The social institutions which fall neither directly under the control of the state nor capital but which are not necessarily anti-state either.
- 4) The democratic organisations and movements of the people which are not only actively engaged in countering the state's power but are further, struggling to replace it with their own.

People's Power and a People's Church

In the South African context the majority of religious institutions would tend to be social institutions which while attracting the support of many people, do not fall directly under the control of the state or capital, nor within the ambit of counter-state movements. The most recent population census (1980), would suggest that more than eighty percent of South Africans have some religious affiliation (See Appendix 1) and even if this number is considerably reduced (when one subtracts those whose religious affiliation would mean very little to them in practice) one

can hardly fail to recognise the popularity of these religious institutions in the social life of South Africans. Hence religion is potentially an important site of struggle within this civil society. While religion can no longer claim to be the principal institution responsible for the reproduction of social relationships, that it once was, under feudalism for example, there are still nevertheless large social groupings whose worldview is primarily religious. Furthermore while it is clearly possible that major social changes are possible in South Africa without really changing the religious sphere, it is our contention that the participation of religious people in this process of transformation will simply be hindered if the religious sphere is not itself made a site of struggle.

Over ninety percent of religious groupings in South Africa would belong to one of the Christian groups and denominations which reflect "on the one hand the divisions of Post Reformation Christendom which were imported into the sub-continent, and on the other, the cultural plurality and historic divisions of South Africa itself." (12) Within the context of the large political struggle we have to recognise that the responses of the churches are anything but homogenous. Not only have different denominations related to the political struggles in diverse ways, but there have been different and often contradictory responses within the same churches. The racial breakdown of each of the denominations (in appendix 1) suggests that the churches are comprised of the same social groupings that are in conflict with one another and hence it is to be expected that these conflicts would be internal to each of the churches themselves.

The Kairos Document (13) crystallises the three main political and religious expressions found in the churches. The first grouping would comprise those Christians and churches which seek to justify the Status Quo with what it calls 'State Theology'. The second grouping would appear to challenge and reject apartheid with what is called a 'Church Theology' but actually prevent the churches from practically engaging in the actions necessary for concrete changes. The third grouping would propound what is called 'Prophetic Theology' in recognising that the root cause of the problem is oppression perpetrated by a morally illegitimate government incapable of change, which needs to be removed from power. While no one church would fit neatly into any of these models it is apparent that the Afrikaans speaking and evangelical churches have tended historically to propound a State Theology while the mainline English speaking churches have long propagated a more Church theology. A notable exception to this is expressed in a post-

Kairos self-critique called EVANGELICAL WITNESS IN S.A.(14). In the last decade movements have arisen within the churches which have attempted to identify more fully with the movement towards liberation and it is primarily here that a Prophetic Theology is being developed.

Hence the question of people's power will increasingly affect the churches in two ways. Firstly as a struggle which is being waged internally within the church, between forces in favour of placing power in the hands of the people and forces countering this thrust. Secondly, this internal struggle for a people's church is a constituent part of and directly affect the outcome of the broader struggle for people's power at the level of civil society and ultimately the state.

People's Theology

At a primary level the struggle involves enabling people to actively participate in all the pastoral activities of their churches and through these activities to express in their own common-sense language and symbols, their experiences and aspirations. These developments would however both rest upon and require for its further growth, a basic change in the spiritual and theological outlook of people. For the most part present models of church serve to block their participation at these levels and instead sacralise the tasks of interpreting the meaning of faith to their lives, in the hands of an elite grouping of 'experts'. To empower the majority of believing, poor people within the church it would be necessary to integrate a PEOPLE'S THEOLOGY which not only allows for the integration of people's COMMON SENSE experience into the church; but further through the process of ongoing action-reflection, encourage the transformation of this into GOOD SENSE (15).

To understand the mechanism which could set this process in motion we need to more clearly unravel the concept of a people's theology. The major distinction between traditional theology and contextual (people's) theology is not so much their varying contents, but rather their divergent pedagogies i.e. ways of doing theology. Traditional theology would be based upon ORTHODOXY, whereby the teachings and values of Christianity would be seen to be absolute and eternal and the task of theologians (i.e. experts) would be to interpret the implications of these values today. Contextual theology would instead be based upon ORTHO-PRAXIS whereby all people attempting to integrate the Christian faith with their lives, could on the basis of their life-experience be capable of reflecting on the implications of their Christian values in

the light of their life experience. So for example, black and white Christians in South Africa engaged in a mortal conflict with one another, will have to base the concept of reconciliation upon justice if it is to have any meaning in their lives. The development of a people's theology is a major methodological innovation whose effects will be explored in the lives of people later in the body of research.

Finally while this innovation has the potential of thoroughly challenging the hierarchical relations of power within the church it would be incorrect to identify the churches as state-controlled structures. This depiction has unnecessarily and mostly counter-productively led to strategies which focus solely upon confronting and attacking the hierarchy in an attempt to change the actual relations of power there. However, much of the church hierarchy would themselves prefer this model of church while the remainder would not have the power to prevent or unroll a process like this once it has taken root at a local level. Moreover the fundamental issues affecting laity and clergy alike would seem to arise out of the broader socio-political economic reality presently experienced in South Africa, rather than from mainly intra-church struggles. Hence the major task would be to build upon the faith and hope of the people, an identity and broader historical project capable of generating a struggle for the church of the people, as a constituent part of the struggle for people's power.

The sharpened tools of analysis that current Marxist debates (and in particular the contributions of Laclau and Mouffe) have placed at our disposal, enable us to recognise and integrate the struggles; which have long been waged in religious sectors as sites of struggle, but which Marxist theory formerly found more difficult to integrate within a class reductionist framework. In this section we begin by tracing the examples of this age-old struggle throughout the different phases of the recorded scriptural histories.

A Short History of the Judeo-Christian Tradition as a Site of Struggle

Religious groupings have never had one constant role which they have consistently repeated throughout history. Approaches which attempt to assign it this role do a discredit to the rigorous methodology of historical materialism and tend to rely instead upon static stereotypes. To illustrate this we briefly analyse religion as a site of struggle through different

historical epochs from the Old Testament through to the New Testament, from the early Christian communities through the Great reversal of Constantine in approximately 300 A D up to the present times.(16)

In **God's Kingdom**, George Pixley (17) analyses how the Kingdom of God is always presented in the Bible as God's rule in relation to some particular 'historical project'. With the help of this aid we begin with the Exodus story.

THE EXODUS: Much of liberation theology takes this period of history as its source and inspiration since Exodus is the key event which models the faith of Israel. The people of Israel were oppressed as slaves in the land of Egypt. Pharaoh to whom they physically belonged was cast in the image of a god and to many of the slaves he did appear to be far more powerful than their god, the god of mere slaves. Yet the oppressed people send up a cry and Yahweh reveals himself to Moses as the God who would free his people from the burdens the Egyptians had laid upon them (Ex 3:7-8). Moses is the instrument of the God of Exodus in trying the peaceful path of petitioning the king to allow the people to go, but it is only after the God of Exodus has acted violently that Moses succeeds in leading an emerging nation of slaves, who had known only poverty and oppression beyond the grasp of the intransigent pharaoh. A people's cry had been heard by a (totally revolutionary) God who loves the poor.

THE TWELVE TRIBES: Yahweh's Kingdom was the concrete historical project of the twelve tribes who withdrew from the domination of the urban states to build a nation in which there were no rich and no poor, no kings and no slaves. Their vision of an egalitarian society did not last as gradually some families became rich and others poor (Numbers 34:18;33;54). Their ideal remained intact however and the religious leaders ensured that every fifty years a Jubilee Year was celebrated in an attempt to correct the inequalities that had arisen. So debts were written off. Properties that had been sold to pay debts were returned to their original owners and slaves were emancipated (Lev 25:8-55). The new Israel was quite insecure existing as a stateless people surrounded by Canaanite states with professional armies, yet Israel was led into battle by leaders who arose on the occasion of a threat - neither Othniel, Ehud, Barak or Deborah attempted to capitalise on their victories by building a professional army. The basic mode of production was the Asiatic or tributary mode where the producers of the basic

Historical epochs from the Old Testament through to the New Testament, from the early Christian communities through the Great reversal of Constantine in approximately 300 A D up to the present times.(16)

In **God's Kingdom**, George Pixley (17) analyses how the Kingdom of God is always presented in the Bible as God's rule in relation to some particular 'historical project'. With the help of this aid we begin with the Exodus story.

THE EXODUS: Much of liberation theology takes this period of history as its source and inspiration since Exodus is the key event which models the faith of Israel. The people of Israel were oppressed as slaves in the land of Egypt. Pharaoh to whom they physically belonged was cast in the image of a god and to many of the slaves he did appear to be far more powerful than their god, the god of mere slaves. Yet the oppressed people send up a cry and Yahweh reveals himself to Moses as the God who would free his people from the burdens the Egyptians had laid upon them (Ex 3:7-8). Moses is the instrument of the God of Exodus in trying the peaceful path of petitioning the King to allow the people to go, but it is only after the God of Exodus has acted violently that Moses succeeds in leading an emerging nation of slaves, who had known only poverty and oppression beyond the grasp of the intransigent pharaoh. A people's cry had been heard by a (totally revolutionary) God who loves the poor.

THE TWELVE TRIBES: Yahweh's Kingdom was the concrete historical project of the twelve tribes who withdrew from the domination of the urban states to build a nation in which there were no rich and no poor, no kings and no slaves. Their vision of an egalitarian society did not last as gradually some families became rich and others poor (Numbers 34:18;33;54). Their ideal remained intact however and the religious leaders ensured that every fifty years a Jubilee Year was celebrated in an attempt to correct the inequalities that had arisen. So debts were written off. Properties that had been sold to pay debts were returned to their original owners and slaves were emancipated (Lev 25:8-55). The new Israel was quite insecure existing as a stateless people surrounded by Canaanite states with professional armies, yet Israel was led into battle by leaders who arose on the occasion of a threat and neither Othniel, Ehud, Barak or Deborah attempted to capitalise on their victories by building a professional army. The basic mode of production was the Asiatic or tributary mode where the producers of the basic

material necessities are peasants organised in villages. Possession of the land within the village is collective with its use determined by traditional kinship structures. The unit of production is the village rather than the individual or family. This stable village based economy attracted groups from various parts of the land to join this classless society.

KINGS AND PROPHETS: These primitive classless societies who lived in Yahweh's kingdom lived on for more than two centuries although they constantly faced the hostility of the surrounding wealthier and more advanced class societies that inhabited the lower lands. This was the context under which the people called upon Samuel to 'appoint for us a king to govern us like all the nations'. Samuel warns however that the king and his officials would become rich at the expense of the people and that in time "you shall be his slaves" (I Sam:8:17). Samuel however finally relented and Saul was anointed king after having led the people in successful battles against the Ammonites. But Saul did not succeed in establishing a dynasty or court partly because of the ambiguity of making an Israelite classless society the basis for a state. David however succeeded in founding a stable Israelite Monarchy based upon a standing army and not the traditional Israelite army of free men. With this army he succeeded in capturing Jerusalem which had remained a Canaanite enclave and because none of the tribes of Israel had any claims upon it, it became a direct possession of the crown. While David remained sensitive to Israelite values, his son Solomon had a great craving for wealth and under his rule the royal bureaucracy increased to the extent that Israel had to begin paying taxes. Under Solomon we witness how history had gone the full circle and the nation which had once been slave, now oppressed and exploited slaves who built, amongst other things, great temples to the God of the poor. The prophets had not lost sight of the original dream and throughout this period they made their cause the defense of the poor who were unjustly treated.

THE EXILE: With the destruction of Jerusalem the Davidic Monarchy came to an end in the early sixth century B C. The royal officials and priests were sent to Babylon into exile but the peasants in the villages were left intact and it is likely that life did not change much for them. While little is known about how the peasants responded to their situation we know more about the Jewish community in exile. The priests planned for their return where the temple would be reconstructed and they would recapture their place of privilege in society. But among the

exiles there arose a prophet who spoke on behalf of the popular classes with a different vision of what Yahweh's Kingdom meant for their times. The anonymous author of the prophetic sayings referred to as Deutero-Isaiah encouraged a new spiritual poverty where people were once more encouraged to fear and rely upon God alone. This project clashed directly with the priestly project which aimed to restore a class-oriented or hierocratic society. The "new heavens and new earth" announced in Isaiah 65: 17-25 never came to be fulfilled and with Persian imperial support it was the priestly project which was finally restored. Some, however, attempted to maintain a spiritual poverty by continuing to live a material poverty by moving into the desert, as is expressed by the Essenes and Qumramites after the exile.

THE JESUS MOVEMENT : Pixley recognises that his investigation here is limited since our record of this period comes through the documents of a Christian church already uprooted from the Palestinian context in which it was born, but argues that as a scientific hypothesis it nevertheless merits respect. Since the Asiatic mode of production was the norm in Palestine and not slave production, the presence of the Roman authorities here from 63 B C did not transform the character of Palestinian society overnight. While the cities were built on the Greco-Roman model they seem to have been enclaves within a society where traditional village life continued. The tributary system was centred in the temple though, where for six centuries the priestly class had been the ruling class extracting surplus value peacefully as long as the imperial authorities recognised the role of the temple in its control and exploitation of the villagers.

Jesus recognised that although the Jews were under Roman rule it was the Sadducees and Pharisees who were hypocritically oppressing and exploiting the people. While he, like all Jews, resented Roman domination, he realised that changing the rulers to Jewish ones would not end domination and in his constant criticism of the Jewish religious leaders he attempted to focus on the primary and root cause of domination instead. Jesus furthermore differed from the analysis of the Zealots, for while they rejected any king but God and were prepared to wage armed-struggle even against a Jewish king (in the pay of Rome) they nevertheless acknowledged the privileged position of the temple and therefore of hierocratic class society. The Jesus movement recognised that the class domination of the priests rested on a deep seated ideology and hence their major strategy was one of ideological attack. The broad coalition of groups that for different reasons were

threatened by this historical project contributed to Jesus' execution. In the year 66 A D the people united behind the Zealots in a full confrontation with the Roman authorities. After some initial successes the Romans crushed their offensive and of the Zealots, Essenes and Sadducees, only the Pharisees remained after the war. Rabbinic Judaism is the direct descendent of the Pharisaic movement.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES: Although Jesus' strategy for bringing liberation to the peasantry of Galilee had failed the Jesus movement continued and in the first Christian community in Jerusalem "all things were held in common and no one called anything his own." (Acts 4:32) Their ideal was not however poverty but the eradication of poverty. One sector within this community maintained the original hostility to the temple and not surprisingly it was against this sector that the priestly class directed the earliest persecution of Christians. The stoning of Stephen as the first martyr bears testimony to this (Acts 7: 54-60). Although the Palestinian movement of Christians was largely destroyed in the war, Christianity expanded to a heterogenous population in the cities of the Roman Empire. In the shift of sociological base the gospel of God as preached by Jesus lost the urgency of building the Kingdom as a historical project for the Galilean peasantry. The heterogenous group that made up its new base had no possibility of implementing any single historical project and under Paul's guidance this led to an individualistic spiritualising of God's Kingdom into an other worldly heaven. Nevertheless for many of the political authorities who demanded complete allegiance to their rule, a Christian community which continued to recognise God as their ultimate authority, remained a subversive obstacle who were continuously persecuted.

CONSTANTINE'S GREAT REVERSAL: In the fourth Century prior to Constantine becoming Emperor he recognised that persecuting the Christians had failed as a strategy and furthermore he recognised that their co-operation was more important to him than their denial of God. So while appearing to conform to God he reverted from persecuting the Christians to making Christianity the official state religion. In the process what is "attributed to God is first found in Constantine" and his project for achieving absolute power is now given divine blessing, while "the church is incorporated into his grand plan.... as an instrument in his unification of the Empire".(18) Hence the values of Constantine in matters of wealth, power, ambition, social organisation and religion determined European history as if they were the values of Christ.

THE CHURCH AFTER CONSTANTINE: Subsequently the monarchies and the papal seats were tied together in a way that suited the political authorities since their will was called the will of God. The religious leaders in turn profited much from this marriage of convenience. Nevertheless even in these contexts there were always heroic minorities (e.g. Waldensians, Franciscans, Dominicans) who sided with the poor and protested against the luxurious lives of clergy and monks. Some of these were purged as heretics, others who were too popular were called saints and served to revitalise parts of the church.

It is upon this background that the present day church has been criticised for siding with the ruling class. This was also the predominant experience of the church in Europe, which Marx accurately criticised for being "the opiate of the people". It is interesting though that Lenin draws a parallel between the words of Marx which had been conveniently forgotten in Lenin's time as if it were a piece of old fashioned "naivete" and Christians who after their religion has been given the status of a state religion 'forgot' the 'naivete' of primitive Christianity with its democratic revolutionary spirit. (19) Original Marxism is not alienated from early Christianity but rather from that form of Christianity which serves Constantine rather than Christ. "Marxism is the enemy of the ruling class, but if Christianity since Constantine identifies itself with this class and its values, then it is hardly surprising that the church has often seen Marxism as its own enemy. (20)

THE PROPHETIC TRADITION REDISCOVERED: Subsequently however the churches have grown most strikingly in the third world, where a smaller and smaller minority dominate and exploit a larger mass of poor people. Under these conditions the churches have tended to rediscover the mystery of Christ in the poor and the prophetic church has tended to grow sizeably stronger. This has been the sentiment expressed in the encyclicals of Vatican II and also taken up in the Latin American Bishops' Conferences in Medellin and Puebla in the Catholic church. (21) Within the Protestant tradition the World Council of Churches and many nationally affiliated church councils have issued statements of a similar nature expressing solidarity with the oppressed.

CONCLUSION

Although it would be difficult to show that this peoples church is now in the majority in South Africa I have attempted to illustrate that :

- i) The option for the poor is the point of departure of an authentic theological tradition and is an effective help to understanding the bible
- ii) In different periods and places religious groupings have played very different roles in relation to how they experienced God's Kingdom re the oppressed and their struggles for liberation.
- iii) In the present conjuncture important sections of the churches are searching for ways of continuing the ancient traditions of the bible and the early church in the pursuit of liberation. Nevertheless other sectors continue to actively legitimate oppressive regimes while perhaps the majority of nominal Christians silently consent to these regimes through their indifference or failure to actively oppose them.
- iv) From the above it should be clear that the religious area is a site of struggle and needs to be organised as such, most especially by religious people committed to the transformation of society in line with building God's Kingdom on earth.

CONTEXTUALISING CHRISTIAN YOUTH GROUPS

In my experience one sub-sector of the church which has been developed as a site of struggle is the youth sector. It makes sense then that in developing this model of church, it will be helpful to begin by analysing that sub-sector which has developed this experience of being church more extensively in the South African context.

Before analysing the actual agents themselves it makes sense that we focus our lense in upon the different types of Christian youth groupings which exist. This will further contextualise the research material which follows (in the next chapter) as well as help to clarify how this particular section of the church has been organised as a site of struggle. While there are many Christian youth groupings in South Africa this thesis limits its scope to three main types which are in some ways typical of the Christian youth structures more broadly. Each of these groupings is shaped by the particular milieu of Christian youth from which it draws its membership and the major distinctions between them consequently correspond with the level of organisation of the participants of each one. We will briefly deal with each one separately prior to analysing their inter-relationships.

- I. The basic and often primary place of gathering for Christian youth is in their parish based youth-clubs. At this level the majority of youth could

be mobilised around activities which are fun-centred. The youth would in turn be encouraged and expected to participate in the religious life of the parish which would in this case, involve attendance at Sunday Mass and receiving (the rest of) the sacraments. Since there is most often very little co-ordination of these types of groupings, the leadership running the groups are generally weakly equipped and there is very little continuity from one year to the next with a high turn-over of youth moving in and out of groups. While there are a great variety of this type of youth-club and hence these broad characteristics will vary from time to time and group to group, generally the group expectations of its membership are minimal at this level and the loose network of people often undergo little change in their consciousness as a result of being part of the group. The majority of the membership of these youth groups are drawn from secondary-school-aged youth although the leaders are often a few years older, more experienced and sometimes express a greater commitment to their faith than the younger membership.

2. The second groupings are drawn from Catholic students in institutions of tertiary education. The International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) identified itself from its beginnings with the missions of the church but with the fundamental purpose to "unite Catholic students to defend their faith"(22). Hence NCFS (white students) and CASA (black students) which are the National IMCS affiliates, serve as local quasi-parishes on campuses and consequently have a similar heterogeneous composition to that of the church at large. The central identity of these local groups was clearly expressed in the response to the Cathsoc group interview question "What unites you as members of the group? Catholicism, our common belief as it is expressed in the Creed.....the community we share that unites us comes out very clearly in the mass when we're all together....but while some of us will be more interested in political action, others would be less interested.... there's no pressure, it's very much the individual's choice..... so while we differ on some aspects, there's a respect for one another that we share."

This response accurately reflects the internal identity of the local campus quasi-parishes. Both federal structures which link the various campus bodies nationally, would similarly allow for a fair amount of autonomy and flexibility from campus to campus. Whilst there are these similarities between parish-based youth groups and campus based Cathsocs and Casas there are no differences. Generally the tertiary education students are older and more independent especially since they often live with and spend most of their time in a broader student

community. Hence the experience of community often has a greater depth at university as was expressed in response to why people joined Cathsoc? "I was looking for a community and had been to the youth clubs (parish-based), but I didn't find them as warm or the friendships as genuine as I've found them in Cathsoc... the fact that people cared for me struck me and means a lot to me".

The activities also generally, have a greater amount of student participation as is often expressed through the youthful liturgies and there is more of an emphasis on ongoing religious formation often in student-run sub-groupings. Hence people generally experience a greater growth and change in consciousness at this level of organisation as is revealed by some of the responses to the group interview:

"The faith-life group has really helped me to begin integrating my faith and life in a totally different way than from before; my whole outlook on religion has changed..it's become much more meaningful for me; Cathsoc helped me to get out of just being a passive spectator. I feel I can make the world a better place, Cathsoc didn't allow me to become as much of a bagel as I otherwise would have become..it kept a good influence over me otherwise I think my morals would have been much lower."

Some of the militant members of Cathsoc nevertheless expressed that certain needs of theirs had been addressed insufficiently. "I need to get more involved in action...political action which will more effectively help to transform the society, I feel the need to be in a group of people who can share this commitment with me; I can't stand people's apathy and get very frustrated when they've got ninety-nine excuses why they can't participate. This really gets me down; ...I feel a need to reach out to others in need, and not just to discuss here on our own, we should be more involved in social action." The above responses indicate that there are a portion of students who are socially and politically aware and are furthermore more motivated to organise themselves as a force in the struggle to transform society. The essentially pluralist and open identity of this secondary level of organisation however limits and strains the potential of this grouping since their more radical social commitment runs the risk of creating a political image which might alienate other less politically committed Catholic students from Cathsoc.

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3. Historically this is precisely what led to the initiation of the Young Christian Students (Y C S) in South Africa. Internationally though IYCS had earlier expressed that YCS differed from IMCS and its affiliates since it was "a specialised Catholic action MOVEMENT which aimed to offer its specific contribution to the university pastoral although it did not want to be "the whole university pastoral".(23) YCS sought not to represent all students, nor all Christians, but only its militants and in the 1974 World Council in Holland it made five important options

- 1." YCS commits itself to the historical praxis of liberation which is an option for the poor.
2. YCS recognises the meaning of student movements struggle within the school and the university if it is linked to the other liberating forces inside a universal strategy for a radical transformation of the society.
3. The YCS militants commit themselves to a historical process of liberation within a global strategy through a critical political praxis where they live and proclaim their faith.
4. YCS believes that the mission of the church is to witness Christ in the world through her commitment for the whole liberation of man, which she understands and announces as the Gospel of Christ.
5. YCS through its commitment, carries out the mission of the church in its milieu and shares with the church its effort of renewal".(24)

Much of this will be borne out from the research into the individual members of YCS in South Africa in the following two chapters. At this point it will be helpful to illustrate the above by focussing on the more generalised data which emerged from a group interview with one YCS region. The responses to the question "Why did you join YCS?" helps to illustrate the relationship between YCS and other Christian societies: "After being in Cathsoc for a few years I realised that Cathsoc couldn't fulfil all my needs.....I felt I needed to be more political! Involved and YCS was the only answer I could see. I had been involved in the struggle before joining YCS but I felt I needed to review what I was doing.... the YCS method appealed to me.... It has also helped me to integrate a Christian dimension to my political involvements;" Another who had joined YCS while still at school commented "Although I was in CLG (Christian Life Group) before, there was much more of an emphasis on what we as Christians shouldn't do in terms of morality....but in YCS this theology of the kingdom took me back a bit...it was the first time I really understood what Christianity was about...what we were supposed to be building".

When people were asked 'What unites you in YCS, what do you share in common?' their responses helped to reveal what lies at the heart of the identity of YCS. "We share a common vision to liberate ourselves and our society which comes from a particular understanding of the faith that we share. I think what makes us special is the way we've internalised a spirit of democracy, I mean there are no teachers or leaders up there... this has helped to create a spirit of openness in which people can grow; the community spirit has helped me to trust others much more and as a result deep friendships have developed; at the National Student Exec the leaders from all over the country come together... the sense of solidarity which comes from our common commitment made us feel very close to each other; the commitment to the struggle that we've developed is more than just on a theoretical basis... it affects all areas of my life and I know it will remain with me after I leave varsity, as the struggle has become more complex I've realised it will be a long thing but I have this hope, which keeps me going."

The Cathsocs and Casas are similarly open to all Catholic students who are involved in institutions of tertiary education and have as their central thrust a formation in the faith. The YCS groups are found amongst both high school and university students who, while sharing a common faith, also share a more consistent commitment to organising themselves as a force to transform their society. Hence while each movement is aimed at a distinctive constituency of students by whom it is shaped, there is nevertheless a complimentary relationship between these distinctive levels of organisation.

Buenaventura Pelegri the joint chaplain of both IMCS and IYCS in the late seventies, explains "IMCS is able to inter-relate large groups or communities of Christian students with different degrees of social and ecclesial awareness and commitment, that option shows better the pluralism within the church. But on the other hand it slows the conscientisation process and gives a poorer witness of Christ as Liberator"(25). Many students have moved from one movement to another as they have grown while others have simultaneously been active in more than one of the movements at the same time. The leadership of the different movements would furthermore most often be of a similar commitment but understand the need for different levels of organisation, which employ different pedagogies to respond to the different and complex needs of the heterogenous grouping of people referred to as Christian youth. This model of organisation is the one that

has been arrived at through a process of struggle under particular conditions and within a particular context. The methods of action and reflection equip the youth within these groupings to adapt this particular form of organisation in relation to the future terrain of this site of struggle.

CHAPTER THREE

SIGNIFICANT DISCOURSES EXPLAINING IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE AMONGST CHRISTIAN YOUTH

YOUTH

While all of the people who were interviewed were young there were no interview questions which sought specific information on this subject position. A youth perspective is however clearly expressed through all of the other subject-positions dealt with subsequently. Youth as a particular subject position is nevertheless an important criteria in explaining why people change or not and needs introducing both theoretically and practically at the outset of this section.

While the research done for this thesis focusses upon Christian youth theoretically it is important to locate this segment of youth amongst the broader body of youth generally as a specific sector of society. Certain theorists attempting to explain the rebellious political nature of youth, have described them as a 'new class'. Marcuse for one, while styling his approach in Marxist terms, quite clearly departs from classical Marxism's definition of class, in terms of a relationship to the means of production. Youth are not on the whole directly engaged in production relations and it would be more correct to recognise youth as a social sector (and not a social class). For while youth would come from a variety of class origins there is also a certain amount of fluidity in terms of which class location they will move into upon the completion of their studies.

Hence from the perspective of youth, and in particular student youth, there is often the expectation of upward social mobility, (even if in practice, the majority of their economic subject-positions remain relatively constant). It is nevertheless a perceived potential, that contributes towards this sense of 'openness' that characterises youth as a particular social category. While economic criteria definitely influence it, a deeper analysis is needed to explain this openness in consciousness which makes youth such an important site of ideological struggle.

I. PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY

Eric Erikson explores the theme of youth consciousness in "A Psychosocial Theory of Personality"(1) wherein he describes eight psychosocial stages in human life. Each stage is characterised by a "phase specific" developmental task, "i.e. a problem in social development that must be dealt with at that particular time.... Each stage is accompanied by a crisis that is a turning point in the individual's life that arises from physiological maturation and social demands made upon the person at that stage"(2). The adolescent stage is regarded as highly significant in the individual's psychosocial development, once the individual is no longer a child but not yet an adult. At this stage the focus of the conflict is within the ego itself, between identity or role confusion. The task confronting adolescents is to consolidate all the knowledge they have gained about themselves and integrate this into a personal identity that shows awareness of both a past and a future.

Socially the adolescent begins to evaluate the world. They conceive of ideal families, religions, philosophies and societies which they can compare with the imperfect persons and institutions of their own experience. An adequate resolution of the ego-identity - role confusion crisis results in fidelity, which refers to the adolescent's "ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions of value systems."(3) During the adolescent stage a sense of personal identity is often significantly affected by the social groups with whom one identifies. On a broader scale certain groups of people (the poor, blacks, women,) find it difficult to achieve a firm sense of identity in societies where they are accorded second-class status. Furthermore adolescents and children are particularly vulnerable to stress, anxiety and uncertainty in societies experiencing socio-political turmoil.

Hence we can recognise with Erikson that "the adolescent mind becomes an IDEOLOGICAL mind in search of an inspiring unification of ideas"(4) (my emphasis), (where an ideology is perceived as being an unconscious set of values and assumptions, reflecting the religious, scientific and political thought of a culture). Erikson further recognises that the purpose of an ideology is "to create a world image convincing enough to support the collective and the individual sense of identity"(5). Ideologies are thus important in providing young people with simple but definite answers to their basic questions associated with identity-conflict, viz. Who am I?, Where am I going?. These psychosocial factors so important for understanding the dynamics involved in

youth consciousness, will be further developed, below in the focus of this research on Christian youth.

2. SOCIAL THEMES

More recently there have been three relevant social theories attempting to explain the prominence of youth in activities that challenge the Status Quo(6). Although much of this literature was stimulated by student revolts in the advanced capitalist countries during the 1960's, we will very briefly analyse each in turn with its significance for South African youth generally, prior to focussing upon the results of the research into Christian youth specifically.

Mannheim's GENERATIONAL CONFLICT theory identifies the nature of a generation in sociological terms, "a social generation", rather than merely chronological terms. A generation becomes an actuality "where a concrete bond is created between members of a generation by their being exposed to the social and intellectual symptoms of dynamic destabilisation"(7). It is their consciousness of belonging to a generation that turns potential membership to actual membership with its implications for concerted social and political action. Later proponents of this theory draw the direct analogy between the group consciousness developed in belonging to a distinct generation, and that of a class or national consciousness.

This notion of a self-conscious generation unit seems helpful in describing the consciousness developed by youth in the student resistance at the Black universities in the late 1960's and early 1970's and in the high schools from 1976 onwards in Soweto and elsewhere. What this 'Soweto generation' seemed to share was a commitment:

To a better education system; to uniting the youth; and to linking the youth to the rest of the community.

A decade later it would seem that these concerns have grown both in intensity and substance with Cosas initially galvanising the energy especially from 1981 - 1985 (until its banning) and more recently SAYCO launching a national youth congress under highly repressive conditions (beginning of 1987). Two important new expressions of this 'generation unit' are the fact that it has grown to include students and young

unemployed (SAYCO) and furthermore that there are a growing, if limited, number of white students at both university (NUSAS) and high-school level (PAAG,links) who are identifying themselves more closely to this movement through the UDF.

A second theory is used by Moller in arguing that certain patterns of age distribution are the DEMOGRAPHIC base of youth politics. He attempts to show how a relative increase in the ratio of youth to total population (especially in societies undergoing disruptive economic and social changes) makes the likelihood of political activity amongst youth highly likely. He argues further that "young provide the driving force and often, to a great extent the intellectual and organisational leadership"(8) in many revolutionary situations.

The 1980 population census shows that South Africa's age distribution is very much that of a society in a phase of accelerated population growth where it has a high proportion of children and young adults; Bundy, in focussing on the specifically youth component of the political confrontations identifies three underlying inter-related factors

- i) "The glaring defects of black education.
- ii) The very substantial expansion of black schooling over the past couple of decades.
- iii) The issue of unemployment amongst black school leavers."(9) In doing this he moves beyond mere demographic data and widens the focus to the corresponding socio-historic dimensions in considering economic, educational and employment trends.

A third theory explains the youth revolt as a by-product of modernisation and in particular as a consequence of the increase in the size of an intelligentsia during rapid economic growth. Hobsbawm notes that the unprecedented expansion of higher education has had three consequences

- i) an acute strain on educational facilities
- ii) a multiplication of first generation students, and
- iii) economically speaking a potential over-production of intellectuals

Hence he states that when "a large body of students either facing unemployment or a much less desirable employment than they have been led to expect.... are likely to form a permanent discontented mass"(10) and feed into radical movements. Modernisation theorists

similarly identify students and intellectuals as being "especially open to 'value changes' and hence as key transmitters of modernising impulses in developing (third world) societies. At the same time students are also a key source of opposition to traditionalism in all its forms". (10a)

South African history does bear close resemblances with this theory in that following the growth of the economy in the 1960's, employers perceived a relative skills shortage and began to attempt to shape educational policy. But it was after the Soweto student revolt that state expenditure on African education really leapt, and between 1978 - 1982, it increased by 130% (excluding the Bantustans). Over the last twenty years though high school and tertiary education has expanded considerably. The economy has however been through a protracted recession which has had two major effects on youth in particular. The quality of education has fallen as a result of an inadequately financed system, attempting to cope with increasing numbers of students. Students in turn have made great sacrifices to achieve academically, only to discover a crushing unemployment upon leaving school. Hence "they have been thrust onto the labour market at precisely the moment that it is contracting"(11). These are some of the underlying factors which help to explain the active role played by South African youth in the education crisis as well as the crisis confronting the South African state more broadly.

3. THE INFLUENCE OF YOUTH DISCOURSES AS A PARTICULAR SUBJECT POSITION ON CHRISTIAN YOUTH

While the above social theories (related to generational conflict, demographic changes or 'modernisation' and the consequent growth in the size of the intelligentsia) apply equally to all South African youth, certain themes are enlarged upon and deepened in the research done on Christian youth groupings. The 'social generation' thesis is of particular importance since one of the most central obstacles manifested by both black and white youth interviewed, were their parents or other adults (especially principals and teachers). This was especially true for those young people who had become politically committed but also featured more generally, in that most young people felt closer to their (racial) peer groupings than to their parents.

a) WHITE YOUTH

There were, for example, many white parents who prevented their children from participating in any social gatherings where black youth would be present. One young lower middle class girl who had participated in such youth group encounters and made the mistake of telling her father that she personally had no problems with inter-racial marriages, was consequently physically assaulted and forbidden from participating in any future mixed-youth church gatherings. Furthermore when young people have become involved in more explicitly political activities, both black and white parents have attempted to prevent their children from participating. Amongst black parents however there was generally a greater flexibility which later allowed for a reluctant acceptance, since besides their fears of repression, there was most often a shared understanding of why and what their children were committing themselves to.

Some white parents have on occasion gone to great lengths to discourage their children when they discover their involvements. It has not been uncommon for parents to threaten and then actually expel 'dissident' university going children from their homes, at the same time as withholding their university fees. More commonly though students in these situations would be forced to develop a dual personality and reveal very little of themselves when at home. "Gerald", a first year upper middle-class white university student, put it thus: "my father is a capitalist, my mother sympathises with me but she's not really interested in listening to me either, so I can't really talk to them and share these things with them. If I do try, they just tell me their views and that's that! We can't really grow together". (12)

Many students in this predicament gradually move further and further apart from their parents and generally move out of home at the earliest possible occasion. Jenny, a white middle-class final year student who was brought up in a rural Transvaal town expresses the complex but real limits in her mother's consciousness, "I know she loves me but she just can't understand or support me in my political beliefs. She believes that I'm just being manipulated and that as soon as I leave Wits, I'll change back again...which means she gives me no credit for being a thinking person. She's worried that I'm not so honest with her anymore.... She couldn't understand why I gave all my excess clothes away and sent them to the homelands. She can't understand why I don't want new clothes all the time, anymore".

b) BLACK YOUTH

The dominant world view of white parents is too often so distant from that of their more politicised children's and the move into a resident student-community is often the only way to survive. On the other hand there have been notable examples of some white and a greater number of black parents really being open to their children and growing from their experiences. This has been especially true where both parents and children have shared a common belief system. Tshepo, a 16 year old youth from Soweto reveals how his father changed from being antagonistic to his political involvements. "My father would always tell me about the scriptures and explain why I should not be involved in politics but after I joined Y C S I learned of bible passages I had not heard in church much.... I reflected with him on these passages and how they related to us and I saw he was beginning to become more open....My father also saw how I was no longer drinking and that I was more disciplined and respectful.... now my father and mother support me and they even support my sister who has joined the union at work."

The divisions between parents and youth in the black community was recognised as a structural political weakness after the 1976 uprising. The subsequent forms of organisations that have developed have thus structurally ensured a combined impetus in schools through parent-teacher-student associations; in the community through street committees, in the work-place through youth supported consumer boycotts. Subsequently decision-making has been made jointly and the energy and militancy of the youth has been more effectively combined with the patience and experience of their parents. Since most black parents would adhere to one form of religion or another Sipho, a 15 year old Sowetan youth, believes that the presence of committed Christian youth has helped to unite the community, "before when I wasn't a Christian my neighbours didn't like me as a comrade, but now that I'm a Christian, people can see the struggle is for everyone....I can talk to the parents in our location much more easily because we come together in church.... they can see I respect them more than before, and they listen to me now."

4. CONCLUSION

It is interesting to note that an MA student in his early thirties had this to say when asked about obstacles he had experienced in the way of his

commitment, "Although I was still experimenting and exploring, I felt I was older, I was more established in my ways than the normal students and I think this made me less flexible.... or perhaps less malleable depending on which way you look at it." Only the test of time will reveal whether the commitment of young people has been thoroughly internalised or not. The point made here though is that youth as a sector of society, have shown a greater openness or flexibility to changing than their respective parents' generation. Furthermore the 'openness' which makes youth such an important site of struggle has been explained in terms of the three complimentary social theories mentioned as well as by the psycho-social theory of adolescence by Erikson, discussed earlier on.

Erikson interestingly adds that in many societies a period of interval has been institutionalised between adolescence and adulthood (tertiary education) to enable some young people to explore a number of different social and occupational roles before deciding what to do with their lives. Other young people with the same purpose in mind have taken to wandering, joining cults etc., before settling down in a community. This would suggest that youth in this particular age group are in a state of flux and hence more open to alternatives than they might be at other times of their lives.

In the South African context it would seem that for many youth this is increasingly being coupled with a sense of insecurity about the future, particularly since youth are the major victims on both sides in this escalating civil war. Hence while the importance of this generational unit should be recognised in that a greater degree of openness to change may exist amongst this sector than for society as a whole, we would not want to over emphasize the weight of this subject position. The race and class positions of youth seem for example, to have a far greater influence in explaining which youth identify with each other, as well as in explaining the overall balance of forces in our society. The greatest evidence here is the fact that at the cutting edge of this war we find black and white people who share the common identity of being young and yet are locked into mortal combat with each other.

ECONOMIC DISCOURSES

While youth is a subject-position which is particularly transitory the other subject-positions which emerged are more dynamic, in that they have a recurring yet varying importance at different stages in the life process. This was clearly illustrated by the responses to the interview schedule which was itself chronologically organised. Hence when we deal with the remainder of the subject-positions we will attempt to highlight the dynamic processes involved at different stages by identifying:

1. What form that particular subject-position took in the emerging predominant discourses of youth.
2. Whether that particular subject-position was responsible for creating any important fault-lines or cracks within their predominant formations.
3. How people subsequently integrate this subject-position into the overall discursive formation.
4. A synthesis of what the research analysis reveals about this particular subject-position and its relative importance for Christian youth.

While some of the youth interviewed had part-time jobs they nevertheless all form part of broader class-communities, either through their families, or class trajectories (i.e. the class positions which students will slot into on completion of their studies). It is important to identify the class-location of the broader communities from which different youths originate, not so much because these in any way determined their ideological perspectives, but rather because of the different paths taken from different class positions, in the processes of ideological change. Another factor which became immediately obvious was how closely intertwined class and race are in South Africa. It was interesting to note subtle differences in the paths of ideological change which took place between youth with different class origins from the same race groups. The focus of this section is then the role that people's class-positions and economic discourses played in their processes of ideological change. Other factors will sometimes be touched upon in passing but only insofar as they highlight this specific theme.

1. BLACK YOUTH

Rapu was the third of five children born into a working class community in Soweto where "everybody was equally suffering". His father was a driver. His mother was a domestic worker. He does not remember much about them in his early years and says "I did not know my parents very well because they were always working, except for Friday when my mother would come to the township and take us all to church." When he was four years old, his father was arrested for a hit-and-run accident and sentenced to five years imprisonment. Since his mother could no longer manage to cope with both her children and her job in town he and his two younger siblings were sent to the homeland to stay with his grandmother. He remembers that when he came back four years later he was very ill from malnutrition. A few years later when he was in standard seven he felt he could no longer cope with his father's harsh treatment and decided to run away from home, which he did for two years. During these two years, "I was mixing with thugs and criminals, we were forced by circumstances to be gangsters... Every morning I would wake-up and wonder where will I get food today? There were many days when we would 'get' no food... my childhood was really tough years."

Siphiwe, whose parents ran a shebeen in Alexander from which "we got a bit of extra money" had one of his younger brothers die as a baby and then when he was six his father was stabbed and killed in a fight. He too went to the homelands to stay with his uncle for seven years where he remembers "life was tough, I had to wake up early, milk the cows, fetch the water, then go to school.... my uncle was nicer to his children than (to) us". For Mpho, a twenty year old Soweto youth things were fine until his parents divorced when his father left his mother and the other five children. "I remember funny things, we didn't have shoes at school, we had one pair, but three of us had to share them, I remember it being very cold....My father came back five years later and brought us Christmas clothes and took us to eat at his house in Orlando on weekends.... it cleared his conscience for a bit but then he disappeared and we were with my mom again."

The above examples help to illustrate the socio-economic struggles for survival of working-class youth (many of whom are forced to work in some capacity to ease the financial burden on their parents). When I asked what they were striving or hoping to be at that time of their lives, their responses were revealing. Rapu said it varied, when he was at school he wanted to finish his schooling and become a lawyer so that he could have lots of money, but when he was on the streets his next

meal was his most important pre-occupation. Siphilwe's main goal was to become a 'reverend' because "I got excited when I heard him preaching at the people so loudly. He was preaching 'state theology' but it sounded good at the time". Mpho simply wanted to be Bruce Lee, so that "I could be strong enough to protect myself because I was small and had no father or big brother to help me". Thandeni, a 17 year old Sowetan youth, expresses well the typical goals of many black working class youth who were interviewed "I wanted to be like a guy in our street who was always smartly dressed and used to have stokvels, he had a nice car and many girl friends...I wished I could be rich like him".

The common thread lies in the fact that people want to escape the constant pressure for survival, and develop role-models from those around them who appear to have achieved this. There does not appear to be any question of transforming the system since people at this stage had hardly begun to conceptualise their experiences in terms of a system. It seems that it is more simply a case of 'what is' and who copes best under these conditions.

2. WHITE YOUTH

1. Barry, a high school student from the northern suburbs, shows just how dominant the ruling ideology actually is when he says "I wanted to be a millionaire as quickly as possible...ha ha...I suppose it's every boy's dream" 'Matthew' from the same school, whose father is the director of a bank, and who seemed to have everything a boy could dream of felt differently however. When asked what he would like to be "I want to be a friendly person, someone who is able to express affection... not like my dad who would just buy me the newest toys all the time to try and make up for his inability to communicate with me, till I hated it!" Here too, though, there is no hint of a link between his father's behaviour and any system. Mathew simply aimed to become a business-man more friendly to his kids.

So far we have illustrated some of the differing economic experiences of (black and white) high school students who all seem to have identified with the common resultant dominant discourse. To deepen this analysis we will compare the distinctive economic experiences of two white students at university from differing class origins and analyse what effects this had upon their divergent emerging consciousnesses.

Antonio is the twenty-two year old son of immigrant parents who live in a lower middle-class white suburb. His father works in a butchery, while his mother is a house-wife and both emphasized doing well at school academically, so that he would get a good job one day which would ensure he enjoyed a relatively more stable existence. To achieve this though, he had to catch two buses and move from the southern suburbs he knew in the northern suburbs "where people were generally more wealthy and tended to look down upon people from the southern suburbs.... I remember being particularly hurt when a boy in my class said I was dirty and that people on my side of town hardly bathed... These kinds of experiences developed in me an exaggerated identification with things and people from my side of town... I suppose it was a kind of latent class-consciousness".

Antonio later joined a Christian society on campus to play in the soccer team and because "a guy I knew from where I stayed asked me to join". But when he attended a service organised by the students to commemorate Sharpeville in a northern suburbs home he was totally confused. "I felt these people were totally hypocritical .. how could these rich whites be praying for freedom, when they had everything they wanted... in any case, if there was any struggle, I believed it was a black man's struggle and whites had no role in it anyway."

Maureen, a first year university student, has parents who are both highly-paid professionals who live right on the other side of town in one of the more plush suburbs of Johannesburg. Maureen attended a nearby private school for girls where she imbibed and accepted a strict moral code, of no smoking, drinking, drugs or sex. She nevertheless remembers that shopping was one of the major social activities of her friends and family, "we always had millions and millions of possessions...there was no question of need involved, it was a matter of buying whatever you wanted" When she went on her first YCS conference (after being convinced by her older sister) with the other schools' groups, which were largely from either the white southern suburbs or the 'coloured' western areas of Johannesburg, a whole new world opened up for her. "I was struck by the different class of others, the way they spoke, and dressed, their body language....I really found the closeness of their community quite interesting....I was most surprised that as school students they had been able to plan and run a whole conference."

For Maureen, as for many of the youth interviewed, "my belief in the Kingdom meant inequalities were wrong" but for Maureen in particular it meant consciously attempting to change her lifestyle and live more simply, "becoming part of the community was such a big jump, whenever I went shopping I consciously tried to shop more frugally and the wealth issue became a constant reminder for me of my commitment to a new way of life.... it also made me critical of the moral values I had developed at school where possessions as a value were never questioned." While Antonio also subsequently identified with this new way of life the economic differences between Maureen and Antonio had clearly influenced the predominant discourses they had held (in their largely 'white' world) before leaving school. This in turn later meant that although they belonged to the same community and attended the same meetings, because of what their divergent discourses had previously been, common experiences struck them in widely contrasting ways.

2. Besides identifying how economic experiences influenced the interviewees emerging dominant discourses, we need to further identify whether these created any fault lines or cracks in their dominant discourses. This often occurs when particular experiences begin to rub uncomfortably against the predominant ideological worldview which people had formerly been interpellated with. While this was partially true in the case of Antonio when he was told he needed a bath, it is to be expected that economic experiences most commonly caused cracks in the dominant discourses of black working class youth.

A number of township youth interviewed sought to complement their families' income by doing work on the weekends from a young age. "Gardening work was the easiest to find and if I got R1,50 for a Saturday's work I would have food money for school and could save some for shoes." Thami is a young working man who comes from the East Rand. His parents are both white collar workers who wouldn't allow him to do gardening work, but one of his friends did. "He had to cut grass, pull weeds, clean the dog etc for very little money, but worse still, one day the dog tried to bite him and he hit it. He got lashed for this. He went home and asked his parents what he should do but they told him to just forget it because the whites would win, no matter what he did....We felt that whites must hate us because they just used us like they would a tool or a machine. We began to hate them. My friend felt that he could have killed that man, but the man had warned him that if he came back he would get shot."

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It is interesting to note that although Thami only heard the story from his friend, he became involved in it and the experience affected him as though it had happened to him personally. As a result of this experience Thami realised that they would have to join organisations to change these things. Whereas he had been interested before he "would now go to meetings against my parents will". What is significant here is that while his fear of repression and his obedience to his parents had hitherto prevented this, the experience of his friend tipped the scales sufficiently for him to move beyond these constraints. A 'fault line' in the predominant discourses that he had previously accepted had been widened into a crack and it was through this crack that he moved into organisations and a new set of discourses.

Bheki, a twenty-seven year old student, experienced a similar if less dramatic development. He came from a big family in the Pretoria area with only a single breadwinner who was "much poorer than the others in the township... others were more smartly dressed at school than I was, but at least at church I could wear the altar-boy clothes...I was ashamed to ask friends to come home with me, I was afraid they would see the contrast." Here Bheki reveals how his material experiences practically contradicted the dominant discourses he had been interpellated with. Since he at this stage lacked the tools for criticising the ruling ideology, his sense of shame at being poor was fairly complete. Nevertheless he felt a mixed sense of anger at his father, whom he felt was responsible for his uncomfortable position, and yet at the same time he loved his father who left for work so early in the morning and came home so late at night, who was struggling to put food on the table. The ambiguity which Bheki experienced in relation to his father illustrates a fault-line created by the economic experiences, in his otherwise fairly encompassing dominant discourse.

A fault-line can be accommodated and remain just that, unless however one develops a deeper understanding of this experience and the fault-line begins to crack until a gap in the dominant discourse exists. This gap can be widened until it is able to be challenged by an alternative discourse which is able to compete for hegemony on the basis of a reconceptualisation of an important subject position the person holds. In Bheki's case this was done by a cultural-grouping based upon black consciousness which was active in the aftermath of the '76 uprisings.

"In the cultural group we shared what we had, we often had tea without milk or sugar, but now we understood why there was no sugar or milk... also after I lost my shame I would be happy to have friends over... I became more accepting of my family and my father as the sole breadwinner...I began to love them more...I became black and proud! Later when a white co-youth-worker came to visit me at home my parents wanted to buy special foods but I said no! we must eat what we normally eat."

Because of the great overlap between race and class in South Africa it was relatively spontaneous for Bheki's class experience (in relation to other black youth in the confines of a township) to be given a radical form and content organisationally in the broader South African context. But while the language Bheki uses is racial it is also simultaneously true in this case that it is the discomfort arising out of his economic subject-position that has been transformed.

While theorists have attempted to disentangle race and class under their microscopes in laboratories, throughout the research conducted, it was repeatedly made clear how these were interfused in the lives of black working class people. It is interesting to note the continuous and dynamic nature of this process when a few years later a different kind of fault line appeared when Bheki began working as an organiser of a youth movement, but for rather low wages. "My parents were expecting me as the first born to raise the family and wondered why I couldn't find a better job" In this instance the tension lay between the new hegemonic discourse that Bheki had adopted, which entailed making sacrifices and the consciousness of economic survival that was foremost for his parents.

3. We have identified the influence of people's economic subject-positions upon their emerging dominant discourses as well as upon the fault-lines and cracks within these discourses. In following some of these case-studies further we have already begun to illustrate the effect this has had upon their changing overall discursive formations. In this section we develop this theme by analysing whether people's economic subject positions help to explain why people changed or failed to change, and how they re-integrated this subject-position into their subsequent discursive formations.

The emerging picture would seem to suggest that especially in the case of black working-class youth but even more broadly than this, economic subject-positions have played a fairly significant role in explaining why people were open to changing and identifying with competing discursive formations. (A general note of caution is necessary however when gauging the true effects since it was difficult to ascertain practically a distinction between interviewees stated changes and their actual participation. It would be reasonable though to expect that at least a number of interviewees would either not be conscious of or simply choose to conceal these discrepancies). Secondly, while this thesis has not focussed as heavily upon those for whom the reverse would be true where a wealthy subject position would be a major stumbling block there is no doubt that this is just as true although it will be revealed here only to a lesser extent.

The distinctive responses of a black and a white youth, illustrate how people at opposite ends of the economic spectrum can for very different reasons change their overall discourses in a similar direction. For Sipho this only happened when he was fifteen and began moving out of Soweto and into town "when I saw how nice whites were living in town, I began to ask more questions about apartheid, about why although we were in the majority, we were living in poverty? Once I began to understand this better I became more committed. I learnt about Nelson Mandela our leader and what he had sacrificed, so I felt I must sacrifice too."

Sharon who comes from an upper middle-class white family on the other hand and graduated from university (where she had been part of a Christian society) with a degree in actuarial science, describes why she changed, "When I started work I wanted to get to the top as quickly as possible... I was working all the time and bringing home work.... At work materialism was very much emphasised and I was pushed to work harder with money incentives.... I was under great pressure to achieve... I was successful at work, but after two years, I felt depressed and a failure... everything seemed empty and useless... something wasn't being fulfilled.... slowly my life started changing... I became more critical of status as my motive... I realised that I always felt self-centred and alone. I felt I wasn't doing anything for the church or helping others when this was so much more meaningful for me... I still want to achieve but now as a teacher, especially to black people".

What is interesting in the above two examples is how both changed as a result of their economic subject-positions. Their distinctive economic experiences nevertheless would imply that each had different perceptions of what needed changing which would explain the subsequent differences in what each was prepared to do, to better the situation. While Sharon's negative experience of materialism was key in her process of conversion it would appear to be the exception rather than the norm. Martha, who became part of Christian organisations at university where she developed in her commitment, reveals some of the more standard difficulties of middle-class white students who take an option for the poor (or working class). "It's been difficult giving up so many of my bits and pieces to which I have become attached... I don't mind working for others but the idea of giving up possessions really frightens me... it's even scary knowing that I'm working for a society that will do away with my privileges because as a white I can get paid more now".

The temptation of trying to achieve is by no means exclusive to white students only. Victor who lived in Alexander township where his father had a shop comes from a family where academic achievement was emphasised, from a young age, as the way out of poverty. During his early years as a medic on campus he too became involved in a Christian organisation where taking an option for the poor was emphasised. At that stage of his involvement he was committed to serving the people as a doctor in the rural areas. After having moved out of his involvement in his latter years he now admits "I'm questioning whether I should stay in South Africa or leave...at the moment dropping my involvement has left me more cynical or maybe just realistic..also the turning point is getting closer as I move towards completing my studies and into the REAL world..I mean soon I'll be a doctor..why not just make bucks man?!"

Jeremy, an upper middle class white professional who had graduated a few years earlier puts it pithily "I try to help the community as much as I can... but I want others to come up to my standard of living... I struggle to give up the comforts I've got used to." Still others, especially those on government loans also have other fears "I worry a bit about ...like what will happen since I'm with TED and on a loan...I mean if I was detained would I get work".

There are nevertheless significant numbers from those interviewed who have integrated in a far more rigorous way new discourses, summed up in their own words as an "option for the poor".

Sipho, a 16 year old, said that when he was first involved freedom had meant "no more school fees or corporal punishment... but rather having a big car and lots of money". But now he sees things differently "a big car or house are less important for me... I can see more clearly how others who are poor are suffering and I would rather share with them than have luxuries I don't really need".

Malome, whose parents are both professionals and comes from a middle-class section of an East Rand township, admits, "when I was at school I was into achieving in sport and academics then when we heard about the exciting developments in the struggle we were also keen to do this, but like sport and academic achievements, it was more for status... the struggle was a fashionable thing, even a macho thing to do in those days.... but at university I realised this was not a plaything, I realised we had to commit ourselves to the poor and be at their level in our lifestyle, our clothes, drinking, ...everything."

George, who comes from a coloured township and Jenny, a white student, both at university expressed how a change in their values, especially in relation to wealth, had distanced them from their parents. George, "I'm afraid to talk to my parents about how my values have changed: They are fixed in their ways, 'get a good job, settle down then you won't have to struggle in life'. I think I had these ideas before, I wanted to be a good lawyer, but it was so I would be a 'somebody' in life. Now houses and cars are not so important, the most important thing is to serve the people, especially those who are suffering most, i.e. the poor... but I don't think my parents would appreciate this, especially after they struggled for me to get a good education". For Jenny, "the old things of materialism and status just aren't important anymore... people are important, but this means I just can't get excited when my parents phone me up and tell me about their new house or all the bigger and better things they've acquired... they in turn can't understand why I'm not materialist any more and are not at all excited about the changes I've made in life."

Gerald, a student had experienced a dramatic conversion in the 1980s. "Prestige and status were very important to me as

aiatric student and a prefect, but now an option for the poor has become central to me. When I came to varsity I wanted to become a hotel manager but this now seems excessive and superficial when people are starving, money now means absolutely nothing, just as long as I can live. The main question is whether trying to convert other whites to take an option for the poor, is really an option for the poor, & whether I should work amongst the poor more directly?"

4. Conclusion

In section one of this chapter we have analysed how black and white youth from varying class positions and totally different economic experiences were similarly interpolated with the dominant economic discourses. These dominant discourses articulated somewhat differently with the consciousness of survival of working-class black youth and the consciousness of wanting to be a millionaire noted amongst white upper-middle class youth. So for different reasons both groupings of youth identified with the dominant economic discourses. In section two we deepened this analysis by describing how counter-hegemonic economic discourses were nevertheless somewhat differently received by middle and working-class youth. While both had accepted the dominant discourses it is clear how black (or white) working-class youth were more receptive to discourses which more closely corresponded with their experiences and enabled them to overcome their consciousness of inferiority which the dominant discourses ultimately placed upon them.

To illustrate this phenomena we needed to develop upon the framework of Laclau and Mouffe who would assert that all social meaning is given by discourses. They would argue that since the relationship human-beings, in particular, have to reality is mediated by language, experience (as a concept) would be enclosed by discourses and hence its importance is reduced. While we have recognised the power of discourses in section one, we have maintained that experiences which rub against the dominant discourses are nevertheless capable of creating cracks and fault-lines in the dominant discourses which helps explain why working class youth were more receptive to counter-hegemonic discourses encouraging a socialist economy. Although Laclau and Mouffe's thesis would suggest that this is explained exclusively as a product of past inter-discursive struggles, the correspondence between socialist discourses and working-class

communities suggests that economic experience has more than an accidental role in this.

This was further clarified in section three where it became clearer that although white (and to a lesser extent black) middle-class youth were also capable of identifying with counter-hegemonic economic discourses they had more obstacles in their paths since they had comparatively more to lose as a result of taking this option than their working-class counterparts who stood to gain more from this in the longer term. We must nevertheless conclude that classical Marxism's stress on the primacy of class has often failed to recognise potential allies in the middle-class since economic experience has been over-emphasized at the cost of other experiences and discourses such as religion, as was expressed by Gerald who had "taken an option for the poor".

RACIAL DISCOURSES

There is a rich literature in the South African context which exhibits many of historical materialism's weaknesses and strengths in its articulation of race and class. While the revisionists have largely inverted the liberal problematic by reducing race to class and by seeing it largely as a function of class, more recent attempts have begun to recognise apartheid's possible dysfunctions to capitalism. The theory introduced in chapter one would suggest that to clarify how in practice the two articulate with one another, more rigorous conjunctural analyses are needed rather than apriori deductions. It is not within the scope of this thesis to theoretically explain a new relationship between race and class. Thus far we have recognised the overlap between class and race in the preceding section analysing people's economic subject positions. In this section we aim to do a rigorous conjunctural analysis of how race as a particular subject position within a specific discursive formation has affected the overall discourses of those young South Africans who are presently involved in Christian youth groups

We will once more analyse this as a dynamic process by:

1. Identifying in what way racial discourses influenced people's dominant consciousness from early childhood.
2. Identifying and explaining why and how fault-lines, cracks and gaps appeared in the dominant discourses of adolescents which caused people to question these.
3. Identifying how people subsequently integrated new discourses (and experiences) which transformed their overall discursive formations.
4. Synthesizing what the research into race as a subject-position reveals in terms of its influence upon Christian youth.

It is interesting to note that most black youth interviewed had very little experience of white people as children since white people seldom ventured into black urban residential areas and it is generally the case that black youth seldom come into the white towns before they entered into the economic sector. Many black mothers who came to work in the white areas, however, found work as domestics, where apart from cleaning and cooking, they were responsible for looking after white children. So from a young age, most white children experienced black people, often in a fairly intimate way, as a stand-in mother.

Jeremy explains how "both of my parents worked a full day so from a young age I spent a lot of my time with my nanny...most of it with her in her room... I think this worried my parents because they would have seen blacks as employees and therefore as subservient. So I was disciplined not to play with 'them' or be with 'them'. My parents saw themselves as liberals but I think I was socialised in a fairly racist way although we never discussed politics". Martha's experience was similar. "Lynette (our maid) was quite responsible for us and we got quite close to her... she was a stable influence on our lives... once she got arrested for a pass-offence... we were very upset but my mom went to the police station and got her out." In Martha's case though "kids in our neighbourhood were always rude to black people but we were always scolded for saying 'voetsak' or anything derogatory to black people."

Matthew, whose parents also worked all day got so close to his 'nanny' that, "when we moved from Durban to Pretoria, my parents brought her with us... my parents felt happy about me mixing with blacks and our maids kids grew-up with me". This more liberal background was similarly experienced by Erica who was brought up in Swaziland where she attended school with, and mixed in a multi-racial group. I think this made me feel 'people are people', so when I came to South Africa, the racist language which is common place amongst whites, jarred with me." What is significant here is that younger children seem to have been particularly influenced by their parents' discourses and attitudes, even when their own experiences contradicted their parents' perceptions. But in both Jeremy's case above and Jacob's below, this remained true only as long as they remained unexposed to discourses which contradicted those of their parents, which occurred later in life.

Jacob's mother was a domestic and she often took Jacob with her to her employer's home where Jacob remembers "they used to let us watch T V with them and they would give us toys and we would play with their children... but I began to wonder why were they so rich and us so poor? I thought maybe if God could make me white I could also be happy like this... So I prayed to God, but I was really surprised when God didn't change my skin colour, after I had prayed so seriously... when I asked my mother, she said it had always been like this... it's just natural... we can never change it, so I just had to accept this."

While children were often in this way conditioned into the dominant ideology this ideology was, likewise questioned by children whose parents were conscious and critical of racism against themselves.

Eddy and Anita who are both middle-class Chinese university students provide an interesting case in point, since although they felt they were never really the butt of racism, both were aware and conscious of the racism their parents were subjected to. Eddy passed on the history that had been orally passed on to him: "My grandfather came with his father to look for gold... to make his fortune, but they weren't allowed to stay in white areas, so they lived and started a shop and shebeen in Sophiatown .. but when Sophiatown was bulldozed and people were forced to move, my parents moved into a white area, Doornfontein, illegally. Later, after many families had done this, the state was forced to recognise it and introduced a permit system. My father experienced a lot of racism after coming out of Sophiatown, they were regarded as blacks and had to get off the pavement when the 'boere' walked past, or they got beaten... my dad told me he would sometimes pay black guys to beat up boere who caused the biggest problems. The Chinese community were very sensitive to racist slurs and if they were called 'ching chong Chinaman' it was a call to fight, but they generally had enough to live alright, unlike the blacks... but even at work my father taught new guys how to be clerks only to find that because they were white they moved above him... so he was very conscious of being overlooked for being Chinese.

Anita was very conscious of how things had changed: "the Chinese community had been discriminated against much more in my parents time... they weren't allowed to make use of most public places, schools, transport, bioscopes; they couldn't own property and had to get a white to sign for their house... when my parents were younger they were very conscious of being excluded but we didn't feel this discrimination much, except for some people at school who said 'ching chong Chinaman' which wasn't very nice". Anita, on coming to university, discovered that there were many people who were opposed to apartheid and although she had been strongly discouraged from taking any part in this, and was encouraged to concentrate purely on her studies she "rediscovered my parents oppression and even my being Chinese means I now want to abolish apartheid."

Heidi is the daughter of a mining engineer who came from Germany to work on the mines when she was three. He was very soon promoted to the position of general manager on a mine in a small rural town. However because he was an immigrant with different ways his family was ostracised by the rest of the white mining community. Heidi recalls "my parents weren't brought up in an apartheid society so they never saw things this way,... my father was more liberal with the African labour on the mines and was called a 'kaffer-boetie'; as a result we weren't allowed to play with other kids or catch the school buses... we were ridiculed at school for being different as foreigners, as Catholics and as 'kaffer-boeties' so we fitted much more into the church community and through this we got closer to the (African) mission church which we often attended". Heidi's consciousness was clearly influenced by the dominant discourses of her parents although these were in some ways antagonistic to the dominant discourses of the broader (white) community within which she lived.

This was similarly the case for Sarah who was very conscious, from a young age of being Jewish. "My father was discriminated against a bit as a Jew; I remember him once getting into a fight with another man in a bioscope queue who made an anti-semitic remark... but it was especially through reading about the holocaust and the Jewish history that I became conscious of being a Jew... My mother had been in Nusas and my parents were more liberal so they made the link between anti-semitism and racism against blacks. They would be critical of police arresting blacks on pass-offences... I remember very vividly the conditions in Alexandra when my mother took us as children to see how black people lived" In Sarah's case it is clear how despite her limited personal experiences of racism it is the recorded discourses of her extended community in a well developed literature on Jewish history which influenced her overall discursive formation.

The above four examples are all from people of middle-class backgrounds whose parents experienced a certain degree of racism. The fact that their ethnic subject-position did not coincide with a lower class position which could have reinforced this discrimination, meant that people became critical of these racist discourses which rubbed uncomfortably against their otherwise 'respectable' social positions. Some of these were able subsequently to identify with the racial oppression suffered by black South Africans, but history has revealed that the vast majority of these minority groupings were no longer as concerned, once they had been accepted within the ruling group.

For those people who simultaneously held inferior economic and racial subject-positions, it was more difficult to be critical of this racism. Molefi who often visited his granny who was a domestic for white people, explains this subtly. "My granny would teach us to call the whites 'missus' or 'kleinbaas'... she would also tell me to fix the garden, when the white boy who was my age never helped... we used to play a lot together with the white kids of the family but their cousins wouldn't play with us, and when they visited we would be left aside feeling lonely and left-out. But with '76 these experiences began to become political... we began asking why whites were rich and we were poor?

Were they naturally better than us? Was God really closer to them? ... I think I began to become more critical after this, because I didn't want to call this boy 'kleinbaas' any more, nor would I fix the garden unless he helped." So while Molefi or his granny seemed hardly conscious of the inherent racism in their practices before '76, subsequently a discourse of resistance had been developed which allowed or encouraged a critical attitude. Prior to this however, there did not seem to be much of an alternative discourse and the dominant racist discourses were hegemonic even in the consciousness of the most oppressed people who must have swallowed the bread of apartheid daily.

The student and youth revolts of 1976 were a turning point, not only for a new generation of youth, but for the community at large as well.

Subsequently there has been a resurgence in the struggle to fight apartheid and what was formerly implicit has been made explicit in each sphere of social life in which apartheid is experienced. What is highly significant about 1976 is that Black Consciousness provided a new discursive formation through which black people could articulate their many experiences under apartheid. Black Consciousness not only enabled people to understand these experiences, but furthermore it served as a counter-hegemonic discourse which directly challenged the dominant racist ideology which had formerly been hegemonic. Thus both black and white youth subsequently grown up on an ideological terrain in a state of flux. This has encouraged a relatively greater openness and fluidity since youth have needed to develop their own explanations to their experiences from competing discourses rather than these being readily supplied by the dominant discourse alone. This contextual account is necessary to explain why

contemporary youth have responded in such a different manner to common experiences that their parents would have similarly undergone a generation earlier.

For many black youth apartheid first becomes explicit when one experiences the white towns and is able to begin to compare them with one's own residential areas. Mpho, a twenty-year old university student: "Blacks lived in the 'township' and whites lived in town, which seemed to me like a heaven of some sort... it seemed that if you achieved in the township then you should live in town... but this was impossible since you were black".

Isaac describes his first experiences in a white rural town. "In shops whites always got served first... deep down you felt it's wrong, but after a while you just get used to accepting it... In still other shops blacks came in on the one side while whites get served on the more spacious side... Also the respect that white people got bothered me... I couldn't understand why there was this smiling and laughing (by blacks) when there was nothing funny happening... I also noticed how black people in authority were far more rough with other blacks when in the presence of white... All these things I just looked at but I couldn't understand why... I wasn't yet questioning whether it was right or wrong."

The comprehensive nature of apartheid has meant that no stone has been left unturned and whether it was petty apartheid or its most fundamental aspects, it seems that it has touched the lives of all. Jabu: "I was in town one day and badly needed to go to a toilet, I found one but I was not allowed to go in because it said 'whites only'... it was very frustrating trying to find another place to go shit... but more than this, I was angry... I mean why should whites not share toilets with us?"

Tshepo points to the boxing ring in explaining why he later got involved. "I was very serious about boxing and would go to training everyday in the afternoon. I was doing well and I was chosen to fight a white boy for the Transvaal championships in a big tournament. After the fight my coach was very excited and I thought I had won, but the two white judges gave it to the white boy and the one black judge gave it to me. I felt I had been robbed and when I told my father at home he said it's 'because of apartheid'. I looked up what this meant in a dictionary and began to realise how unfair it is... This racism made me become involved."

Apartheid is carefully organised into a hierarchy which encourages maximum division amongst the oppressed as Sebo discovered: "Before my questions were in relation to the 'Coloureds' who stayed in our township... they got better schools with free books and transport... but they seemed closer to us than to the whites, except their fathers got more money than ours and they could also get jobs in the holidays easier than we could."

Piri was very keen to get to a good university after having struggled through boarding school for his matric "I applied to go to Wits two years in a row, but each time I got letters saying they couldn't accept me without the ministerial consent... So then I went to Turf knowing it was a much weaker education. My sister told me how good it was at Wits... I felt Wits is only for whites... but there was nothing I could do... I wasn't keen to go far from home again."

Rapu, who had run away from home at 14, remembers how "I used to sleep on street corners although we weren't allowed to sleep in town and I was often put into jail for 'trespassing' ... I often used to wonder "why do blacks have to suffer so much... is it fate? I always saw the wealth that whites had wherever I went, and began to question why? I heard people say whites have robbed us of our land... and that Nelson Mandela is our father... (at first) I never knew who he was... I thought he must have been a rich somebody in the township."

George, a coloured student, who attended a white church high school for the final two years of his schooling, expressed the changes to his consciousness in a way which clearly illustrates the dynamics of ideological change, and we analyse these in some detail here. Having been brought up in a coloured community, in a society where the dominant discourses emphasize white supremacy, it is understandable that he faced the prospect of attending a white school with a certain amount of trepidation: "I felt these guys would all be cleverer than me and it scared me... but after a while I was doing fairly well and realised that I could beat most of the students in my class without too much effort... but they still felt superior to me." Nevertheless George had gained a level of confidence from his experience of white students that enabled him to begin to question the assumptions of white superiority inherent in the dominant discourses.

Subsequently he began "riding on the white side of the train along with the rest of the boys, but the white conductors would often throw me off. Some of the guys and girls from the convent tried to stick with me... but I was arrested twice and had to appear in court... the 'dutchies' complained that I was encouraging other blacks to do the same... I didn't care what they thought really, but my father had to come and humiliate himself in pleading for my release, and this made me feel terrible... these experiences made me anti-white and although I finished my schooling there, from then on I didn't associate with whites from school again. After school I was close to a group of friends who identified with black consciousness. After sharing with these friends I was able to talk about experiences which I had felt deeply but couldn't express before... I got rid of any inferiority complexes I had and I became much more confident... even to the other extreme of seeing that I knew much more than whites and began to look down on them." So from recognising the fault lines and cracks in the dominant discourses of white supremacy, George moved to rejecting these discourses, especially after having identified a competing discourse which articulated experiences that he had previously felt very deeply but had been unable to express. Hence it is significant that prior to black consciousness as a counter-hegemonic discourse, George had been critical of the dominant discourses, yet since he was unable to articulate and understand this clearly, he remained subject to its interpolations and so still felt inferior. But in George's case, as with many black youth, after the initial reaction to the predominant white consciousness, his consciousness of being black moved beyond the limited confines of being anti-white and developed into the broader counter-hegemonic discourse of non-racism. "As I began to understand and integrate a more progressive Christianity, my political understanding progressed and overtook black consciousness which was more static..."

Prior to developing the influence of non-racial discourses on youth, however we need to analyse in what ways the dominant racist discourses were challenged in the lives of the white youth interviewed. While there is an overwhelming amount of literature describing how Christian missionaries contributed towards the spread of colonialism and its underlying racist discourses in third world countries, it would seem that Christian discourses of equality have at least challenged the dominant discourses in the lives of a number of those interviewed. Theresa, a white middle class youth from Pretoria, reveals the struggle to articulate either racist or non-racial elements onto Christian discourses. "I came back from a youth rally (where we met many black

youth) one weekend with a black guy... so I took him to church but a man at the door said he had to leave because blacks were not allowed. When the minister heard about this he got very angry and emphasized non-racialism subsequently in his sermons... people started bringing their black friends to church after this.

Eddy who attended a Catholic school, remembered how when his class sat in on a fellow-catholic matric class in Soweto, "I was surprised to find black students doing work which I couldn't understand... they were quite bright and this shocked me" When the same class visited a very poor rural area where there was another Catholic school, Eddy recalls how "I was really disturbed by the poverty of black people... I felt I had to come back and help in some way... I think we all did." Craig, a lower middle-class white youth, who participated in a soup kitchen run by a youth group, for the poor in the city centre, spoke about how "I got involved because it seemed like a good thing... to help others, as a Christian group... but when I was confronted with the hopelessness of people's situation, I just got more and more frustrated. There were no jobs or places for blacks in town and it was terrible to just watch as the newer ones sank into a drunken state of fatalism after a few months".

Other white youth who came from families where liberal discourses were more dominant became critical as they experienced the effects of the dominant racist discourses. Erica from Swaziland expresses the problems of having a black boyfriend. "I felt I should be honest if I believed in something, so I felt fine about having a boyfriend who was black, after we grew close to one another... but both blacks and whites would stare at us and my parents after initially agreeing, later made it clear that they disapproved but wouldn't discuss it with me. We had quite a long relationship because it had a good basis to it, but in the end the social pressure to conform contributed to me breaking up with him.

Matthew recalled how "when I was small I would always play with black kids... as I got older, little things began to irritate me, like two-faced white guys who would be sweet in front of blacks but as soon as they'd left would begin speaking behind their backs... life in South Africa has made me political because I feel I have to take sides, if someone says the only solution is to 'go and shoot all the blacks', I can't just let it pass... I feel I have to argue with them, which has meant I've lost popularity quite a bit."

Jenny, whose family was less liberal didn't feel race was much of an issue for her until standards 9 and 10 when she worked part-time at a supermarket. "I got closer to the coloureds who became my best friends at work... I felt it was unfair that they got paid less than me, although I was only temporary... Then the Christmas party came and they had a separate table on the side... I wanted to visit them at home but my mother forbade me... It made me feel uncomfortable that I was more friendly with them but I just got on much better with coloureds... I was reminded all the time that they were beneath me, economically, socially, where they lived, etc." Hence, while religious or liberal counter discourses explain why some white youth were critical of the dominant racist discourses, still others who showed few signs of this within their discursive ideological tradition seemed to become critical when they had positive encounters with black people, and simply failed to come to terms with the dominant discourses with which they had been imbibed.

A white school boy expressed a similar though more dramatic conversion after the surprise of a visit to Soweto, "there were so many people... it was so full and alive... I felt surprisingly comfortable being amongst black people after having been led to expect the exact opposite... coming back to Johannesburg was like coming home to a ghost-town... there was no-one in the streets... It made me begin to question our supposed better way of life... it made me feel whites don't really know how to live... blacks live much closer to each other... they call one another brother... I feel I would prefer to share this kind of lifestyle". Positive experiences of this kind seem to suggest that while the dominant racist discourse is very pervasive amongst white youth, when one of its pillars fall, the entire ideology could come crashing down..."

Cynthia met black people who were part of her boyfriend's social circle and expressed how "I spent a lot of time talking to one particular guy and we became really friendly... it was funny though, because I just forgot that he was black... before this, I just accepted what the T V told me but now I don't believe them because I've heard what others think."

So far we have recognised the influence of the dominant racist discourses had upon young South Africans. We have further illustrated how and why black and white youth began questioning these discourses as counter-hegemonic discourses became more important in their lives. It remains then for us to illustrate how new discourses transformed

people's overall discursive formation. In a society where racist discourses manifest themselves in every sphere of life, it is not surprising to discover that the new discourse which has had the most effect upon both black and white youth is centred upon non-racialism. While both black consciousness and white liberalism have played significant roles in undermining the dominant racist discourses, it is interesting to note how from both of these paths the young South Africans developed a transformed non-racial democratic discourse, as their resultant overall discursive formation.

Koki, a sixteen year old Soweto youth, describes how he moved from the spontaneous consciousness of reaction to anything 'white' to a non-racial position. "I heard about Cosas from a boy at school, but I didn't like their political analysis... I wanted action.... to release the prisoners and start a student revolt which wouldn't stop until the revolution.... I liked violence because it was the only thing I could see which could bring freedom.... I joined Cosas to advise them of the need to fight and stop all the talking.... my intention was to burn and destroy more especially the whites... but Cosas said 'whites are not the enemy' this made me suspicious of Cosas... I thought maybe they are paid... but then the clear members of Cosas explained that we should educate people... I saw how he was committed and was helping the students. I realised that the enemy's propaganda had fooled me, but now I am able to think more logically... I can analyse and criticise the actions of fellow comrades when they want to be destructive, like I was before."

Maureen, a white university student reveals part of how she changed. "I went to the funeral in Alexandra on humanitarian grounds and because YCS people were attending as a grouping... but when I was surrounded by thousands of black people who were mourning the death of people who had been shot by white soldiers... I became very conscious of my whiteness... afraid even... as though I was in some way to blame... but there was a spirit of hope and unity that convinced me that the black masses were not crazy nor revengeful as I had been led to believe.... when later it was the police that unnecessarily teargassed our bus and caused people to get hurt, I was livid with them!... there was a new bond which united us as black and white after this... We were clearly on the same side and shared a common enemy."

Malome, a member of the Wits YCS region, shared some of the practical difficulties he initially experienced with non-racialism "In Azaso

we were non-racial in spirit but we never practically mixed with white students, so at the first YCS conference, it was my first time to sit with whites. I felt self-conscious and shy to ask a question while others were discussing a lot of things... some of which I didn't understand. This made me feel unconfident... but in free time people talked with me and got closer to me... I was also challenged by other black students who were confident to speak and ask questions... this experience of non-racialism has made me more committed to YCS now" Simphiwe, in a similar vein spoke of how "I now feel much more relaxed. Although we are from different backgrounds that 'them' and 'us' is fast disappearing... non-racialism has become much more than just an abstract principle in YCS.

While YCS as an affiliate of the UDF would have formally adopted a non-racial democratic discourse, this non-racial theme which has been made explicit above, was revealed more implicitly in interviews with the members of broader Christian youth groupings, earlier on. What has been illustrated in this section is how in a racist society, when non-racial discourses have successfully interpellated individuals subject-position, they have often succeeded in transforming people's overall discursive formations.

Conclusion

It is immediately obvious that racial discourses are a dominant feature of life in South Africa.

Apartheid had clearly manifested itself in each of the forty-five Christian youth interviewed in some sphere of their lives ranging from economic to family life; from residential areas, transport, schooling and sport to toilets; from social relationships and language to religion. The architects of apartheid had truly left no stone unturned in their entrenchment of racial discourses onto the social fabric of life.

In section one we analyzed how racial discourses were passed onto children from both black and white parents and fully internalised, because although there were clear cases where youth's experiences contradicted these, they did not at that stage have an alternative discourse which lucidly articulated their questions. Viewed from this perspective, the '76' uprisings' greatest contribution was to popularise an effective counter-hegemonic racial discourse (in black

consciousness) which could compete with the dominant discourse and ensure that contemporary South African youth have their consciousness formed on a substantially altered ideological terrain. This would explain why especially black youth responded in such varying ways to common experiences their parents had undergone a generation earlier. In section three we analysed how non-racial discourses have had a particularly successful impact upon the overall discursive formations of Christian youth in a racist society. Finally we were able to illustrate how racial discourses which subjugated people were more effective when they were reinforced by economic discourses with the same content. These however contradicted the economic discourses of middle class ethnically oppressed people who were consequently more likely to be critical of these racial discourses, which excluded them.

GENDER (FEMINIST) DISCOURSES

Gender as a subject position did not feature as prominently as age, class and race as a causal explanation for why people became involved. It would seem that this is largely because feminist discourses are not as strongly developed as the above factors in the South African struggle rather than because this is not an important aspect in the lives of the people. Another important reason lies in the fact that while there were similar numbers of both sexes for white youth, there were very few black females involved in the groups interviewed. The research thus reflects this imbalance from the groups and must admit then to being able to account only for part of the picture in relation to this particular theme. We begin by analysing the effect of sexist discourses upon youth in the home and school, prior to identifying the fault-lines and questions these raised in their consciousness. We then conclude by identifying how an inability to address this issue properly has resulted in inadequately transformed discursive formations in the case of some interviewees, while at the same time gauging other instances where it has had some success in transforming people's conception of themselves and people of the opposite sex.

1. Cynthia's experience of sexism in the home is typical in that without having the conceptual tools to clearly understand her experiences she nevertheless felt very strongly about it: "At home we weren't allowed to discuss anything....we had to just accept what my father said...he used to tell me straight that I can't talk because I'm a girl while he put my younger brother on a pedestal... but I always shouted back at him and

then he would say I was not his daughter but my mother's. I had to cook everyday from when I was about eight and when my parents came home from work the supper had to be ready but my brother never had to help me, he just had to do the garden.... and when we got older he could go out when he liked and come home late but I was only allowed to go out once a weekend and had to be home by twelve. I wasn't trusted because 'I was a girl'.... I never thought about things much then but I was always rebelling in an unconscious way... I never knew why... it was just how I felt."

Cynthia's experiences of sexism seem to have been compounded by her class position since she was not only given work responsibilities from a fairly young age, but we are given a hint that her freedom was restricted as she grew older because a high proportion of working class unwanted pregnancies had taught her parents that "I couldn't be trusted because I was a girl". Furthermore although Cynthia identifies her father as the major protagonist it seems that her mother is at least an accomplice. Cynthia's last statement telling us that she didn't know why she was always rebelling but simply that that was how she felt, suggests that she had nobody to talk to about this problem in her life. The fact that there are many Cynthias whether they be daughters, sisters or mothers who struggle along alone in the confines of their own homes, helps to explain why women's oppression, while a fairly common experience, has not really developed a discourse capable of challenging the dominant sexist discourses sufficiently.

The strength of the dominant discourses are also expressed by Mathabo, who described how her parents' fighting and divorce affected her self-consciousness. "I always felt I lacked love, especially from my father because he always fought with my mother... I felt I was to blame... because my father always used to say I wasn't his child. They divorced after a long struggle (because they are Catholic) when I was 18... before this I was a loner and shy, I always felt inferior... my main aim was to be a nun because getting married made me think I would end up like my mother who was always unhappy."

Sarah, on the other hand has a mother who had been at university, and while in her home environment, "my parents taught me to be assertive" she was unable to express this at school where sexist discourses predominated. "All the main sports at school were boys sports.. it was compulsory to attend rugby games, for example, but this would never

have been done for netball... The class captains could only be boys... even when it came to 'going out' I resented not being able to take initiative with boys" So even when the home environment did encourage more feminist discourses it is obvious that sexist discourses are hegemonic in the society at large.

How did these discourses encouraging male dominance influence young boys? Almost all the people interviewed both male and female, revealed that during adolescence their best friends and closest peer group had all been of the same sex. Often this was encouraged by single sex high-schools, but this occurred in the home (amongst brothers and sisters) as well as in the neighbourhood groups.

Mario, who lives in a partly working-class, partly lower middle-class white neighbourhood, spoke about what it meant to him to be 'one of the boys', "I liked being part of the X gang because if you were with them you were 'alright'. We played soccer together, went to movies together and went to clubs looking for fights together... we mixed with the Lebs and were against the Porra's... we used to hit them with baseball bats... we were close to each other but in a macho way... I mean we wouldn't talk about our problems or weaknesses with each other... as part of the gang I went along with the scene... otherwise I would have been an outcast."

There are however some boys who just can't fulfil the status accorded them by discourses emphasizing male dominance. Jeremy expresses some of his doubts "I had friends at school, but they were more like acquaintances in a male kind of way... at school physical strength and achievement were emphasized in boxing, rugby and cricket... I could never quite compete at these levels so I was a bit intimidated by this macho stuff and tended to be more of a loner."

Barry, a 16 year old, similarly explained what made him a 'nerd', "I prefer talking to people than 'jolling' all the time... also nerds don't really have girlfriends, we act more mature but don't mix much with each other, after school" Barry later explained an experience which had helped classify him as a nerd. "I had a medical problem in standard seven, but we got this rugby coach who was just out of the army... he used to make us run so hard I got a bad case of asthma... then he would punish the others for my lagging... I remember him calling me a baby in front of all the boys, after that, I hated these guys and anything to do with rugby."

2. Some girls at high school began questioning the stereotyped patterns people were expected to fulfill according to the dominant discourses. Cynthia, mentioned above, remembered the first time she took a stand, "I had a good friend, Gary and he was a dancer... but just because he is a male, people often called him a 'queer'. This made me begin to become critical of the way people perceived things and I remember one day in housecraft, when some of the girls said he was gay, I stood up for him!... this was important to me because I was also breaking out of how my father had always told me that I can't speak at home, because I'm a girl."

For Maureen, this process of questioning happened because, "at home I felt my mom and dad were equally intellectual and since my mother is a doctor she worked just as hard, and brought home as much money as my dad... I think this helped me to undergo this feminist rebellion at school, where I refused to shave my legs like all the other girls". So while some girls received this tradition from their mothers others explained how "after we saw films and read books where women said they were equal, we began to feel more strongly about this..., we felt we don't need boys... we wouldn't wear make-up, we refused to become sex-objects.. Still others revealed the ambiguity in their position. "Unlike the other girls at school we weren't forever talking about boys... we were quite happy on our own and weren't really into boys but we were also a bit scared too."

One girl was even "bulldozed" into a kind of feminism by an enthusiastic boyfriend who had recently been exposed to feminist discourses at university, "He told me to stop shaving, buying new clothes, wearing make-up and quite a few of the other things I liked doing, but I couldn't for the life of me, understand what he was on about." In a similar vein some girls who joined student groups where feminist discourses were hegemonic exclaimed how "we liked the fact that women led many of the student groups we joined, but we couldn't understand why they had to have hairy legs and never wore make-up" So different experiences and discourses raised questions in both boys and girls, particularly when they were frustrated by their inability to achieve the stereotyped role-models that the dominant sexist discourses had set for them. While this sometimes resulted in feelings of inferiority and the effective suppression of people's potential, amongst other groups, feminist discourses succeeded in serving as counter-hegemonic discourses which helped liberate people.

The above examples arose largely from the lives of white youth interviewed, it is interesting to note then the similarities and differences in the lives of some of the black youth interviewed. Mpho, whose parents were divorced, described the economic struggles the family went through after his father just left them without any maintenance. Five years later, when he returned and took them out on weekends and bought them new clothes, Mpho commented, "it cleared my father's conscience for a bit, but then he was gone again". Later as a teenager Mpho disliked the fact that his peer-group spent a lot of time planning and reviewing "strategies for proposing love to girls and who could succeed the most in evening visits to the girls. I was happy when during '76 we dropped the subject of girls because I could never succeed... I was always too shy". Mpho was very conscious of the injustices between black and white but his experience of life made him equally critical of inequalities within his township, "boy-girl relationships seemed unfair because the boys were always playing with a number of girls at the same time... and then many illegitimate kids were being born... this unfairness was making us suffer a lot".

It is hopeful then that a number of men who had become involved in the struggle had been exposed to feminist discourses and expressed as one of the changes they had subsequently undergone, "I have become more concerned about people's suffering now... before I would 'play' with girls and have many at once, but now I only have one girlfriend". Malome, an older university student expressed how this had been structured into organisations where at Fort Hare, "The women's courts helped guys to discipline themselves much more because any guys who were fooling around with a few girls at the same time were summoned to attend these women's courts in the women's residence and had to answer for it in the presence of the women".

3. It seems from the above examples that feminist discourses are beginning to challenge the dominant discourses of at least those who have become involved in the struggle. A closer analysis reveals however that this is very much a beginning, since although at a superficial level sexist terminology and some sexist behaviour is now sanctioned, one of the key weaknesses identified in the process of women's ideological conversion, is the fact that feminism in its more substantial aspects was not sufficiently addressed. This is expressed primarily through the fact that working-class women in particular are generally absent from participation in the struggle since they are fully

occupied after school, or working their second-shift in the home. But even for those women interviewed, who are part of Christian youth groupings, it became clear that although they were engaged in broadly progressive discourses, as long as their subject-position as women remained insufficiently addressed, a primary obstacle in the path of their ideological conversion remained intact.

Patricia expressed this when she reflected upon how she had initially identified with the struggle discourses since "the excitement of the mass meetings was good at the time, I felt the emotion especially when we sang freedom songs... but after I left Cathsoc... I became very confused politically... my brother would counter argue Cathsoc's points and I couldn't really formulate my own opinion. I began to feel you had to be fanatical to be left... I felt that my emotions had been manipulated but that my intellect hadn't really been developed. But I also think that at the time religion was a substitute for a boyfriend and once I had a boyfriend that void was filled... also I couldn't do those things without the support of a boyfriend and since the boyfriend I got doesn't share this I can't really do it on my own!"

Patricia's honest admissions reflect two central points. First, the extent to which she had been successfully interpellated by the dominant male discourses which had made her become so dependent upon a male, and secondly the failure in the Christian grouping she joined, to effectively identify and challenge these discourses with counter-hegemonic feminist discourses. Instead it would seem that a failure to address the primary cause of Patricia's lack of confidence, expressed through her 'inability to formulate my own opinion,' meant that challenging her other conservative discourses related to racism or state-theology proved to be a partially fruitless task while discourses of male dominance remained intact. This is significant in that it suggests, in line with Laclau and Mouffe's thesis (discussed in chapter one), that particular discourses related to any one of the many subject-positions we all hold, will be significant in the discursive make-up of different people; and that which one(s) it is cannot be deduced a priori.

Jane expresses a similar frustration to Patricia after she became conscious of the effects of "my parents divorced when I was eleven. On the surface there was a great relief since the tension in the house rapidly reduced, but after my dad left us, I began to unconsciously question my worth... this came out much later... whenever I joined a

group my starting point is that I didn't believe I had any self-worth... (while) I felt I agreed with their ideas, I always felt inadequate... I would react to this by becoming critical of the people .. I could always see similar values in lefty groups and society and this would make me question and become disillusioned... I mean, pretty girls are as valued here as elsewhere... also there's always great competition within lefty groups, if you don't have the confidence to be a fighter you just sink... I would feel bad because my interests seemed frivolous next to some women who gave the impression it was such a serious business..."

Jane, after having felt disillusioned with these groupings subsequently joined a women's group where small group discussion and reflection is encouraged. Here she feels "I'm very much at home being a feminist... I think my sense of inadequacy and lack of confidence (from my parent's divorce etc) has never changed... it's this that I'm understanding more about in the women's group... if this did change maybe I would feel I could have some impact upon changing other things which are wrong in our society... but at the moment I've got no power to do anything significant... so while I would be sympathetic ideologically (to the left) I'm actually apathetic because it seems useless.

4 CONCLUSION

The research would suggest that counter-hegemonic discourses encouraging a non-sexist attitude are less developed than those relating to class, race and age, discussed above. From the outset the research into this theme was hampered in that less women were active in the groupings interviewed, particularly amongst black working-class girls who are most often responsible for a second shift of domestic labour in the home after school or work. Sexist discourses nevertheless effectively limited the human potential of both men and women who were active in the Christian youth groupings. While there were some instances where non-sexist discourses had positively influenced interviewees, it became clear that the inability to challenge sexist discourses was still primarily responsible for the inability of certain young women to effectively participate in the struggle.

CHAPTER FOUR

SIGNIFICANT DISCOURSES EXPLAINING IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE AMONGST CHRISTIAN YOUTH (CONTINUED)

POLITICAL DISCOURSES

Prior to Laclau and Mouffe's re-conceptualisation of ideological struggle,(1) Marxist theorists would have generally recognised the economic reality (base) as determining the objective conditions under which the subjective factors of political struggle (super-structures) had to take place. Certain Marxist theorists would have further been prepared to recognise race, gender and age as additional factors which could further help to explain the objective conditions when related to the economy.(2) Laclau and Mouffe have however recast and displaced the whole conception of the objective-subjective tension. They argue instead that the objective conditions which set the limits to political change are explained by the existent structure of subject positions which in turn are a product of past intra-discursive struggles. They have come to this conclusion by illustrating that structural PLACE (class, race, sex, age) does not equal subjectivity but rather that it is the product of all discursive PRACTICES that accounts for subjectivity.

In the research done into Christian youth, it would seem that their thesis has been helpful in explaining why youth have become engaged in struggle or not. So far we have analysed the discursive practises related to age, class, race and sex. The remaining factors requiring analysis which were brought out in the research relate to the political, repressive, social community, psychological, intellectual and religious discourses experienced by Christian youth. As we began by analysing these discourses relating explicitly to political experiences, by distinguishing between those political factors which:

- A) Retarded or prevented youth from engaging in struggle before we deal with those which
- B) Encouraged an active involvement in struggle. We analyse both of these processes by once more identifying for each:
 - i) The influence of the dominant political discourses upon youth at home and school.

ii) The effects of the political discourses of the left upon youth who were questioning the dominant discourses.

iii) How these discourses have subsequently transformed or failed to transform people's overall discursive formations.

iv) A concluding synthesis will follow on the research in which the main points are summarised.

A) THE INFLUENCE OF DOMINANT DISCOURSES WHICH DISCOURAGED YOUTH FROM ENGAGING IN PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL DISCOURSES

1. The political discourses young people are initially socialised within their home and school life usually play a significant role in determining the overall discursive formations they will adopt as adults. This is made obvious when one does a general analysis of the continuities over time between the political discourses of parents and those that their children later adopt. In a context of organic political crisis this pattern would still hold, but less consistently so, because of the fluidity of the situation.

Isaac, whose parents are teachers in the rural areas, recognised "my parents tended to be conservative, but not by choice, they were educated by the Dutch Reformed church which had an influence on them.... once they were qualified they worked in government departments where speaking politics would have meant you got no upgrading in your job position... They sent Isaac to a 'good' school where there were adequate facilities, but many of the teachers at the school were S.A.D.F. soldiers. Furthermore "the soldiers wouldn't allow us to buy any newspapers, so the only extra reading material available was their publication "Warrior Friend"... where 'radicals and terrorists' were always made to look inhuman and 'moderates' were seen as good... So when I came to university I was critical of the black students' society which looked too radical and instead I signed up with the Students Moderate Alliance who I thought must be good... but after a short time of mixing with other black students, I realised my mistake."

Anita, who is Chinese, spoke of how her parents would "support the Nationalist party but they're not aware of what's going on in South Africa really... their main concern is for the Chinese community's well-being." Anita was one of the first Chinese students allowed to a white school where "I was very committed to getting high marks... it was a very strict

school we were pushed to play sport... I did everything; our school was also very career-orientated, and we got motivated quite a lot, to achieve... but we weren't really taught to think critically in any of our subjects."

A number of young people interviewed spoke about how the selection of prefects in particular epitomised the dominant values in the school, "Things were steeped in certain girls' favour and they always got in, they fitted in more with giving the 'right' impression of the school. Especially those whose parents got involved in the school and were friendly with the teachers... the whole unfairness of these things made me angry... but I still tried to get scrolls and an honours blazer, they were very important to me... I was really distraught when I wasn't made a prefect... I was quite sore inside for a while after this."

Antonio develops this theme more clearly, "I was a little critical of the choosing of prefects at school because it made blatant what had always been implicit. There were those who were the achievers and then there were the rest of us, who were considered failures... it created a lot of tension and conflict in the class... but while I didn't like the whole system of competition at school, it was never very clear because I couldn't reject it either." This ambiguity which Antonio refers to, helps to illustrate the power of the dominant discourses in the uniform environment of a school. Although certain students showed signs of sympathy for discourses which were critical of the dominant discourses these were hardly ever given an organised expression and so it was often a case of there not really being an alternative.

For Antonio this meant "I really tried hard to make the hockey team and practised everyday... I really believed I had a good chance of making the first team or at least the second, so when I was put into the third team by a coach who had long classified me, the blow was all the more crushing. This shows the ambivalence of my attitude to school... while I didn't like the system, I didn't like feeling a failure either... so when you tried your best and were still a nobody, the feeling of inferiority was all the more powerful." Another white student who was chosen a prefect recalls how she "hated every minute of being a prefect but I never rejected my prefect badge... I realised I was co-opted but I was too scared to hand it back... I was afraid I would lose the little prestige I had". These examples illustrate the powerful influence of the dominant discourses which have contributed to setting the limits to change in the context of white high

schools. The sharp contrast between this and the experiences of black students when discourses which are critical of the school system are dominant, provides an interesting comparison later, when we deal with the discourses which encouraged an active involvement in the struggle.

THE EFFECTS OF COUNTER HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES WHICH FAILED TO ENGAGE CHRISTIAN YOUTH

2. We now analyse those interviewed, who were alienated by or simply not attracted to the counter-hegemonic discourses from a left perspective. It is interesting to note that the majority of those who engaged in, but were repulsed by the counter hegemonic discourses were from middle-class white backgrounds. This might suggest that their existent structure of subject positions disclosed them from actively taking part and this trend is clearly in evidence. The fact that some did later become more involved suggests that it is not merely the content of the counter-discourses which attracts people, but rather that it is the form with which these are introduced to people, which are equally important. A self-critical approach is then essential for groupings waging counter-hegemonic political discourses if they are to more effectively engage potential adherents.

Craig, who later became quite committed, illustrates this phenomena in his initial reaction to an older brother who he felt "threatened me by rejecting the things which were important for me when I was younger... like 'jorling', church and morals... he introduced me to the struggle by telling me about all the things in my life which he felt were wrong, but I didn't take him too seriously... he was too different from me... he was at university and his dress was very tatty and his morality was also free and easy while I was more smartly dressed and had a stricter morality... more than this, his challenges came across in ways that were uncaring and competitive... I felt he was trying to show me how good he was rather than helping me to change."

At university there were three types of responses which ensured that students did not engage in the counter-hegemonic discourses of the left. The first relates to a greater interest in 'jorling' and a general political apathy and was clearly expressed by Sharon who felt. "I never found politics at varsity interesting, I felt people were speaking just to be heard, I was more into the 'jorl' and found this as a drummy... I got involved in rag, but this was less out of a sense of concern than because as

drummies we had to!..... also being a science student meant I had no time for politics... besides I didn't need it at that stage of my life." The second relates to the fact that many students arrive at university having been forewarned of the 'evils' of political involvements, "I came to varsity well prepared by my parents and teachers who had warned me about leftist-manipulators. Especially after Wits students burnt the South African flag... I felt it was the most disgusting and evil thing to do... so the political environment didn't influence me at all because I was convinced I wasn't getting tainted.

A third response is typical from those whose liberal backgrounds meant that they should listen to what people had to say but were "distanced from the radicals when they disrupted my classes... I mean, look, as an extra-mural I felt politics was okay, but I disliked the left's style of confrontational politics... they stopped the right wing's meetings but expected the right to listen to them". Another student complained "I couldn't identify with NUSAS lefties... I felt there was a lot of blind sheepishness, where people were mouthing things they hadn't really thought through... also they used to know who was going to become president before the elections. I felt this contradicted democracy." While these criticisms came from outside, a student who had been active in student politics shared some internal criticisms "only people with status or people who were very articulate got listened to... this seemed to contradict what I thought we were working for in participatory democracy... also I could never understand the need for this strange dress or why you couldn't wear make-up". A working youth complained that the idealism of students and what they expected from people were just way out of touch with people.

While some of these criticisms could help student political organisation to more effectively engage students, certain contributions make it clear that the dominant discourses of white middle-class students make it difficult for them to move beyond the objective limits of their existent subject-positions. Patricia puts it thus, "At one conference father (i.e. the priest) spoke in favour of liberation theology and although I was more rebellious at varsity, I felt this was wrong because Christ was a pacifist... also I realised that it was dangerous to get involved... I didn't want to help others with these kinds of costs involved... maybe I was a bit selfish at the time." Jeremy who sympathised with political groupings nevertheless remembered, "when I saw the students crossing the bridge in June 1976, I just felt now they were going too far and that the police would have to stop them" and although Jeremy has since progressed in

a commitment to the struggle, he confessed "I feel still today my race and class position means I have to continuously fight racism and my class perspective... I still have to struggle to stay in the left... one's conservatism is like a natural force constantly dragging one back."

Tumi, a high-school student expressed similar criticisms of organisations to those mentioned earlier in relation to white student organisations: "I was wary of organisations because I felt organisations would push me to do things I didn't like... I didn't like the competition for leadership in some of the local groupings... also the lack of debate in groups where people with questions were just squashed... this seemed like a dictatorship and yet people were calling for democracy... these things made me feel people had lost the aims of the struggle along the way". What is important here is that Tumi, unlike many white students, did not as a result, get disillusioned with the struggle per se, but rather became critical of some groupings who were acting in the name of the struggle. His objective subject-positions which had arisen out of the past intra-discursive struggles in the township, put him in a qualitatively different position to that of many white students.

3. THE FAILURE OF THE COUNTER-HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES TO TRANSFORM PEOPLE'S OVERALL DISCURSIVE FORMATIONS

Victor, who had been involved in student politics illustrates some of the additional difficulties faced by white youth, in sharing his fears.. "I was afraid and unsure of what would happen in the future, after a black revolution... I felt inferior to black people in the struggle... but this was maybe also a cop-out because I was a bit immature and didn't want to accept the responsibilities of being accountable to others in the struggle... Then when there began to be intense in-fighting between different groups in the struggle... I just broke away from it all."

The difficulties experienced by people who dropped out of political groupings but who were nevertheless sufficiently influenced by the counter-discourses to alter their overall discursive formations was shared by Jane, "I can no longer accept the traditional goals and values in life..., they seem so petty... but now that I'm also disaffected from the left I just feel lost". Another student in a similar situation found it easier, however "I'm still anti-apartheid but I just can't commit myself to something I can't fully believe in... So now I believe in myself".

B.1. THE INFLUENCE OF DOMINANT DISCOURSES UPON YOUTH WHICH ENCOURAGED AN ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN STRUGGLE

While we we have shown above how both black and white youth were exposed to discourses at home and in their schooling which discouraged them from engaging in progressive political discourses and practices, we now focus on those interviewed, for whom the reverse was true. A number of township youth interviewed revealed how their parents had given them an oral history of their involvements particularly those parents who had been active in the mass campaigns of the fifties: "My father told me about his participation in the pass burning campaigns of the ANC youth league... but he was only active until the state of emergency." Another whose 'first' father had died spoke of how "my second father was involved in the ANC before it was banned...he would always tell my mother and us about the struggles of those days and these stories used to influence us quite a lot... he had been very active in those days and knew what it had been like to be on the run...today he's very old though and can't be active, like before". Another had been more influenced by her "mother (who) was in the ANC youth league and the Women's Federation in the early years.. she pulled back in the early sixties when the state got very harsh".

A number of youth whose parents had no political tradition were however very powerfully influenced by the discourses and events of the student revolt of 1976. Mpho: "We weren't politically aware at the time we were still in primary school and just saw older students who we knew marching... we looked up to them and spoke a lot about who had been carrying placards... we just thought about black power... we used to create exciting stories about the student leaders... we said Tsietsi could throw the teargas back at the police... Then when the hostel labourers threatened to attack the students, we thought about how we could fight them. " Thus during times of great political turbulence we see how even groupings of children can begin to develop discourses in their own style, which encourage an active involvement in political struggle.

Gerald and Cecilia express how they, as white children, were exposed to liberal discourses which in the South African context in some ways set them apart from other white youth and made them more open to later on adopting non-racial discourses. Cecilia: "My parents lived in Kenya

before coming to South Africa and there they had many black friends...they are liberal and I remember when I used to recite 'eeny meeny miny mo, catch a nigger by his toe'... like my friends in South Africa, I would be reprimanded... so even from a young age I was conscious that mine and my parents' views seemed different to many of my friends' and their parents' views". Gerald: "My parents are upper middle-class English speaking South Africans. We were brought up as Catholics and my parents were always a bit liberal...they saw people as people and taught me to see everyone as equal.. This meant blacks shouldn't be treated unfairly... but then I was discouraged from treating them with favours either... what was emphasised was that they were no different".

Freddy and Gail's parents were also liberal, but working on the mines exposed their parents to many of the more blatant inhumanities of apartheid and this they shared with their children. Freddy's father was the mine doctor, "he used to raise critical questions with us at the supper table, about how terrible the hospital conditions were... we used to see how the migrant workers were brought to the mines past our house, on cattle trucks... There were often tremors which meant people could be dying underground... when he tried to improve the safety conditions on the mines by bringing these things to the attention of management, he got kicked out... we shared in his bitterness... he then left the PFP (Progressive Federal Party) after conflicting with the party leadership over workers' rights... these kinds of experiences developed in me a social responsibility...I wanted to contribute to change from a young age".

Gail shared "we had always seen the racist behaviour on the mines and questioned this, so from the start I didn't have the dominant worldview." Her whiteness was nevertheless also part of her consciousness as is revealed in the ambiguous feeling she experienced, "When June '76 happened and I read about it in the paper, I knew it had to happen sooner or later... I felt both excited and afraid at the same time." Freddy also remembered that "when all the migrant labourers left the mines in droves they would come past our house... at these times I remember there being a sense of fear especially with my mother". Hence while there is, on the one hand, a criticism of the dominant racist discourses, there is also the realisation or fear that black people would also perceive things in this black and white way and that under these circumstances it would be one's whiteness which categorised one as

the enemy. This ambiguity experienced by some of the interviewees, illustrates well the potential as well as the limits of the liberal discourse.

2. THE EFFECTS OF COUNTER-HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES WHICH SUCCEEDED IN ENGAGING YOUTH IN STRUGGLE

A fair proportion of white youth interviewed moved more solidly into a non-racial-democratic discourse after having been involved with groupings where these discourses were more dominant. Gerald's political growth clearly illustrates this move. "When I was at boarding-school I got involved with the PFP which was the most radical white grouping there was in the small rural town... we distributed anti-government stickers and pamphlets and helped collect signatures criticising the local Nat (Nationalist Party) MP... so I came to varsity with an anti-apartheid consciousness from a PFP perspective... at the time of the elections though, when the Progs lost, I realised parliament was hopeless... my Christian beliefs also underwent a change in Cathsoc as I developed a new outlook on who Jesus was... this meant I needed to take an option for the poor by uniting with the people and trying to see things from their perspective and not through my upper middle-class eyes only... my political consciousness has developed a lot since... I can see why extra-parliamentary opposition is more effective... before I thought being a non-combatant in the army was good enough, but now, six years in jail would seem to be the better moral option".

Matthew, a high-school student felt very uneasy with the conscription issue "after seeing friends coming out of the army warped... it worried me a lot... I don't want to have to fight and kill people in townships when they are just fighting for their rights... later I met some E C C people and chatted to them for a long time... So I put an E C C sticker on my guitar because I really believe in what they are doing... but a guy at school wanted to hit me because of the sticker, so we had a fight... I'm prepared to make sacrifices if its important enough though".

Another young man felt that a parish Justice and Peace group had helped him to understand much more "I was always sensitive to black people but I had no respect for people like Mandela and the A N C... All I knew is that they supported violence... I didn't really know what they were fighting for... at the Justice and Peace mass I listened to a priest who shared with us how the police had tortured him in detention... it just sickened me... it showed that the police had no respect for God...maybe I

wouldn't have believed it if he hadn't been a priest, but since then I've been learning a lot and am committed to resolving the conflicts between blacks and whites... somehow I don't feel I've got anything to lose anymore".

The majority of black youth interviewed became actively involved in struggle through the intervention of student or youth organisations which embraced progressive political discourses. This occurred through a fairly sophisticated process which can be divided roughly into three main stages which for analytical purposes will be dealt with consecutively, although in practice they would have occurred simultaneously.

In the initial stage people became engaged in political discourses at a mass level in the streets: Siphos: "I didn't realise I was getting into anything but I liked chanting slogans and singing songs... I would always join in (although looking back I realise it was more of a mob psychosis)" Jabu: "through the slogans, poetry and songs I learnt about Nelson Mandela, our leader and what he had sacrificed... these messages built my commitment"... At a more basic level another student remembered his first awareness raising in 1984, "I used to participate in the looting in the location as part of the masses". A university student recalled how, "every struggle-day was commemorated at Fort Hare but when people sang I would join in without really understanding it."

After the initial stage where people's interest has been engaged, people begin to ask questions which they want answered. During this stage people begin to get exposed to the same discourses but in a more rational form. Tshepo recalls, I saw how we were suffering and I wanted to know why? My father explained why there's no jobs for black people and how the whites had robbed us of our land...then I began going to night vigils and funerals... they made things much more clear for me". For Thandeni it was graffiti which got him questioning "I saw 'Long live Oliver Tambo' on a wall in Dube, so I wanted to know who he was? People explained how he had sacrificed by going into exile for us...so I felt we should also be committed to the struggle... I asked how I could join and people invited me to a Cosas meeting".

Once people have got to the point of joining organisations it is usually a combination of the new discourses they are exposed to as well as the responsibilities they are given to develop others' commitment, that

makes them become more fully committed. Sobo : "after all these experiences at home I felt I had to play a part at university, so I joined CASA... the older students would discuss with us and in CASA I realised Christians had a role to play in changing our country... through CASA we not only saw the conditions people were living under but we understood better the causes of their suffering.. we realised we would have to treat the causes of the disease and not just the symptoms...we felt we had to educate other people to resist these things."

Tsietsie elucidates how his understanding developed "before any white man was a target for me... to be stoned... but last year... I joined SOSCO, I became more clear at student meetings... step by step I developed a clearer analysis... I realised that there were also whites who are part of the UDF and that it was wrong to see all whites as targets". In a similar vein Bheki, who was an organiser in YCS recalled how "in my early years non-racialism was an eye-opener for me... I could see why whites had different ideas and perspectives because of their different backgrounds... some of the whites were still quite racist then, but others were more open and listened to us... I had begun working seeing all whites as oppressors but I moved from B C to realise that class was an important issue... but I began to really understand things and live them, once I became an organiser... When I visited unpoliticised groups I realised I couldn't impose my ideas on people but had to help them to discover this for themselves... My political understanding grew clearer and clearer as I was challenged by new situations".

These experiences where people are placed in positions of responsibility to educate others, seemed to be the most effective in building peoples' commitment to their newly adopted discourses. Mpho: "I remember when I was doing form three 'student representative councils' began to become an important term... they were the ones who could confront the police so they could get more status and people would listen to them. I was at a conference by accident and discovered it was a national conference to revive student organisation in 1979... since I was a student, people said I should participate... there were only 80 of us from all over the country but we were given the responsibility of setting up branches wherever we were from... this was a big responsibility but I felt confident and excited... and we achieved it". Siphos, similarly, expressed "I helped to form Cosas in my school... we had to work very hard to organise all the students around our demands... and we had to push for an SRC".

Mathabo: "In our church youth club there were members of Cosas who had explained things to us, so when I was elected onto the SRC I got more committed... I was prepared to help in any way I could." Still others were thrust into positions of leadership after only having been in organisations a short time, "our chairperson went into exile and suddenly we realised nothing would grow unless we took responsibility and began organising ourselves... then when we formally launched an Azaso branch on our campus, we were the leadership... so I began to attend meetings much more seriously and I began to read a lot of political literature... so I became much clearer. Another student who reluctantly joined YCS "because militants used to look down upon us if we were Christians" used to always ask questions about liberation theology. He was unsure whether people were using Christianity for political ends or not, but found the tables had been turned when "they made me secretary and suddenly I was the one who had to answer the questions... I felt I had to be clear... so began reading my bible so I would be able to answer people's questions well... I suppose it was theologising under pressure"

3. THE INFLUENCE OF COUNTER-HEGEMONIC DISCOURSES UPON THE OVERALL DISCURSIVE FORMATIONS OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH

One person interviewed saw the continuity between her early involvement in charity programmes, through to parliamentary politics, through to an active involvement in the extra-parliamentary forces trying to bring about social change. She pithily remarked, "I've always been committed to justice, its just that its taken different forms at different times in my life." Many people interviewed, nevertheless, felt that the political discourses they had been exposed to had changed them quite dramatically. "status and ambition were very strong motives in my life before but now I feel its more important to be with the people... not above them". Another revealed a change in values, before "money and success is what I was striving for and academic achievement was how I was going to achieve this, but now I've discovered a new meaning to life where helping to change our society is the most important priority".

Another young student remarked that the struggle "has totally changed me... my lifestyle... my way of seeing things... I understand life better now... I feel that with people we can change things and control our

destiny much more than before". These are just a few examples of the many youth interviewed who felt that their overall discursive formations had changed quite dramatically as a result of having discovered progressive political discourses.

4. CONCLUSION

Using the analytical framework developed by Laclau and Mouffe we have analysed how and why political discourses have either discouraged youth from engaging in resistance to the dominant discourses or succeeded in doing so. In the case of the former we analysed how parents in the home and the dominant values at school (epitomised by the prefect system) had attempted to socialise youth in ways which legitimised the dominant discourses. Subsequent counter-discourses often failed to effectively engage particularly white youth since their past inter-discursive struggle had left them: 'either apathetic; just interested in "jorling"; suspicious and wary of political discourses from the left; or open to the contents of progressive discourses but alienated by its confrontational style. People who had been active at a certain point were furthermore left cynical when progressive discourses failed to respond to and challenge their basic fears. In some of these instances these youth were similarly alienated from the discourses of the status quo and were thus left disaffected.

On the other hand progressive political discourses were handed down from parents to their children with black youth receiving an oral history of resistance and white youth learning what was acceptable behaviour within a liberal discourse. The discourses of resistance after June '76 had a great impact upon black school children which sometimes spread even to white youth. We analysed in some detail the process of three distinct stages through which counter-hegemonic discourses influenced youth:

- i) Here there was often a mass participation when youth were mobilised into basic actions which generated excitement.
- ii) Subsequently youth went through a process of informal education where their initial questions were answered.
- iii) Youth were only then organised into political groupings where they were given greater responsibilities and they subsequently more deeply internalised the new discourses they received.

Youth testified to the dramatic processes of conversion they had undergone where their personal values and lifestyles had been radically transformed. Whilst the focus of this section was upon political discourses, since the object of research are Christian youth, it is to be expected that for certain youth religious discourses played a profound role in their political growth.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND REPRESSIVE DISCOURSES

The Marxist-Leninist conception of the state as the repressive apparatus of the bourgeoisie was in some ways refined by Gramsci who instead recognised "the state equals political society and civil society, in other words hegemony protected by the armour of coercion". Hence it can be seen that hegemony should not be seen as a pole of consent in contrast with another of coercion, but rather as a synthesis of coercion and consent. This is clarified by Therborn who further challenged the force/consent dichotomy as being responsible for the maintenance of political power, by illustrating that:

- 1) The force/consent dichotomy fails to recognise other forms of non-coercive acquiescence (a sense of inevitability, deference, resignation), and
- 2) Furthermore fails to see that consent is largely governed by the constellation of force (through a sense of accommodation, representation or fear).

So while we have dealt with political discourses and repression consecutively, it is important to recognise how closely the two are interlinked. While repression can be defined in a fairly broad way, which includes analysing discipline in the home, school and other sectors of civil society, in this thesis we only touch upon these areas and focus particularly upon state repression since this was clearly predominant in the consciousness of the sample of Christian youth interviewed. While the brunt of state violence has fallen upon black youth in the townships, white youth, particularly those at English speaking universities have more recently also begun to feel it. Moreover while there are many instances where the youth themselves directly experienced physical violence, it would seem that the effect was just as powerful for people who had some form of relationship with the person against whom it was perpetrated. This illustrates how besides the actual act of repression, which affects an individual, the way in which people conceptualise this and communicate it to one another, represents a discourse. Both the experience and the related discourses are important in analysing:

- 1) How these influenced the dominant consciousness of growing youth.
- 2) How these challenged and made people critical of the dominant discourses they had grown up with.
- 3) How these subsequently altered the discursive formations of young adults.

1) Sipho was five years old in 1976 when the police came and took his older brother from his home "they beat him badly in front of us...I felt so helpless... I just wished I was a big giant who could beat these police and save my brother... he was put into jail for five years... for a long time... I cried every day because I missed him because he had always played with me before... From that time I wanted to be involved..." Sipho's experience while more traumatic, was typical of many children in Soweto in '76. Sechaba: "I was eleven in '76 and when I saw all these police, with guns shooting and with helicopters flying low above us...I felt it must be the end of the world... so I just locked myself up" or Jabu: "before we went to school there were about 6 of us who used to stay with a granny in our street during the day... I remember one day the police chased a boy who ran into this house... they tear-gassed us all... when I saw so many soldiers around us, I was afraid they would kill me".

Tshepo who was eleven remembered "my uncle was part of the student resistance in '76. ..one day I saw the students stoning a target near where I stay, then I saw the police shooting at them... I saw one boy get shot and killed... then the police threw him in a hole in a park... after this I hated the policemen... I wanted to know why the students were throwing stones". Not all people were equally affected however and some whose perspectives were influenced by different discourses remarked, as did Thandeni, "It was unusual to see so many police and the teargas... but I was not really critical then...I was just afraid... I didn't know any people who were hurt or killed".

Kokie's experience of repression came at school "I was never interested in school before... I didn't know why I was there... so I never did any work... and I was beaten daily...I really hated corporal punishment and I realised I had to do something but I didn't know what? Then I heard about Cosas from a boy at school...I felt if they could stop corporal punishment I would support them". Barry who attended a white high school was ridiculed and humiliated at a rugby practice for being unable to keep up physically (see section one under gender) and without actually being physically hurt, this form of repression definitely alienated him from the rest of the boys in the class.

Sebo attended a Catholic school in a township, and it is interesting to note how in his experience it was a combination of intimidation, persuasion and repression that made him become more committed. "For the first 3 weeks our school did not boycott... then the reps from the

steering committee of the other schools visited our principal and told him to close the school... but he said no... we felt the pressure staying in the township because all the other students were boycotting by then... then some of our students were beaten and some windows were broken at school... this pushed us as students to attend the next meetings of the steering committee.

After this we understood better what the boycott was about... I was elected to represent our school although I wasn't so keen to go... we decided we should have a peaceful boycott and that when the minister of parliament met with the community councillors we would give in our grievances... the councillors said its fine but only the reps must come... but the students said no! we must go with you and wait at the gate... but as we all approached, the police fired teargas at us and the students responded with stones. By this time we were convinced that what we were doing was right... as a Catholic school we had to pay higher school fees and pay for all our own books, but the other students said we should also get our books free and pay the same fees. We felt these and all the other demands were just and fair."

Although Sebo's initial fear of repression kept him out of the struggle he did not personally experience any repression and although this fear did not subsequently vanish it was a much more realistic one, whereas previously it was this exaggerated discourse of fear which had kept him paralysed. Other students who did experience the repression far from being crushed were often more determined to fight back. Phiri was a student at Turfloop University in 1983 and just before the June exams the students held a June 16 service on campus but "the police came on and beat us up badly... I had to go to hospital to have my injuries treated... but when we wanted to come back and write the police beat us again so we left campus... then some students wrote their exams while others didn't. Those of us who didn't write were not allowed to re-register and many of us were expelled and just told to leave... I was very angry with this unfair dismissal... I couldn't understand why I was expelled because I wasn't part of any organisation... I think maybe the hospital gave the names of those who had been injured... at that time I just wished the whole of Turfloop could be destroyed so no-one could write!"

It would seem that in the majority of cases thus far repression, rather than crushing the discourses of resistance has in fact had the opposite effect. Themba and Rapu illustrate this: Themba, "I had a clear

understanding of the rent-boycott... so when I heard how the system had shot people, I realised that innocent people were being killed for nothing... so I felt that if I die, it will be for something". Rapu adds " Last year with all the campaigns of boycotts... I was arrested and put into detention... they beat me up badly and kept me inside for a long time... but I decided we must put a stop to this... so I realised I had to become more involved in the struggle to hit back".

The analysis so far clearly reveals how black youth who either directly or indirectly felt the blows of repression developed dominant discourses of defiance which led many into political organisations from a fairly young age. The picture is quite different for those largely white youth who never experienced direct state repression until they came to open universities.

The predominantly conservative discourses they had grown up with, often fell asunder simultaneously with the blows of repression that their past discourses were simply unable to account for. Maureen explains, "when I first saw the police beating students I realised they were brutal and not really humanitarian... as I would have expected them to be... what really made me angry was the bus incident, when for no reason they threw a few teargas cannisters into our crowded bus on the way home from a Mayday rally. A lot of people were injured trying to jump out of broken windows... my sister was hurt and this made me livid with the police, because it was totally uncalled for". Peter adds "the presence of heavily armed cops chasing students who were making a peaceful protest on campus just makes me feel sick".

George, a coloured student was in one protest where "I was standing right in front... the police said they were going to give us three minutes to disperse... but after about twenty seconds their leader shouted "vat hulle marine" and everyone started running in different directions... a girl fell in front of me and I tried to help her up... but then the cops began hitting me with their batons and quirts... there were three of them and they just kept hitting me till this girl got them to stop... I had to get stitches in my head, but I don't think I was really bitter about it... I just realised that they were brutal and that we needed effective ways of challenging them if we were going to beat them... I realised that mass organisations were necessary for this... " Isaac, a black student from a rural area arrived on campus suspicious of radical organisations... he was trying to listen to

both the left and the right but "after I saw the police provocation and brutality towards students...I knew the left were right (truthful)".

For Cynthia and Jenny it was the detention of friends that made the struggle become a reality; Cynthia, "I've never really understood politics much but when my boyfriend was arrested in a student protest, things which were very far away suddenly became very close... at the time I felt militant and was prepared to fight to free him...After that I got angry about the way detainees are treated like criminals when they have never done anything wrong... I began to help detainees after this....I remember visiting a detainee's wife and seven children who didn't know what had happened to their father... I was struck by how petrified they were of the police.

Jenny "I chose to go on a political march once I realised that as a Christian I could not just ignore the injustices of apartheid... I felt I had to make a protest...in that march, a policeman with a dog chased me... the dog was about to maul me, but the policeman held him back... when I got back to my friends I heard that James had been arrested...I was quite distraught...I couldn't understand how they could do this to such a nice person... all my old ideas were shattered... I had really believed that those who got arrested must have done something wrong... but now I felt people really have a right to protest against these injustices."

The effects of a long term detention are very strongly felt, not only by the detainees but also by their families; Maryanne "my sister's detention meant I could never stop struggling... it was a personal and emotional experience... as a white I felt that it was as much my struggle as black people's... I was no longer afraid of dying... I think there was a stage when I would have eagerly welcomed dying for the struggle.. I just felt that it had become my struggle." It is important to recognise that while state repression made many white youth become more critical, revolutionary violence can have a similar effect in an opposite direction. Matthew recalled "after reading Albert Luthuli's book "Let my people go" I was beginning to get more interested in political opposition, but when the bomb blast went off at the Nedbank Centre... it scared me a lot because my father works at Nedbank". Nevertheless it was made abundantly clear that state violence was one of the major factors that challenged both black and white youth. With white youth it was central in challenging them to question the dominant discourses they had grown up with. For black youth it had been central in ensuring that they

were brought up in an environment where the counter hegemonic discourses were dominant.

3. On a closing note it is important to analyse the way in which state repression altered the discursive formations of young adults in the longer term. Bheki emphasized that a commitment to the struggle was something which activists were forced to continually re-dedicate themselves to, in the light of the ongoing threat of state repression. "I'm committed to our struggle... I was 'inside' for a long time in 1985 and I've been harassed a lot since, so that now I can never feel safe when I'm at home... this creates a lot of tension and at different stages I have had to decide whether I should continue or not? But I could never let down all the people who had become committed through and with me... in fact none of those who became committed with me have dropped out of the struggle."

Sandile adds "I had to leave my home after it was petrol bombed by vigilantes..but it actually encouraged me because this made me realise that the enemy are really committed... so we have to be too... later they detained my father because they couldn't find me... but in the struggle we have to expect these difficulties... I have not been home now since the first state of emergency in 1985... but I was prepared to make sacrifices before, for the priesthood, so when these difficulties come I can cope alright"

Conclusion

Since state repression has consistently been perpetrated against the black people in South Africa it is a central factor in explaining why particularly urban black youth are brought up in an environment where counter-hegemonic discourses are dominant. Its force has been felt not only in the sporadic political confrontations but is rather a basic feature of urban control, or school discipline, which characterises everyday life. While white youth have sometimes also experienced severe disciplinary measures at school, it has been at the open universities where political confrontations with the police have become regular, that most white youth have really been exposed to state repression...While it is assumed that state repression is an important factor in dissuading particularly youth from engaging in political resistance, the bulk of the research reveals that it often served to make both black and white youth more determined to fight back. This is perhaps explained by the fact that all

the interviewees belong to youth groupings where the effects of repression are shared. The slogan 'an injury to one, is an injury to all' is evidence that counter hegemonic discourses relating to repression, have in fact strengthened the opposition in the face of the violence of state repression.

SOCIAL COMMUNITY

For a high proportion of youth interviewed this was a significant factor (and in the case of white youth a crucial factor) in determining whether or not people identified with discourses of change. What is meant by social community is a grouping of people with which individuals felt they would closely identify, and with which they experienced a sense of belonging. While this criteria is not always given much prominence in explaining the ideologico-political behaviour of people, from the research done it could seem it was rather significant. This may be partially attributed to the fact that Christian youth would have gained this emphasis from both their position as youth, where peer group bonds and discourses while transitional are traditionally strong, as well as the fact that a sense of community would be emphasised in their religious discourses.

We analyse this phenomena of social community as it was chronologically experienced:

- 1) in the family,
- 2) amongst teenage peer groups and
- 3) within the Christian youth groupings.

At every level discourses of social community will be analysed for how they either facilitated or retarded youth from identifying with progressive political discourses. Furthermore where it was difficult to integrate progressive political discourses within any of these levels of social community, we will analyse how in each case, youth resolved these tensions.

1. FAMILY

From early childhood, youth recalled the influences their families had upon them. Tumi spoke of how he and five other grand-children had stayed with his grandmother and grandfather from birth, "she cared for us a lot... we weren't aware that we were without parents... she was very fair and shared everything evenly amongst us, teaching us to respect one another... she taught us to be caring of people especially those who had no money... at that time I always wondered why?... I never wanted to be very rich or famous, I just wanted to be okay and not suffering." Theresa's family were very close to each other "whatever we did my

parents were also interested in and supported us... I never felt alone... I could always tell them about my problems... at high school I became very conscious of what I looked like... my weight and manners... material things like new clothes could have become important but my parents squashed this because they said you should only have what you need... they tithe to the church and believe that loving your neighbour is more important than money or things".

Phiri comes from a family of eleven children where, "my parents always supported us...I used to wish for a happy life... I had a nice family and friends and enjoyed life... I couldn't foresee any problems then... my only problem was when I didn't clean the house or do my jobs... then I would 'get it' because my parents were very strict... We went to church together and also prayed together as a family". When Phiri went to boarding-school he quickly became part of a group of about ten close friends "we shared our fears with each other and would discuss a lot about our home lives... childhood, withcraft, circumcision schools.. I felt very close to them". In family environments such as these it is relatively easy to share one's questions and the changes which are occurring in one's life. Phiri "when I saw how people were suffering and wanted to know why? I asked my father and he explained why we were suffering because of apartheid... after I became involved I would always come home and discuss new questions... now I can even begin to teach my father things he was not aware of".

Matthew recognised "when I was into pot-smoking from peer pressure, my parents discipline helped me to get back on the right tracks". This illustrates the regulating effect parents can have over their children. When however white youth have become involved in progressive political discourses their parents have not always understood or accepted this and have often strongly discouraged this (as was illustrated earlier under the youth section), Eddy elaborates on this "My parents made it very difficult for me... they tried to block my growing involvement... they wanted to know why I was involved in something that wasn't my struggle... especially when my security and safety were being threatened... so living at home became a problem or an obstacle.. until I moved into a student community which shared these beliefs."

Family problems were not however only a problem for politicised white youth nor were sympathetic families exclusive to black youth. What is being illustrated here is simply the general fact that children learn the

discourses their families live and usually follow these paths. When however other forms of social community become more important for youth and the discourses of these groups do not coincide with those of their parents one of the social communities will sooner or later take preference.

2. TEENAGE PEER GROUPS

A number of the youth interviewed, especially those from more working class backgrounds (both black and white) had very close bonds between peer groups which often took the form of teenage gangs. Themba explains.. "I spent most of my time with my class-mates... we used to play together at school and at home and do funny things... like steal food at the shops when we were hungry... we got very close... I felt very comfortable with them and there was a strong unity between us... if you hit one of us... you hit all of us." Another added "After school we would stand at the shop and smoke and steal small children's money when they came to buy things... we would also fight the boys from other neighbourhoods". Mpho also explains in passing how "we were never at home, we were always getting into mischief by breaking something or drinking and then just laughing a lot... mostly we did things just to pass the time... that was all we were really living for". Thulane was "part of a gang that beat up people" but like most of the above youths he later changed once he became more committed to the struggle. His old friends however, "never got involved... they just got more committed to drink... so now I have new friends who are also committed".

White middle class youth often spent more of their time at school where extra-mural activities are usually organised. Most of Paddy's friends were also part of the school-band where "we spent a lot of energy practising... I was very much into school.... I could sing the loudest at galas and sports competitions... I was a college boy and proud of it... we had a great school spirit!" While the general school activities are geared towards the formation of the students, at a Catholic school this included doing "charity work by raising funds for the poor and at school Catholicism had a bit of an anti-apartheid identity, since our school was the only one open to black people... I think this definitely made me more open." Another student at a Catholic school recalled how "there was a sister at school who made us collect money for the poor, many girls were against her and didn't want to know about others' suffering. I got

very angry with them because they were often the richest kids... I could never be friends with these people."

Many students who became more committed were thus forced to move away from their traditional school friendships. Gerald explains "when my old friends are around I have a problem these days because they're not really open to my beliefs... they're just into smoking, drinking, sex and using racist terms which I can't identify with"... Barry's experiences were similar "I was a bit of a loner so I wanted to be part of a group... I tried to go around with the 'jorlers' but the smoking and drugging they got into, turned me off, and also scared me a bit I hated the fairsness of chasing all those passing things, like fashions".

Other friendships were really strong as Craig explained. "I was part of a really strong community of friends who grew up together... there was a lot of trust and support for one another and we could say anything to one another... there was a strong sense of acceptance of one another... even when I told them why I wanted to be a non-combatant in the army... but retrospectively I realise that we weren't really able to work through differences, we just accepted them... so as I began to take more seriously my new commitments, I just moved further and further apart from those friends of mine... they couldn't really share these beliefs".

As the struggle has gained a greater and wider mass support, many township youth are presently becoming involved together with their traditional groupings of friends, Malume describes how these changes have taken place, "At boarding school all these boys from the townships stuck together, we would dress up and were more popular than the 'skaaps' (rural boys). The rural boys didn't really compete with us in school work, in sport or over girls, because they felt inferior to us... even those township boys who were tsotsi's or mpantsula's were our enemies... the Ivy cats were the classiest guys out.. but after having been conscientised by political discourses during the holidays in the township I began to question things... so we began talking to rural guys and became friends with them... later we also became critical of the divisions between the Ivy's and the mpantsula's because some of us were poor... so political things were attractive especially to those who were poor because it eliminated these class distinctions".

Ten years ago however, even township youth who got involved were not the norm. "Most of my friends weren't interested in schooling because

they were too discouraged by having to repeat so many classes, but I was doing well at school, which encouraged me... we never discussed serious things in our group because of this... but differences were emerging because when we did discuss things, the others would wait for answers from me and look up to me... I tried to minimise this... but when I did jaycee I developed a clearer political analysis and moved further away from my friends, I realised we had less and less in common".

3. CHRISTIAN YOUTH GROUPS

Amongst white youth interviewed, the single most important causal factor which accounted for their changing discourses, related to the strong alternative social community provided by the Christian youth groupings they identified with. This must be viewed against the backdrop of the South African social formation where racist discourses are a dominant feature of every sphere of social life. Hence white people who reject the dominant discourses and instead identify with the oppressed in the struggle for a non-racial democratic South Africa are often simultaneously forced to commit 'social suicide' out of their traditional community of support. Without a clear alternative social community which people can practically identify with in the intermediary stage, this conversion is likely to be short-lived except in the case of a minority of whites who are highly motivated by counter hegemonic discourses and capable of going it alone independently of their traditional support bases.

Social community hardly featured as an important criteria amongst black youth interviewed because within their traditional communities, those who actively engage themselves in this struggle are usually perceived as heroes and are hence accorded a greater status within the community. This does not suggest that social community is not as important amongst black people but rather that it is taken for granted and is hence not a conscious need experienced by black youth.

It is important at the outset of this section to further clarify that the vast majority of Christian youth groups, both black and white, have thus far hardly indicated a clear identification with non-racial democratic discourses in practice. The more typical response is well illustrated by Tshepo who, while a member of a church youth club, was politicised elsewhere; "when we had a rally with our church youth club, I was given

a chance to make a contribution... I gave a speech of how our tasks were the same as Moses to bring peace and justice by liberating our country from oppression... But people felt this was too political... and I was asked to leave the group... because it was said that I would divide the youth group...but I knew I was integrating Christianity and politics in a true way". Here it is clear that the more prevalent discourse amongst Christian youth groupings encourages a fictitious 'neutrality' or absence of conflict, model. What will be illustrated in this section is how those Christian youth groupings interviewed, which do identify with non-racial democratic discourses, have especially helped white youth to more successfully identify with these discourses by providing a strong alternative social community. Where this has failed we will further seek to explain this.

People were first attracted to these social communities for a variety of reasons which had little, if anything, to do with the political discourses they had adopted. Maureen expressed how many newcomers to university "feel uncomfortable on arrival at such a big campus after coming from the smaller schools where they tended to know many of the people and felt more at home... but I felt comfortable because I came onto campus with my older sister who had introduced me to a lot of her YCS friends already... I enjoyed this community because it made me feel at home... also after being at school, I wasn't treated differently as a younger person but rather as an equal". Antonio recalled how "I initially joined Cathsoc to play for the soccer team... there was an active community spirit and a nice crowd of young people... it was my first experience of really getting to know girls better... I also liked the democratic way of doing things where there was no 'teacher'... at school I had been very self-conscious and afraid there was something wrong with me, but the community spirit in Cathsoc took the attention off me and just allowed me to grow ... I was more committed to this new experience of community and from this it really seemed a new kind of South Africa could develop".

Michael said "I joined Cathsoc for the "jori" and enjoyed it a lot... I built a lot of deeper friendships and the feeling of community was very important to me... no politics touched me at that time... later when I was exposed to radical black students and there was an element of fear... I stayed on because of the deep friendships I had made with people that I had chosen". Jenny remembers how after "accompanying a friend to the student mass I liked it...the community was so friendly...I felt people were

interested in me... this surprised me... I felt loved in a community of friends and that was important enough for me."

Once people had joined these groupings what strengthened their commitment to their new social communities? Erica explains "joining YCS helped to consolidate me... I liked meeting people who were like me and didn't try to be wierdo's but could be themselves... this experience of community is what I had previously been lacking... before I had been aware of injustices but couldn't share what I really felt... also it wasn't just a case of being co-workers, we were friends who could relax with one another". Cecilia adds "unlike other Christian groups I had belonged to, in YCS there was no pretence... I felt people were genuinely interested in me... I began to subsequently question things much more than I've ever done before... in all areas of my life... previously I saw myself as a follower and was quite happy with this, but now I've been challenged to see everyone can be a leader... people were always giving to me till I felt I must also give to others."

Another important aspect of this alternative social community is that it has often taken a non-racial form which has directly challenged the dominant discourses. Jeremy comments "I was progressing intellectually through progressive lecturers' courses at university, but YCS concretised, backed up and supported this growth... I was exposed to black activists from other YCS branches and this challenged me... I gained a lot of confidence in the leadership of black people and although I wasn't in a leadership position myself, I got hope from the fact that we were working together in this thing". George, a coloured student, discarded black consciousness as his political position after joining YCS, "I feel more confident and comfortable with myself.....I understand where I fit in...I feel I belong... while I'm confident in challenging others I'm also much more tolerant towards differing views".

The final steps in this process of identifying with a new community are well expressed by Sarah who explains, "whenever a pamphlet came out on campus we were asked as a Christian society to put our names to it... we used to always fight about whether we should or not... when we did I felt we had achieved something by taking sides... even though it meant conservative Christians would be less likely to identify with us in future". This did mean, however, that students who took sides in this way were "dependent upon this community of friends, because I didn't have many friends outside of it but I loved our Cathsoc parties... later I was put into a

responsible position which made Cathsoc even more meaningful for me".

This close identification with a new social community is then particularly needed when (as in the case of white youth who have adopted progressive discourses) their traditional white community would be hostile to their new political positions. This has been clearly expressed in the past when the security forces with the support of most whites have taken 'firm' action against protesting white students. For Anita it is nevertheless important that even during such occasions, "all of the Cathsoc people stuck together... we all suffered from the teargas together... and afterwards we reflected on these things together and through these reflections we discovered what it really means to be a Catholic". This is crucial for Anita when she knows "my parents don't want me getting involved and my dad got very angry when I spoke to him about it". She confessed "I worry about what other people will think, especially my family and the broader (ethnic) community I come from." Freddy illustrates how the racist discourses remain predominant amidst the broader white community "I have friends at work now, but even though I am part of the group, my politics always make me a bit cut off... I always have to separate different aspects of my life and keep them in compartments."

The form this new social community took was, as can be expected, in a fairly hostile environment, a highly disciplined one where accountability to one another was emphasised. For some this meant "I had to learn not to be so individualistic and had to work more democratically than I had been used to before". Others however expressed "I had problems with the rules and dogmatism of the group... especially the judgemental attitude... I felt my lifestyle was disapproved of... although I fought against this... and there was a constant environment of debate and openness... I just felt that unless one adopted the whole package one was disapproved of... so I gradually moved away from this grouping"

Gail who also initially felt very positive about the group later complained "its limiting in its own way... there was a pressure to conform which made me feel perpetually guilty... the extremes of simple lifestyle put me off... sacrifice seemed an end in itself... there was a constant checking-up on one another... I liked being with some of the people but I felt I had to be part of the group to keep these relationships and this was too much". Gail also admitted that "I'm not really a 'group person' I find it

difficult to commit myself to a group whose rules I have to abide by... I feel restricted by groups and their need for coherence and cohesion... some people function better in this way but I don't". In Gail's case it would seem that it was because her family was ostracised from the mining-community as well as her inability subsequently to fit into groups, at school which gave her this deep-seated fear of groups.

Jeremy also had difficulties belonging to a group. "after being isolated at school ' became cynical and critical of being part of a group" . This phenomenon was particularly prevalent amongst white middle-class youth some of whom dropped out of their involvements and it would seem that the discourses encouraging a collective response could not easily co-exist with these people's previous discourses encouraging individualism. The same people emphasized that while groups had been daunting, personal relationships had often been significant in helping them to become more committed. Jane "whenever I can remember, personal relationships have been what motivated me to make important changes... usually though they have happened in crisis points where it has been a thing of having to change rather than choosing to". This is important in that it is not necessary to give up on people who for historical and current reasons find it difficult to work in groups. Progressive discourses are not in principle always linked to a group form and people in situations like these described above, could have a greater chance of growing in commitment if they were given a greater autonomy as part of a loose network for example.

In concluding this section, it is important to recognise that discourses which emphasise belonging to a new social community, which are often initially a positive experience need to be deepened, if they are to survive not only the negative experiences which arise out of the day to day conflicts with the ruling discourse , but further those which arise out of conflicting discourses and groups from within the left. Antonio explains "I was more committed to the Cathsoc community than to doing political action... but then the in-fighting within Cathsoc and the negative feed back I received for not being committed to the struggle made it all turn sour...I didn't really understand what these criticisms meant...but I remained part of the community".

While Antonio did later grow in his understanding and commitment others found it more difficult to cope. Michael was one who came to Cathsoc for the community but later on "the community became very

introverted... there was too much in-fighting..I felt pushed to take sides as political differences began to emerge between different groupings... I didn't really understand the issues properly but I went where the friends I was closest to went...but conflictual issues were constantly being raised so after a while I just broke away from the crowd.." Hence, where people's identification with a new social community was not accompanied by the necessary intellectual formation, any threat to their positive experience of community was accompanied by a similar threat to those people's ongoing participation in it.

Conclusion

From the research done it would seem that social community plays a significant role in explaining the socio-political behaviour of youth for each of the three periods analysed. At a young age children proved to be highly susceptible to the discourses practised by their parents in the family. When, however, youth began identifying more closely with their peer groups in their late teens and the discourses of these latter groupings failed to coincide with those of their parents, particularly around political differences, it was usually the case that one of these social communities had to take preference.

While white youth who identified with progressive discourses were most often simultaneously distanced from their traditional peer groups, black youth especially more recently, increasingly grow up in urban environments where progressive discourses were far more hegemonic, and hence their peer groups often become committed together with them. This meant that while social-community could be taken more or less for granted in the black community, a strong alternative social community was a pre-requisite for white youth who in adopting counter-hegemonic discourses were often simultaneously cutting their traditional support bases.

Hence the identity of especially white Christian youth-groupings was centred around a close community where accountability was often emphasised. This provided a key problem however when individualism was a prominent feature of the past discourses of much of its membership. The fact that some of these people later did become more committed to progressive discourses when in a looser network suggests that progressive discourses need not in principle be linked to a group form. Furthermore while social community was important in providing a

basis for groupings who would have found it difficult to otherwise identify with progressive discourses, the community experience in itself did not facilitate this unless it was accompanied by the necessary intellectual formation

Personal (Psychological) Consciousness

In analysing why certain people had difficulties identifying with a grouping or community of people (in the last section) we uncovered a level of personal consciousness which showed how psychological factors are also relevant in explaining why individuals were encouraged or discouraged from engaging in progressive discourses. In this section we attempt to unravel this theme more fully by analysing in what ways the Christian youth's personal consciousness, at different periods of their lives, either disposed them towards progressive discourses or made it difficult for these discourses to be taken seriously. We will analyse the relevance of a personal consciousness chronologically;

- 1) in its influence upon children,
- 2) for the period when people were actively engaged in Christian youth groupings
- 3) as well as how the interventions experienced within the youth groupings subsequently influenced people's perceptions of themselves.

1. In relation to children, while little was gleaned which indicated how a positive personal self-consciousness influenced people either way, it was clear that a negative self-consciousness arising particularly out of the trauma of divorce or death did hinder certain individuals from later on adopting progressive discourses. Since divorce also interestingly enough seemed to have a greater impact upon young girls than boys, some of this theme would have already been covered under the theme of Gender. Erik Erikson, who developed a psycho-social theory of personality, emphasized that during the first years of life a general sense of trust is the cornerstone of a healthy personality. A child with a basic sense of inner certainty or independence sees the social world as a safe stable place and people as nurturing and reliable. Parents thus play a significant role in influencing young children's self-consciousness. In situations where there is great tension and conflict between parents and/or divorce there is a fair chance that these children will have an unfavourable ratio of mistrust over trust and hence lack confidence in themselves and their social environment.

Jane and Mathabo both seem to have suffered this kind of early childhood experience; Mathabo: "I feel I lacked love, especially from my father. I was a loner and shy... I always felt inferior and had no ambition in life". Jane: "when my parents divorced there was a great

relief on the surface since the tension in the house rapidly reduced, but unconsciously I began to question my worth... I felt rejected by my father". While Jane has not yet been able to overcome "this sense of inadequacy and lack of confidence (which) have never changed" she nevertheless feels "if this did change maybe I would feel I could have some impact". So although Jane was sympathetic to progressive discourses her actual apathy seems to stem from this deep seated sense of inadequacy and lack of confidence which she has never been able to overcome. Mathabo on the other hand gained in confidence after "I was elected onto the SRC and I got more involved", which shows how people are capable of overcoming earlier negative personal experiences later on in life, once placed in a more healthy environment.

The trauma of death on young people can also sometimes postpone their broader growth. Sharon explains, "when my father died I couldn't understand it nor did I accept it... after that I didn't care about life... I thought about death a lot and was very worried that my mother would die for about the next five years... I didn't see any good in church any more and stopped going... later I moved away from home for varsity, although it upset my mother... I felt I needed to get away... when I went to varsity I wasn't at all interested in politics". Mario went to the army straight from school and came close to death for nine months while operative in Angola where "three guys I knew were killed and many injured who are now invalids... this made me think life is short... I felt I had to cram in as much life as I could before I died... so when I came out on a pass, I wouldn't sleep I would just 'jorl' the whole weekend... I went out with different girls all the time". Apart from the fact that Mario's experience in a war against black people would have barred him from any progressive discourses during this period, it was this obsession with cramming in 'life' as a reaction to his fear of death which precluded this possibility. He concludes "later on, when I was finished with the army, I got involved in the church youth group and began to re-order my priorities"

2. During this period when people were actively engaged in Christian youth groupings, a great number of personal changes took place. Much of it may be attributed to the fact that people were often simultaneously growing up and becoming more confident as they moved out of school. But since this took place at the same time as people began to discover new discourses which helped them to understand more clearly their social world, they often associated their new found confidence more strongly with these progressive discourses. Cecilia explains how this

practically happened "before, I felt what was right or wrong, but I couldn't explain why to others... but now I'm more confident... YCS has helped me a lot in learning to articulate myself... people forced me to express what I thought, even if I tumbled along, whereas at home my parents always said 'think before you speak!' YCS is different to other Christian organisations where the few lead and the rest follow... I've been challenged to see everyone can be a leader.

Eddy expressed an excitement at how he had dramatically changed from being an introverted shy person; Eddy: "we used to 'jerk' as a group and the togetherness helped me to be less shy and more outgoing... already at school, being chosen as a prefect helped me to gain confidence, since it meant I had become socially acceptable... in Cathsoc I was part of an interest-group where I helped plan the meetings with the older people, so when they left I felt I had to help the younger ones to learn so that when I left they would know how to run the meetings... when I first joined I remembered how I used to find phoning people very difficult because I was so shy... now I feel I have grown a lot personally, I feel I have a sense of purpose in life".

Phiri: who was a new member in SUCA had to help to take over the leadership when the leader on his campus went into exile, but found it quite difficult because "I was very shy before... when we were small my parents used to lock us in when they went to work, so we didn't mix with others much... but the struggle helped me to associate much more freely with people... I realised you can't change the system on your own... Now I always move with people... I feel its important to understand what people are thinking".

A number of students grew quite significantly in confidence once they were given responsibilities in the youth groupings. Matthew explained how he changed from being an unconfident member to a more confident active one. "I got to a point where I realised I shared the goals of YCS but wasn't able to integrate this in my practise... I was asked to do actions but I didn't feel confident or ready for them... so I felt a bit guilty... conferences and formation events had helped me to develop politically, but it was only when I was put into the position of counsellor that I properly began to understand what YCS was all about...this responsibility integrated me more fully into YCS."

Sipho explains a similar phenomenon, "I had problems with Mxolise saying 'Jesus was a revolutionary' so I always used to ask questions and have long discussions with YCS guys... but I still had my doubts... then they made me secretary and I had to answer the questions of others... so I had to be clear... so I started reading the bible... I had been shy but I started to speak in churches... this made me much more responsible and self-disciplined... maybe if I hadn't done this I would have been a tsotsi like many of my friends who are in jail for stealing cars... but I see myself as a good person now". Themba recalled how he didn't want to be a leader, but since the students at his school had elected him onto the SRC and he had to become one, "later police harassed us for no reason, I felt good about it, because by that stage I was convinced that what we were doing was right."

Mpho, who was without a father or big brother "felt very insecure in terms of life in Soweto... I was very impressed by Bruce Lee and karate films because I wished I could be strong enough to protect myself..". Mpho was searching for confidence primarily and grew in commitment quite by accident, "I started doing plays about the struggle with some friends...I wasn't aware of the content we had to speak at that time... it was more important to me to have a part...I felt I was worth something... when we performed in the community people clapped such a lot but I couldn't understand why?... then after others explained to me I started understanding the content of what I had been acting."

We have already analysed in some detail (under the theme of social community) how some young people found it difficult to identify with progressive discourses precisely because of their negative self-consciousness, particularly in relation to groups. Another reason was put forward by Mike, who had been exposed to progressive discourses but explained that he had not identified with them because "I was too immature at that time... I didn't want to accept the responsibilities and I wasn't accountable to anyone... so I just copped out". Mike's comment suggests that the challenges of involvement came at a time when he was personally unprepared to make the necessary sacrifices. It is difficult to rationalise via discourse analyses why some people are prepared to make the sacrifices and reject a socialisation which encourages selfishness, while others are not. While analysing people's discourses goes some of the way to explaining this, on its own it would appear to be incomplete. The personal consciousness that facilitates tipping the balance one way or the other, would appear to be partly the product of personality development which while owing much to the

rational discourses of adolescence and adulthood, is also a product of having been nurtured as a child in a stable or unstable environment. Hence while we have analysed part of this process, it would be an exaggeration to claim that this is sufficient.

3. Many people interviewed were able to recognise important personal changes which had developed as a result of coming into contact with progressive Christian groupings and their associative discourses. Maureen expresses how "joining YCS totally changed me, in my lifestyle and my way of seeing things... before I had wanted to do psychology for individualistic reasons... now I'm still doing psychology but in a way that will benefit people". Another added "when I was anorexic I didn't see a point to life, but now there's a meaning... I believe more in myself... in terms of a job.. money and success were important before, now I just want to ensure that wherever I work I want to help people to change society."

If there were areas of change there were also areas of continuity as Maryanne admitted: "I've always had a strong streak of individualism in me which is why I didn't mind being called a 'commie' at school... I think individualism and status will always be a struggle for me although I can see how I've changed in other ways". For some the process of conversion was dramatic, as was the case with Kokie a high-school student "I was less concerned about my life or others before, now I've got ambitions..., people elected me onto the SRC because they could see I was concerned with the students' problems... also I used to be so shy, now I'm confident ... even to talk in front of big crowds." Another student spoke of how "Christianity (now) challenges me not only to fight apartheid, but also to get rid of the bad elements that are still in me" and explained "before, if I had a problem with someone I would want revenge, but now I will rather try to solve the problem with the person... the struggle has educated me to love people more."

Jeremy however, expressed how he would prefer to be like others, "who I can see are more at peace with the political struggle ..I wish I could be like that... but I think in my case personality factors are important...I struggle with taking the final step of commitment. I fear that I'll lose myself... I mean my independence ... it's a projection rather than a reality, I know... but it's still there". This statement hints at the fact that social discourses on their own cannot fully explain people's behavior.

4. Conclusion

What has been argued in this section is that for different individuals personal consciousness has either retarded them from, or allowed them to identify with progressive discourses. It has further been argued that psychological factors which are deeply rooted in the individual's (childhood) past, have in certain cases belied the rationality of discourse theory and suggest that a deeper understanding of people's behaviour would entail a greater complexity. Discourse theory, particularly here in personal consciousness has nevertheless been helpful in explaining some of the changes which did take place.

We conclude with a reflective interviewee who helps to synthesize how rational discourses articulate with personal consciousness by shedding further light upon these dynamics: "I still have the same personality (after having been involved).. I'm not very confident and these struggles that I had in school remain, but I'm now consciously trying to overcome this by working with people...I'm capable with certain tasks but at the deeply personal levels I'm still not so confident...my political understanding has developed though and knowing other people's suffering gives me conviction... this has helped me to be less selfish or concerned about my own private needs. . So although YCS has changed me I'm still the same person."

INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSES

In analysing the influence of intellectual discourses we focus specifically upon those discourses related to education in both its formal (academic) and informal aspects. We once more analyse the effects of intellectual discourses in;

- 1) socialising young students to perceive their world through the lenses of the dominant discourses,
- 2) providing cracks and fault-lines within these dominant discourses which either succeeded or failed in encouraging a process of critical questioning which led young students away from these dominant discourses.
- 3) Throughout these first two sections we will analyse the relative efficacy of these countervailing intellectual discourses and weigh up their overall influence upon the resultant discursive formations of these Christian youth interviewed.

1. The Influence of the Dominant Intellectual Discourses upon Christian Youth

a) White Youth:

Victor and Felicity are both the children of middle-class parents. Victor's parents both worked long hours in the two cafes they ran while Felicity's parents are both white-collar workers, working office hours. Felicity recalls how "after school I spent most of my time at home doing my homework...at that time, passing at the years end was the most important thing to me; after I matriculated I went to a teacher's training college...but I failed! I had always wanted to be a teacher because being happy and successful were what I was looking for...nothing much more than this...but now I'm typist all day but it's very boring...I think working in a fashion shop or writing novels would be much better". It is clear that from the importance homework and passing played at school and the way Felicity equated being a teacher with being happy and successful, that she has quite thoroughly accepted the dominant discourse's perception of education with its results of upward mobility and happiness. Her failure to achieve in these terms has not altered this consciousness, as is expressed by her dis-satisfaction as a secretary.

Victor remembers "I was encouraged a lot to achieve at school...I can even remember my older brothers going over my grade one report with me and congratulating me where I had achieved high marks... They were helping in my parents shops after school and I think academic achievement was emphasised as a way of moving up in life... So even in high school I was always conscious that I was at school to achieve academically... sport was more a secondary thing... At varsity I followed in my brother's footsteps in studying medicine and in my first year I was fully committed to the academic side." In his second year of study, however, Victor joined a Christian youth grouping where he was exposed to counter-hegemonic intellectual discourses where "that conference when I first heard about the kingdom and liberation theology was a turning point... it was really 'good news' to me... it was the intellectual breakthrough that made me realise I had a choice to make... to take an option for the poor... it meant changing my life style."

Victor expresses here how both the dominant discourses emphasized in his schooling as well as the counter-hegemonic discourses he experienced at university influenced him. It is interesting to note, however, that while these subsequent discourses did influence Victor, to the extent that he is now prepared to give up part of his free time to help in a rural clinic, he has moved back, closer to his original discourses.

He explains, "I'm not so sure of what I've said before... as I move closer to the REAL world ...In being REALISTIC and true to myself rather than living up to other's expectations". His resultant overall discursive formation would seem to more accurately reflect the dominant discourse's perspective on REALITY, rather than that of the Christian counter hegemonic discourses which had earlier made him capable of perceiving "a new heaven and a new earth." (Is:65-17)

For Sharon, "Academics was my life at school...I always wanted to become a doctor, so people would look up to me... this is what would have given me confidence." Sharon, whose father is an engineer, comes from an upper middle-class family and expressed that since she was not in any financial need, money was much less of a motive behind her aspirations. She adds, "I wasn't as into sports, since this was less important to my father... he was particularly interested in how I had done in science, maths and biology... I even used to work in breaks at school and I used to lie to my friends that I'd been "jorling" on the weekend

when I'd been studying instead." Sharon seems to have been particularly well imbued with the dominant intellectual discourses and hence it comes as no surprise that she had this to say about her university experience, "I was there to get my degree and was not too concerned about the South African situation, then ... being a science student meant I had no time." An earlier section analysing people's attitudes to Prefects under the theme of POLITICAL DISCOURSES, is also relevant in highlighting the cardinal values implicit in the intellectual discourses dominant in white high schools.

I.b Black Youth

After black education became such a highly politicised arena of struggle, particularly in the mid-eighties, what were formerly counter hegemonic discourses have increasingly become the dominant discourses here. Subsequently the majority of youth from the townships of the Witwatersrand would in some ways be critical of the values implicit in 'bantu education' and many would be conscious of the struggle for a 'people's education' instead. Prior to this, however, the intellectual discourses predominant amongst black youth reflected a similar perspective to the dominant discourses of white youth, although they articulated somewhat differently with working class youth.

Kokie, whose parents both worked long hours and seldom found time to talk to him about his education complained "I never learned much at school... I didn't know why I was there nor was I in any way interested in it...I just remember being beaten daily for failing to do the work." Students receiving an education under these conditions often dropped out of school at the earliest possible moment to join the army of job-seekers. It is interesting to note that Mpho, who was doing well at school, and as a result, was more committed to schooling, was the exception amongst his peer grouping and was forced to "move further away from my home friends who were still repeating lower standards or looking for work..." So despite the fact that proportionally few black students actually achieved academically, the majority shared the aspirations of the dominant discourses as expressed by one youth who believed "I wanted to get a good education, so things would be better for me... so I would get a good job and be happy". The high proportion of black matriculants who subsequently have been faced with unemployment have been forced to face this half-truth squarely.

George, who had become critical of the dominant discourses in relation to education shared an interesting aspect of the problems he still faces, since his parents, who are from a lower middle class Coloured community, have not undergone any similar changes. "My parents literally 'slaved away' so that they would be able to afford a good education for me... now they expect me to get a good job and settle down... once I qualify as a lawyer.. so I won't ever have to struggle in life , but now the most important thing for me is to serve the people... houses and cars are not as important anymore."

2. The Influence of the Counter-Hegemonic Discourses upon Christian Youth Through Formal Education

Many students interviewed made mention of the fact that progressive intellectual discourses taught to them at university or high school had been a factor in developing their changing consciousness. Jane, a student at university explains why "lectures had a big influence upon me... lecturers had credibility... as they spoke I would be writing down what they said...this meant I was internalising a whole new set of ideas." Sarah was a student who tried to join a student organisation, but felt alienated by their style. After attending a certain course at university she felt that "my old understanding that capitalism was better for democracy was severely undermined... socialism made more sense and was firmly on the agenda from then on... I got involved in the left again after this". But while courses succeeded in exposing students to a new set of challenges which chiselled cracks in their dominant discourses, on their own, these are insufficient in explaining why youth became actively engaged in struggle. Jane above illustrates how this process requires more than a new set of ideas, "I went to meetings, but was cynical because of the way the people treated one another..."

Informal Education

Informal education was far more persuasive and influential in causing changes in the perspectives of Christian youth. This is understandable once we recognise that although educational institutions have become particularly volatile sites of struggle in recent years and while the state's authority in this site has been seriously undermined, the state with its repressive machinery, still exercises power here. Hence attempts at developing a formal people's education will remain seriously hampered until the people exercise control over the state as well. The recent (1987) De Klerk Bills which withhold state subsidies from universities

makes this clear. In the meantime the thrust of this energy has been channelled into informal spheres of education which do fall under the people's control. These emerging traditions are experienced somewhat differently amongst black and white youth and will be dealt with separately.

I. White Youth

For white youth there was no clear tradition of counter-hegemonic discourses which had become part of the social-fabric of the white community. Hence these had consciously to be organised in groupings which began more closely to identify with these discourses. Antonio explains how this occurred. "YCS organises conferences as well as more regular formation events... and these helped me to develop politically but only when I was put into the position of counsellor did I properly understand what YCS was all about... the group and the responsibility integrated me more fully into YCS...(now) there are political questions and issues which we constantly discuss informally". Here it is clear how even the semi-formal education done in organisation needs the complementary experience of involvement and responsibility before the penny really drops and people begin to analyse political developments spontaneously.

Erica explains how the YCS method of review groups helped to consolidate her commitment as a long term one "In bigger groupings of people in other organisation I had a policy of 'mouth shut, ears open' otherwise I was afraid I would reveal my ignorance.. but in reviewing I learnt that there's no right answer and I got more confident to express my views... I began to understand more clearly how educating people was so important because of the difference it made to me.. I feel much more part of a broad community support-base with whom I can discuss and listen... so I've become caught up in campus conflicts and participated in the protest marches this year".

Cynthia, who is a young working woman less exposed to the explicit process of political formation, explained how her participation in Christian youth groupings had influenced her "before I would believe what the T V told me, but now I don't believe them because I've heard what others think as well. I don't think I have a clear understanding of the different political parties or groups...my understanding is simply that people are suffering and this must be changed... I've also read novels

which look into racism and this has helped me to understand more clearly".

2. Black Youth

Black youth interviewed were not all equally exposed to counter-hegemonic discourses and the informal educational networks amongst urban township youth were clearly more extensively ingrained into the social fabric of life than amongst rural black youth. Isaac, who had attended a rurally based boarding-school, where SADF soldiers had been amongst the teaching staff, had quite the opposite thrust as his informal education. "We were not allowed to get the newspapers but were given free copies of 'Warrior Friend' (an SADF publication) where we read about the terrorists and the radicals...and how moderates were good... So when I first arrived on campus I thought the Student Moderates Association must be good but the Black Students Society looked too radical" Nevertheless, after a short time on campus where Isaac was able to read both the literature of the left and the right, "I realised the left were right... living amongst other black students meant I mixed with them and got more and more involved, also the police provocation on campus confirmed this".

This combination of relevant literature and a sympathetic community on the university campuses also ensured another youth from the rural areas converted. "At university I had access to more literature which I could understand, but informally the older students would always discuss all the issues with us to make sure we were clear". Malome who was a member of YCS on one of the bush campuses explained. "My political analysis sharpened and my commitment to the struggle grew because we analysed the role Christians had played in struggles like Nicaragua and I realised we had a lot to do... I liked YCS's method where we reviewed all these things because I developed a much clearer understanding of the struggle from this... it helped us to see which areas we were weak in, and then we would get political literature to educate us on these things".

In the townships some of the youths interviewed revealed how their friends and family were often also their informal educators. Rapu who had run away from a broken home to become a petty thief when he was about fourteen, explained how "I had a friend who was more involved... he lent me a book by Tutu and I understood things a bit clearer in the struggle... I realised how the cause of all my problems was

oppression in South Africa... it made sense to me and I became committed...he took me to SOSCO meetings with him... where I developed a far clearer understanding of life... I can understand why people are the way they are... I used to hate whites...I couldn't go near to one without flinching or going into a shell... now I can understand why I was so poor before." While religious discourses will be dealt with more fully in the following section it is relevant here to look at how Sipho's understanding of Christianity similarly changed. "I joined YCS because I saw it was involved but I couldn't understand why it was a Christian organisation? ..after a YCS guy gave me the Kairos Document I understood why. I had problems with State theology. Now I can distinguish between this and liberation theology which I see as a blessing... this has made me confident in this new Christianity which I see as a blessing."

Apart from Sipho's educational formation from his father, the fact that he initially developed a clearer analysis from attending funerals reveals to what extent counter-hegemonic discourses have become part of the basic social fabric in the lives of some township residents; "Comrades would explain things at the night-vigils and funeral services... this was important in helping me to see things more clearly... I would tell my father and he would explain more when I came home with questions... now I can begin to teach him some things too." The availability of progressive literature clearly facilitated these broader processes of informal education: YCS's literature which based its facts on religion convinced me...especially liberation theology because it satisfied the needs of the people". Phiri explained how after being given the joint responsibility for starting an Azaso branch "had to read a lot of political literature so I could become more clear because I had to attend meetings much more seriously after this."

3 The effects of these Countervailing Tendencies upon the resultant Discursive formations of Christian Youth

The influence of counter-hegemonic intellectual discourses have clearly facilitated important changes in the consciousness of both black and white youth. Their influence should not however be exaggerated when clear indications from cases amongst both black and white youth reveal that people were sometimes alienated by these processes. Tum's experience of youth organisations in his township made him wary of

organisations "because I felt organisations would push me to do things I didn't like... there was a lot of debate in groups and people with questions were often squashed... This made me critical of dictatorships amongst people calling for democracy... There was also a big competition for leadership which I didn't like."

Patricia, who had initially been active in a Christian student organisation but dropped out when she entered the more hostile political environment in the white community, complained, "I felt as though my emotions had been manipulated but that I had not really developed intellectually... because when I left campus my brother would counter argue the points I made and I became very confused politically... I hadn't really learnt to formulate my own opinion." Here it is clear that a more rigorous formation process was necessary for Patricia to have been able to withstand the somewhat different political environment in the white community where counter-hegemonic discourses would have gained an unfavourable hearing.

The unevenness of these processes also allowed Kokie a 16 year old student to confidently express "I think much more logically now... I can analyse what's going on, and will criticise the actions of my comrades when they are destructive..I can also criticise the enemy's propaganda which I used to believe before." Victor, a chinese university student, who had been active in Christian groupings on campus, in a similar vein, makes an appraisal of the processes he had passed through, which helped him to change his consciousness. "I could understand the struggle better because it was expressed to me in a Christian way... religion plays such an important part in our lives . it's a powerful tool which could be used to manipulate people...but with me it was used well... it is my belief in Christianity which directed me in a very powerful way for liberation ,now it's innate."

Conclusion

Through researching the influence of intellectual discourses on black and white Christian youth, we have found it helpful to distinguish between those which have sought to inculcate the dominant discourses and those which have created cracks in the dominant discourse through raising critical questions in relation to them. While both black and white youth were imbued with the dominant intellectual discourses whereby formal academic education was seen as the gateway to a better life, relatively fewer black youth were able to achieve here. This however

did not necessarily lead to a questioning of the dominant discourses and instead led many black students who had failed to achieve rather to feel inadequate and inferior.

Counter-hegemonic discourses which raised critical questions were seldom part of the agenda of formalised education for high-school students. At a university level this was often a point of primary formation, particularly for white students. Although some of these university courses were fairly rigorous it was found that intellectual discourses on their own were unsuccessful in facilitating a long-term engagement with counter-hegemonic discourses, unless complimented by more informal personalised formation process. While this informal network of counter-hegemonic discourses was very much part of the social fabric of urban black youth (through families/funerals, the distribution of literature etc) it was found to be less developed for rural black youth and white youth generally. But certain Christian youth groupings have more recently succeeded in consciously developing structures which catered for these less developed areas.

Finally the weaknesses in these counter-hegemonic discourses were also identified when they were either administered in an authoritarian manner or when they failed to thoroughly prepare their members intellectually, especially when they would subsequently be moving into a hostile political environment.

RELIGIOUS DISCOURSES

The fact that all those interviewed are either active presently or have in recent years been active in Christian youth groupings, helps to explain the significant role attributed to religious discourses in the research done. The effects of these religious discourses were by no means uniform. One third of those interviewed expressed a negative reaction to the particular form of religious discourse they had received, at some stage of their lives. For one ninth of those interviewed, this negative experience was significant enough to counterweigh any other positive experiences and for a variety of reasons, those people have subsequently distanced themselves from religious discourses.

It makes sense then that we distinguish between these processes by analysing those whose experience of religious discourses;

- A) alienated them from religious discourses, before we analyse the experience of the majority of Christian youth interviewed, who
- B) had a strong background within a religious tradition and grew more committed to these discourses as a result of their experience of religious discourses.

We will once more analyse both of these processes by identifying in both cases;

- 1) the influence of religious discourses upon the dominant consciousness of Christian youth from early childhood,
- 2) the influence of counter-hegemonic religious discourses in creating fault-lines and cracks in the dominant discourses;
- 3) and analysing the overall influence of religious discourses upon the resultant discursive formation arrived at by Christian youth;
- 4) ending off with a conclusion.

While the bulk of the research is focussed upon Christian youth it is interesting in the conclusion of this section, to compare briefly the influences of Christianity and Judaism upon South African youth, from two case studies of Jewish youths.

A.1 One of the major reasons why religious discourses failed to influence young people was because the church as an institution usually expressed itself to youth in the same form that it addressed itself to

adults. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that many youth recalled, as did Thulane "I always attended church against my will because my father was forcing me to go...I didn't like church... I found it difficult to concentrate on what was being said... most times I used to just fall asleep." It is clear that religious discourses missed the mark here. Since for Thulane it was not difficult to integrate being part of a gang which beat up people, although "we did these things after church".

Because the governing racist ideology was usually backed up by a theological justification, black people would often reject Christianity, since this conception of a God who is for the whites, often seemed more closely to co-incide with their experience of reality. Rapu who had run away from home at a young age and been subject to particularly harsh treatment, expressed a youthful theology in response to his experiences: "I asked why do blacks have to suffer so? Is it fate? I saw the white's wealth and questioned why...? I was very angry with God and Jesus who must have been white... I felt it is better for me to pray to the devil... he was always looking black... I felt he must be my forefather." Rapu later on in life accepted a new Christianity as a blessing "because I had hated the old Christianity... but now I can distinguish between state theology and liberation theology".

Tumi, who attended church regularly with his grandmother (in the wake of 1976) also began to ask questions about why whites were always rich and blacks poor, "were they naturally better than us... people would complain that God is only the God of the whites... we are only there to be 'baas boys' ..I would wonder in church, if it was true what people were saying... but I would go because I believed in my granny... when she prayed with us I was sure God was helping us and that it couldn't be true that God was really for whites only". Mpho recalled that although "I didn't like church because it was in a lousy classroom and we were forced to go...I still had an orientation to God which meant I feared to do bad things, I feared God would punish me and he was too powerful for me to fight against...but church was like going to school, because it was something I had to do".

White youth had somewhat similar experiences to black youth although their race and class position meant these took a different form. Maureen had been part of the SCA at school which was very small, since participation was voluntary, and also attended Sunday school after she was confirmed. After she was appointed chapel prefect she had the

responsibility of attending the weekly communion service along with the headmaster, the vice-headmaster, the choir mistress and her daughter. The fact that no-one else in the whole school attended made me begin to question why Christianity was so irrelevant to the majority of staff and students... but when I tried to make changes in the way the service was organised, I was blocked... Christianity meant being a conformist and I began to reject it because there was too much 'crap' associated with it.. you had to strive to be 'good' all the time, according to a narrow definition of good that others had worked out for you."

2. Jane, who had been part of a tight but closed, born-again community, (together with a grouping of school friends, who also participated in church and the youth group together) admitted that "the only thing that kept me being a Christian was guilt... but I gave it up because later on I realised I was a good person yet this 'God' was only telling me I was bad all the time." So although Jane later joined the Cathsoc community because she was attracted to the community itself, she expressed that "after rejecting being a 'born-again' I could never really identify with being a Christian... if there is a God he's just passively watching us like in a test... and in the end he'll just reward or punish... but I don't think he intervenes or hears our prayers... I don't think he's a personal God at all...but anyway religion is over for me now...once I had rejected being a 'born-again'... a new form of the same thing had to be viewed with scepticism and cynicism."

Isaac a black student from a rural area recalled that at school "we were compelled to go to SCM because we were punished if we didn't go... so we were present, but not with out hearts...but subconsciously being steeped in a church atmosphere did affect me". Later on, at university Isaac joined a white Christian grouping with a similar pentecostal thrust but became critical since "they preached community but after a while I began to realise it wasn't really there... also white Christians separated their spirituality from life" but what really angered Isaac was when this grouping tried to disrupt a political meeting organised by a progressive Christian grouping on campus. Subsequently he "realised it was easy for churches to programme people... especially when good Christian preaching was linked to a warped conservative political understanding... the repetition leads to the manipulation of Christians" Isaac confided that "the most important turning point in my life was to become a Christian... this made me strive for the truth...be it in the area of social awareness or religious issues".

A number of black Christians who had been brought up in mainline Christian traditions rejected Christianity once they became involved in the political discourses of the struggle as did Kokie "Christianity was a useless thing at this time... I decided to stop praying and my family realised it when I stopped going to church with them... I questioned why the priest should be the only one to preach... why did he always speak only inside the bible but never relate this to the struggle we were going through... people in organisations said that Christianity was part of why we are oppressed but when I went to the International Year of Youth festival in 1985 and listened to speakers who were Christians but political ones... it contradicted my theory... I knew they were on the people's side... it made me look again at my mother's sacrifices and hard life... then when I met YCS who preached about Jesus the Liberator, I realised I should become a Christian again".

While youth movements within the churches seemed to minister much more effectively to youth in the context of a struggle, the institutional church's 'neutrality' is often inexplicable to youth, as was revealed by Mathabo when she exclaimed, "I've become critical of Christianity or rather the way it is being practised... I'm against church rules which prevent the struggle... like when they say 'you can't get good out of evil'... so although the soldiers are killing us, the church says we mustn't fight back... I feel as human people we must defend ourselves... I think many Christians understand this amongst themselves but the institutional church is not adapting itself because they are against our politics... they preach justice but don't practice it". The shortcomings of such discourses, which the Kairos Document criticises as 'church theology' has meant that many politicised black youth in particular, have either chosen to join the youth movements on the fringes of the church where they can at least identify with Christianity, or drop it altogether.

3. Since it was more difficult for the researcher to trace those black youth who subsequently rejected Christianity, we will limit the analysis of how religious discourses (negatively) influenced the overall discursive formation of Christian and white youth.

Freddy, who grew up in an environment where "we would go to Sunday mass... always say grace before meals and I was a regular... to move away from Catholicism in high-school. "after a brother laid a heavy trip on us for masturbating and then sent us off to confession... this put me off confession... I could

increasingly see gaps between what we were being taught and what was being done in the church... and so I only went to church afterwards to see my buddies and the girls from the convent... the last straw came when I was in the army and really freaked out about what propaganda they were teaching us in basics... then when a Catholic priest came I got so excited, I thought 'at last someone who is on my side'... but after telling him about my problems, he just pushed the army and told me 'obey your officers, be patriotic'; and I felt I had no support".

Although Freddy later on found 'it refreshing discovering a liberation theology which was critical of traditional Christianity' in YCS, he nevertheless moved away from Christianity as he found political circles more stimulating. Today he says while he never consciously rejected Christianity it just became less important to him and he concluded that the political struggle is now his only yardstick for morality. Jeremy, after having been convinced of a Marxist position through his studies "left behind the divine idea of faith... I don't believe there's any after-life or resurrection of bodies... so I couldn't understand why translate political terms into religious terms... I felt more comfortable in the straight left, because I felt I didn't have to struggle with two frameworks anymore. I felt Marxism's putting power into people's hands felt right, so I didn't have to rely on some removed transcendent force, but rather on people". Interestingly though, Freddy also had problems with Jesus having sacrificed his life on the cross. He felt this was too "martyrish and final, when this is the only life one has".

Victor, on the other hand expressed that while "Christianity is part of me and I can't escape it... I still have serious doubts about whether, what I want is what God wants?... I don't feel I could commit myself in the way that Jesus did... where he was prepared to give his all... the social constraints of my relationships and being financially secure, make it more difficult for me." Victor's response contrasts with Jeremy's, since for Victor the Christian discourses that he accepts challenge him very powerfully... it is more his ability to fulfil this challenge which he doubts.

For other white youth who had been involved in Christian youth groupings, the tensions were more between their expectations in a secularised western culture and the constraints that official church teaching placed upon these. Patricia confided that "I stopped giving time to God after going out with my boyfriend.. he doesn't go to church... communion is still very important to me but I won't go.. because I've

sinned and enjoyed it.. and it's no good saying I'm sorry when I know I'll sin again... until we get married....". So although Patricia has had difficulty practising as a Christian since she has had a boyfriend, she further admitted that before "religion was a substitute for a boyfriend but once I had a boyfriend that void was filled."

Tracy's mother divorced her father at a young age, but never remarried because she is a devout Catholic. Tracy in turn was sent to a convent where religion was stressed so she logically found a home in Cathsoc at university. But since issues of social justice were raised here, Tracy complained "I felt Cathsoc used religion for political ends... religion wasn't stressed enough, like how to pray". While religion has slipped away for Tracy, it is interesting that she nevertheless "still equates Jesus with love and justice... and although I don't see Christianity influencing my life in any way now... I still feel I have an allegiance to the church... there's something that's very real there." This is an example of how the power and depth of the symbols of Christianity can sometimes develop a dynamic of their own which outlives the duration that people are actually engaged in these discourses.

B.1. Youth for whom religious discourses had a positive influence

Many young people interviewed, expressed how religious discourses had been a central emphasis at home and at school, and expressed how they had been an important influence upon their overall consciousness

I) White Youth

Allan explained how while "my father was a Presbyterian, my mother's family was very Catholic and had a long history of involvement in the church... we would go to church every Sunday, except for my father... I liked church a lot because my family was very enthusiastic about it... I also went to a Catholic school all my life... it was a good school and our families had to make sacrifices to get us there... so we tried our best at school because we were conscious of this... religion was important to me at school and I remember at one point saving my tuck-shop money to buy a Sunday missal". Allan later expressed how he had 'always wanted church to be more than a Sunday thing but never met people in my parish who were like minded... until I joined X parish where I helped run the youth group... I feel I belong here.. "ve always felt I could've

given a lot more and since I've got more involved I want to love God more and give more of myself, it's a growing relationship".

Felicity also comes from a family where her parents are actively involved in the church. Besides attending mass together, Felicity's family often prayed together in the home, and she attended a convent throughout her schooling. Although Felicity recalls 'I didn't like mass when I was small because I couldn't understand anything, and it was always too long'. Later on Felicity added "Now I understand it more and enjoy going to church, also I realise it's more important to try to live a Christian life everyday... I'm secretary of the youth group because I realised I needed to get involved to help others... Every day I wake up and pray to God to help me to live a Christian life today.. but at night I always feel I wasn't that good". While it is clear how Christian discourses play a central role in a family like Felicity's or Allan's, it is significant that Felicity's family all vote for the National Party. Allan admitted that his family were very class-conscious and looked down upon both Afrikaans and Black people of a lower class. These examples would suggest that people's race or class identity plays a more fundamental role in determining their overall consciousness and that religious discourses are integrated into this general framework.

Mario's father who identifies with the N P (although he never votes) like many white Catholics, expressed anger at the SACBC (S A Catholic Bishop's Conference) for the outspoken statements it has recently made criticising injustices in South Africa. In these situations the dormant contradictions between the racist and Christian discourses are made unusually explicit. It is therefore understandable why many white Christians like Mario's father, raise up the cry "keep politics out of the church." The separation of these discourses has practically enabled whites to unconsciously assimilate those elements of Christianity which fitted into the dominant discourses they had already adopted, while ignoring those elements of Christianity which challenged this dominant consciousness. The call to separate those discourses as antagonisms are increasingly experienced, illustrates that there are many white Christians who are finding it very difficult to sacrifice or deny their Christian identity in the interests of the political discourses they presently hold dear. While we will soon analyse why increasing numbers of Christian youth are prepared to disentangle themselves from their status quo discourses, once they recognise their religious discourses rubbing uncomfortably against these, we must first return to

Mario to discover why these gaps between people's discourses develop in the first place.

Mario, who comes from a working-class white neighbourhood, attended church regularly together with his family: "I was an altar-boy... I remember feeling very religious on the altar because I used to feel closer to God there...but all the 'main manne' were altar boys in those days". Most of these 'main manne' were simultaneously members of a gang which used to "hit the Porra's (fellow Catholics mind you) with baseball bats" on a Saturday night while never failing to attend Sunday morning mass. When asked whether Mario experienced any tensions between these distinctive practises, Mario laughed and said "I suppose we were just the naughtiest Catholics, but we always felt at home in the Catholic church". This gap between the discourses practised in church and those of every-day life are often in this way entrenched at an early age. Furthermore, when the religious discourses fail to challenge the predominant discourses to change, they are inevitably assimilated into these discourses taking on their form, and ultimately blessing them.

Mario, after growing up, later exclaimed "when I look back I wasn't so Christian when I was younger... now I'm more aware of how a Christian should help people, as Jesus did... I go out of my way now because I like to be a good witness to younger guys in the group... I must show I'm a decent guy... their parents must be able to trust me". Within Mario's predominant consciousness this is clearly a point of growth, yet the existent structure of his subject positions which have arisen as a product of past inter-discursive struggles affecting him, objectively limits his potential to change and his perspective concurred with that of his father since: "I don't feel the bishops should make their views too well known because it gives us problems with the youth... I don't mind if they speak on politics, so long as they keep it to themselves." While Mario in his own words is trying to follow Jesus' guidelines, his objective discursive position determines how he has in fact perceived these.

Craig, who comes from a similar white working-class neighbourhood, was steeped in a similar religious tradition, where "being a good Christian meant attending daily mass as much as possible." As a member of a Christian youth group he had been active while at high school, in running a soup kitchen for unemployed black vagrants, who stayed in the veld close by. Subsequently he joined a YCS group at an open-school, where he was exposed to non-racial discourses and once

got all the students to refuse to catch a bus which would not allow a fellow black student on it, until the bus-drivers gave in and allowed black students onto buses doing that route. What is significant in Craig's case is that the religious discourses he was interpellated with in YCS and Cathsoc explicitly emphasised justice in terms of a religious basis. He felt that religion which had always been important to him, best explained why he had changed, "before it was important to me but was less integrated into my life... now in everything I do, Christianity is involved..". Although he had initially found these progressive religious discourses threatening of his old values, he was part of a family and broader social community which he felt "gradually helped me to change my values." This in particular helps to explain why Mario who was not part of such a community where such discourses could have more meaningfully been put across, was alienated by the very same religious discourses.

Theresa came from a liberal Christian background where she had been taught "God created us all equal". When she came to university she joined a Nusas sub-committee where she became more and more committed politically. She however reacted to this process "when Christianity was laughed at and scorned because this hurt me... it made me feel very alone... people argued the church had no role to play". Theresa later joined YCS where she was "excited to discover Christianity and a political commitment could go together, but I was rejected by my past friends as a result." She nevertheless now feels "Christianity has grown in importance for me since I have been able to use it in my daily life... it challenges my politics and the two work together very well". Hence it is clear how religious discourses which have been emphasized at home and school amongst white youth have become part of the social fabric of life for them and subsequent discourses which have related positively to these have had a greater chance of influencing the overall discursive formations of such youth.

II) Black Youth

While society is being increasingly secularised, the impact of Christian discourses upon black youth in the home and school have made a lasting impression which remains imprinted on the social fabric of their lives in later years. Sandile's first memory of his family related to when "we all prayed together every night around candles... I knew the prayers by heart... especially the rosary... so Sundays I would go to church with my mother, my father only sometimes came, and when I was old enough to start school I became an altar boy... after this from 8 a m on a Saturday till 9 p m we were at church... we would begin by going to

catechism in the morning, then all the altar-boys stayed to clean-up the church... afterwards we would eat lunch with Father Joseph... then we would fix the garden in the afternoon and he would take us home in his car later... we used to joke a lot with him, we liked the life and felt very at home in the church... we all wanted to become priests... if I missed those days, later when my father made me work at home, I used to cry."

After this firm foundation in a Catholic tradition Sandile attended a Catholic boarding school where he was very active in the SCM which was led by a 'saved Christian' who was nevertheless a weak teacher. When Sandile moved out of the confines of this single-sex Catholic environment for his last two years of school "I became critical of the 'saved' teacher because I was so far behind in work after I changed schools... I also began to drop the idea of priesthood because I was independent, staying in my own room, and the girls at school were something new for me...it was also difficult to live the strict Christian life that I'd lived before, without the support of a community...(later) at university where I was involved in Azaso, I didn't reflect or try to relate Christianity much but I remember when a friend said "if my involvement in the struggle means I won't go to heaven... I would rather go to hell". It made me think, surely the bible relates to liberation...after I came home from university I was involved in the youth congress, but felt I needed to belong somewhere and stood on the Catholic youth committee in my old parish, but I was shy to tell my comrades I was in a church youth group... but then with IYY where youth congresses and church youth clubs came together, I felt more comfortable about it... the kind of Christian I first grew up being is different to the kind of Christianity I've later discovered... now it's more contextual... there are things I can do which strict Christianity wouldn't allow, but which I can see will benefit the community".

Phiri also came from a working-class family which "went together to church and prayed as a family twice a week...I remember after receiving the eucharist I would always smile... I felt very good... also after confessing my sins...I would feel almost nearer to God at those times...the catechism teachers told us that after receiving the sacraments we had gained graces and that is also how I felt". Phiri later on at university was involved in SUCA before starting an Azaso branch on his campus "but I would still attend mass after getting involved...I felt we needed direction from God and would pray for this while working for change... I had no problem with being a Christian and a comrade, the only difference was I would pray much more after getting involved...

since many of us who started that Azaso branch were Christian, we would always pray before or after our meetings... some of the comrades from other branches couldn't understand this really... but they accepted it".

Phiri was not however brought up with a progressive Christianity and explained "I had to choose between two kinds of Christianity SCM's and SUCA's. SUCA's form was more acceptable.. it played an important part in building my commitment because I understood love is what Christianity preaches... bringing this together with our aim of destroying apartheid, the two went together because if we loved each other we would destroy apartheid... Christianity is about justice and sometimes this might even involve disciplining people... but as Christians we must always reflect on our action to see if it's right or not... true Christianity must be for justice and against apartheid... any other Christianity which is against our struggle I don't take too seriously". While Christian discourses were not essentially central in explaining why Phiri was committed to the struggle, these discourses of his youth nevertheless remained with him and were assimilated into his overall struggle consciousness. But as he has explained, this did involve choosing between two kinds of Christianity. Hence progressive religious discourses which extended and built upon his childhood religious discourses were important in that they challenged the predominant conservative Christian discourses but nevertheless allowed for a continuity rather than a break with Phiri's past.

Malome's family would rise at 7.00 a m on Sundays and he would attend Sunday-school before joining the adults in the church service. After the church service he would go to the youth group and finally finish with singing practise at 3.00 pm. He remembers "I liked meeting my friends at church and we were more respectable because we were against bad behaviour like smoking and drinking at this time". Later on however after '76 and the subsequent student struggles, Malome admitted that "as we got politically educated we began rejecting the church because as blacks we had problems identifying with the church... militants would look down upon you if you were a Christian". But nevertheless Malome would "always pray to myself before sleeping and eating as I had done since I was young". When he was introduced to YCS "people explained a progressive Christianity which was a new thing to us... we were also surprised to find a Christian grouping that was affiliated to the U D F... then when Fr Mkhathshwa was detained after

speaking to us on campus, we realised there were many Christians around because many new people wanted to join YCS as a result".

Malome later on became a YCS leader on his campus where "I started re-reading the bible and re-interpreting it in the way YCS had taught me... it became clear to me that Jesus had taken an option for the poor and that we as university students on the road to the middle class, should do the same... Also it is much clearer to me that we must try to love people if we're really going to change South Africa... so whereas before in political meetings I would have shouted down those with whom I disagreed, now I'm more sensitive to people and apologise if I've hurt them... I see myself as a good person now... when militants challenge me saying 'Christianity is a white man's religion' and 'God is a myth' I can see why it might be true for them but for me Christian values have challenged me to be with the people... I know I've become more effective and committed as a result". Malome had then become involved in the struggle prior to engaging in progressive religious counter-hegemonic discourses. Once he had been exposed to these which linked up with his positive experiences of Christianity as a child, the consequent changes in his overall consciousness were however that much more thorough as a result.

B2 1) Black Youth

Whilst many youths had been brought up in a Christian tradition these often diminished in importance when these same youths were later forced by new questions and problems to which their traditional religious discourses had few answers. Counter-hegemonic religious discourses often related far more effectively to these contemporary problems and for many young people these played a significant role in transforming their overall discursive formations. Thandeni was taught by her mother "if I believe in God he will give me whatever I want and I felt that God did help me in everything I did". After having been involved in the student struggles for a better education through COSAS "I became critical of Christianity and the bible because I always heard ministers saying that we are just visitors on this earth but that we would only be happy when we returned to our true home in heaven... we could see how this was brainwashing us to accept things as they were... so I became critical of ministers and stopped going to church"

While Thandeni's politics had deeply challenged his past Christian discourses he subsequently began attending church once more

because "YCS taught me about a different kind of God which does exist... I could see how Christianity had been hijacked by the rich for their own purposes... and that they had used religion to take the land from us... I mean if they believed we are 'all created in the image of God' why is this not true in South Africa? This made me realise the South African government is not really Christian.. I am a Christian though, and am committed to fighting this government back, even with religion... the Kairos Document helped us with this... Christianity has made me into a better comrade, because I wasn't patient with people, before I was too rough...I would often provoke fights.. I also realise that as Christian I should not be in the struggle for what I can gain, I should give my property to those who need it more, wholeheartedly.. There is no conflict between being a Christian and a comrade for me... I can even convince other comrades who have doubts about this."

Sipho was not brought up a Christian but on a school tour he learned about Jesus and the Bible and later on joined a choir because he loved gospel music. He explained that although "I was active in COSAS, Christianity was more for leisure...until I joined the organisation for Christian comrades... I learnt a lot from YCS... I like liberation theology... it gives me a light... I tried to get people in the choir to also join but some don't want to understand... so I can see that as a Christian we've got a big role to play... in organising other Christians. Now that I'm a Christian... other people can see the struggle is for everyone."

Tsletsie who stayed with his grand parents who were Christians, went to church regularly and he too liked singing a lot "when we sang I felt I was in paradise because I loved music a lot" but after he got involved, he too confided "I was very confused about Christianity because most priests would tell us that you can't be involved in christianity and politics ... because they couldn't go together!..but as I was moving away from the church I would go to political rallies only to find other priests and ministers like Tutu and Boesak addressing us on how the bible related to our situation... so I could see they went hand in hand. In church when they spoke about salvation, what they really meant was survival because they encouraged us to cope as best as we could without changing the system... but the other priests who involved themselves in our struggle and did so in following Jesus, those who sided with us made it clear for me.. my politics grew a lot out of these experiences with progressive Christians".

Sebo's family were religious and sacrificed to send him to a Catholic school where he was active in a bible-prayer group... "the teacher who led this group told us that political people were lacking faith in God ... (and worse still) they were bad because they were excluding God... so we never got involved and instead we stayed in our bible groups with the other charismatics... we believed change would only come about through Christians and prayer, not politics... but then the boycotts changed all this... especially when the police arrested priests... once I knew that priests were also partaking in politics I knew I could too".

Later on Sebo went to university where he joined CASA where he recognised "Christianity can be good... but for most it keeps them passive... When I was young it was also vague for me because only the sermons were informing us, but now the struggle has challenged my Christianity... when I looked at the bible again,...I saw there were many struggles there... Jesus and many of the prophets died for their faith... so now if I see suffering I have to ask what should I as a Christian do about it? Just pray or pray and take action?... Christianity says to me if you want freedom you must carry your cross... This is the situation we find ourselves in now, in South Africa...If I had to choose the lighter way I know I would also in some way be rejecting Jesus!"

B2 ii) White Youth

While the struggle discourses directly challenged black youth and simultaneously forced a rethinking of Christianity, the same was not true for white Christian youth. For many of them struggle discourses only reached them indirectly through the mediating challenge of counter-hegemonic religious discourses.

Antonio explains how he had "acquired a Catholic tradition as a child but Christianity played very little role in my life then... I questioned a lot of the things I couldn't really understand, like the sacraments... it wasn't really meaningful to me." But after being attracted to Cathsoc by the community he joined the faith-life group which "introduced a radically transforming understanding of Christianity which really made sense... it was the first time I heard about the kingdom of God as something to be worked for here on earth... Also the democratic ways in which things were done gave me hope it was possible.. the discussions we had were personal in that they related to the values I had...I realised I wanted to become a more caring person... Jesus' life, his selflessness and compassion for people challenge me to want to follow him...I think

without Christianity I would have been coldly analytical about injustices in South Africa, but the symbols of Christianity challenged me personally... I think I would have been too pessimistic to be involved, but Christianity gives me a hope which is realistic... it has opened my eyes to the generosity and selflessness of those around me as well as the many many people who are struggling to change apartheid."

Erica a fellow university student added "although I was vaguely brought up as a Christian, as I grew older I felt people were using it as an escape... also it set up such a goody-goody model to follow. I just felt most people were being hypocrites..."

I couldn't be part of it because there were clear areas where I differed from the church's teachings... I also had problems with believing in miracles and heaven... but in YCS I realised there were other Christians who didn't feel they had to agree with everything in the church and their explanations of things brought me closer to Christianity... the basic Christian value of loving your neighbour was always important to me but YCS helped me to see that my political involvements could be inspired by this same value... Christianity has further challenged me to see my political commitment as a long-term thing."

Gerald, who comes from an upper middle-class family, was brought up as a Catholic and then sent to a Catholic school where he was an altar-server as well as a member of the C L G which did charity work. He recognised that "Christianity has always been an important part of my life but the emphasis seems to have changed... Christianity allowed me to be open to anti-apartheid people because even at school Catholicism had a bit of an anti-apartheid identity. .. but discussions in Cathsoc have challenged me the most. I got a new outlook on who Jesus was... this meant I needed to take an option for the poor more seriously... it meant I needed to move out of parliamentary politics and see things through the eyes of the majority of South Africans... I feel God wants us to devote our entire lives to bringing the kingdom... Jesus was prepared to die for this and I hope I will be able to do the same... Now I see everything through the eyes of Christianity...which has become my life." Counter-hegemonic religious discourses seem to have had quite a profound impact upon Gerald's overall discursive formation and he quite clearly pointed to this in explaining why he personally had moved beyond a parliamentary perspective of change.

Cecilia belonged to the S C A at school "where we sang and prayed after supper every night... it was quite a supportive community... it was felt that pop-music was evil and although we listened on the quiet... we'd feel guilty afterwards.. we would also pray for all the non-SCA members, we wanted everyone to become a Christian... my Christian friends were not really concerned about social problems in the community... So Christianity had always been a very personal thing... it made me feel superior to others who weren't Christian... what was most important was my relationship with God... action was limited to being 'nice' to people... the cross had meant that Christ had died for my sins... so in a way he had done all the hard work and I was lucky to be born after him... but in YCS there is much more of a social emphasis... it is clear that everything's not done yet, and while Christ is our example there's also some suffering in store for us... before suffering had meant not going to discos and being rejected by your friends... now my commitment is not so dependent upon emotional feelings of being 'close to the Lord'.. while I sometimes have moving experiences, at other times I feel quite dry inside... my commitment is more rational though".

Cecilia, in concluding, explained what the central differences and continuities were: 'Christianity has always been central in my life but it's changed it's form... There are clear links though... God's still God... he still loves me, it's just that there's a de-emphasis on the personal side and a development on the social side... before God loved everyone and was neutral in social conflicts... but when I look at the way Jesus lived his life it's more and more clear to me that he sided with the oppressed... and if God does this, then we should too... before I was always trying to fit things into Christian rules, but now Christian faith is more my main motive in life... it motivates me to take my commitment to political solutions seriously... not just as a sideline optional extra... it's not just a struggle at a political level either... it affects every level of my life, personal relationships too... So the aim of this struggle is clear.. it's not just to get rid of apartheid but to bring the kingdom of God in its fullness to earth."

White high school youth were similarly challenged by Christianity, although it took a simpler form for them than the university students. Matthew explains, "Church was first, you just had to believe this and had to believe that... then I thought about it again and realised that loving your neighbour is really the most important thing... this was important to me because it meant I had a positive reason for being a Christian rather than just following the rules... it meant I had to stand up for what I

believed in... like, when people speak badly of blacks at school. It also gives me a vision of how I'd like to see South Africa... it must be more than just a mechanical equality... we must really be able to live in peace and harmony... when I was younger, Christianity was very much a white experience at Sunday church but now I've integrated it into life more broadly".

3. 1) Black Youth

While Christianity received the brunt of a thorough criticism for its historical relationship with colonialism and the ideologies of white supremacy, many of the black youth who were brought up with Christian discourses remained open to a transformed Christian discourse which often had a significant effect upon their subsequent overall discursive formations. Bheki explained, "I was born in a Catholic family... but I was brought up with a Christianity that didn't fulfil my needs... when I was part of B.C., I rejected it (Christianity) totally but now I'm critical of it... Liberation theology fulfilled me much more, but people in the struggle still criticise Christianity and although I couldn't always defend it properly... deep down I know it's important... it's important for our people even when it's 'pie in the sky'... it's not something that can simply be done away with, that would be unscientific... moreover I have seen many Christians change to become committed and this has given me hope in Christianity... I am a Christian although I will always ask questions... although christianity is not universal like mathematics, it is still important for many of our people... I respect other churches much more now, especially the Independent Churches, although I am critical of their conservative leaders... I have this hope that the followers will change them."

Simphiwe who had also at one time rejected Christianity expressed how: "I would have been politically committed if I was a Christian or not, but I joined YCS because I wanted to act in the struggle as a Christian... Liberation theology made things clearer for me because I had this background and also it helped me to explain my commitment to other Christians... YCS literature and the Kairos Document influenced me to see that God is on the side of the poor...but in our township churches this is never preached...participating as a Christian means I have to reflect upon my participation. I don't feel I could ever necklace anyone... educating people about liberation theology will help many others to participate... but I'm much more confident that Christianity is for the struggle now."

George, a coloured university student, expressed how "Christianity didn't mean much to me in this early period of my life . it was jut like breathing and eating, there was no choice... but I never related Christianity and my life together... during my first year at varsity I rejected God... it was part of my B C. experience but while others didn't believe he existed, I did but I just believed he was on the side of the whites... but later as I began to understand and integrate a new form of Christianity with my political understanding I moved away from B C because while the B C friends I had, had rejected Christianity, I never could do this... now my basis is Christianity and in terms of this I understand political action... without Christianity I wouldn't have a reason for acting politically... I would maybe be a sympathiser but without Christianity I think I'd just get rich and go to church every Sunday." This paradoxical quote implicitly reveals that George's latter conception of Christianity is something quite different from his earlier form, which simply entailed church attendance although one's life more broadly could be quite selfish. While he attributes a significant status to the latter counter-hegemonic religious discourses for his overall transformation, the traditional religious discourses with which he was imbued as a youth, nevertheless also help explain why this is so.

3. II) White Youth

For many white youth interviewed, Christianity was a vital thread of continuity in their otherwise radically changed worldviews. While this suggests that Christian symbols and discourses have become so malleable that they can be articulated into conflicting social discourses, it also suggests that people are able quite consistently to travel the path of these discourses in moving from the one pole to the other. This research would suggest that Christian discourses have played a key role in transforming the overall discursive formations of white youth in a progressive direction, (and although this thesis does not focus upon it, examples of moves in the reverse direction would appear to be as easy to find).

Jenny who got quite involved in her church, teaching Sunday school after her mother remarried a man with whom she did not get on, explained that "church was a refuge for me... my relationship with God was emphasized then". She later joined a Christian society on campus because "I was scared of what would happen if I died". Here she explained "Christianity became a living thing... I knew I had to try to

integrate Christianity and its values into other spheres of my life... before when events happened it didn't affect me but subsequently I began asking how a Christian should respond in this situation... so whereas political events had been other people's problems before, I felt I had to take them seriously afterwards...it has made the biggest difference because now it challenges me everyday...I feel it's my Christian duty to be involved... I don't think I would have got involved without this Christian basis but now its a way of life for me... the gospel is central to this whereas it didn't challenge me much before".

Eddy attended a Christian school and participated in the religious practices at the school just as everyone else did, although he does not come from a Christian family background. He explained how at university he too "got challenged once I saw the link between Jesus' values and my life... now I find the services meaningful... Christianity is what motivates me... the kingdom of God has become my goal... I want to share the good news with others because I believe it will motivate them too... when I have seen other Christians growing in a commitment to the struggle it has really motivated me."

Maryanne, who became more committed after her sister and brother were detained explained that "I don't think I would have been as emotional about the struggle without a Christian faith... I mean Marxists are not supposed to be loving people, whereas we feel we should be... faith gave me a sense of vision rather than just a mechanical political programme... for me faith is the attitude of a lover, where because you really care about people you have a total involvement.. it breaks the attitude that the struggle is a part-time thing". For the above white youth, Christian discourses were an integral part of their processes of transformation in Christian youth movements. It makes sense then that Christianity is a central and integral dimension of their political consciousness and has dramatically influenced their resultant overall discursive formations.

Sharon's case was different, in that although she had a similar Christian upbringing, the deepening of her Christian commitment occurred in YWCA "where we prayed and meditated and discussed". Here, though, there was no articulation between Christian and political discourses since political upheavals were largely ignored and social action was limited to discouraging people from attending clubs or drinking alcohol. Sharon nevertheless identified "my varsity years was where it all

happened and my understanding of Christianity deepened... now it plays the major role in my life and I take it very seriously... it helps me to question my aims and motives for doing things... so now I change what I might have been doing for the wrong reasons". In Sharon's case this has consequently meant changing work from a highly paid job, to wanting to teach maths to black students. This would suggest that even when political and religious discourses are not explicitly linked in Christian groupings, the current political conjuncture in South Africa still makes it possible that people will make the links, in some form, on their own.

Gail who had been part of Christian groupings on campus but was alienated from them by their group-style of operating, had many questions about religion. "I don't like the structure of the church... its hierarchy of power and its forms of discipline, and although I have difficulties seeing myself as a Catholic in the way the hierarchy of the church defines it, I ultimately still feel Catholic... somethings have just stuck which I won't give up on as beliefs.. even if I'm cynical and pessimistic I will never lose hope in the idealistic things of justice, equality and love, which can be real.. it's this essential foundation which Christianity gave me, which keeps me going... so I'm trying to live according to what I see as right and am redefining it... even what being a Catholic means..." Gail's account suggests that once a solid Christian foundation has been laid, people may find it easier to redirect it, when conditions make this necessary, but reluctant to reject it outright.

C. Two case studies comparing the influence of Judaism on white youths

Merle expressed that her family was fairly religious "I was sent to Hebrew school three times a week until my Batmitzvah.. without it I would have been lost... so from my youth I understood that I was a Jew". Later on Merle became more involved in social justice and although "I went to SAJJ's I couldn't identify with SAJJ's Judaism... I was critical of Zionism .. but after being exposed to a progressive religion in YCS I got excited because I felt Judaism could be developed in a progressive way maybe in Jews for Social Justice. . I suddenly realised I could be Jewish and progressive". Sarah "was brought up in a very Jewish culture. I always went to Hebrew school and I knew Jewish history... I participated in Habonim where I became more Zionist, as well as more critical of racism... Although I was Jewish, more culturally than

religiously, I've always been kosher for religious reasons". At high school, Sarah was active in S J A and had intended going to Israel after completing her university studies in South Africa but at university she got exposed to progressive political discourses while at the same time "encountering right-wing Jews who based their racism and chauvenism upon the same history and theology that I claimed to uphold".

"My Judaism has subsequently become more secular because orthodoxy's perspective on women and racism is so bad... I don't believe that Judaism is intrinsically reactionary but the rabbis seem to be, and the majority of South African Jews are... while Judaism is still important to me I no longer consider myself a Zionist... I would be committed to being part of a lefty Jewish community who don't reject being Jewish... the theory and practice of politics has challenged and forced me to question a lot... I'm critical of the bible and Jewish law now... I still pray but I'm moving away spiritually because I can't identify with rabbis as spiritual leaders... maybe if there was a progressive rabbi I would integrate this better".

It would seem that in the above two cases people were unable to find a social community which integrated counter-hegemonic political and religious discourses in a Jewish student grouping. While the two participants were dissatisfied with the conservative political discourses and Zionism associated with the existent Jewish student groupings, they were similarly dissatisfied with Jewish students engaged in left wing political discourses who had rejected their Jewish identity. While Sarah hinted that there was a tradition of 'lefty' Jewish communities in Europe, Merle hinted that Jews for Social Justice might be able to fill this void in South Africa.

CONCLUSION

While religious discourses have had a significant impact upon the overall discursive formations of Christian youth interviewed, the effects have been by no means uniform. For some, religious discourses were too closely bound up with a conservative ideology and an institution which distanced itself from or blocked progressive discourses, and hence a number of youth distanced themselves from the religious discourses they had earlier been interpellated with. It was also noted more generally though that the adult format with which religious discourses were addressed to youth was a further reason why they had failed to meaningfully influence younger children.

A major finding of the research into this section revealed that people's objective discursive positions, which seemed to be strongly influenced by their race and class positions, often determined how in fact religious discourses were perceived. Hence both black and white youth often only assimilated those elements of Christianity which fitted into their dominant discourses, while ignoring the rest. Counter-hegemonic religious discourses nevertheless had a profound effect upon both black and white youth although differently. Black youth who were brought up in a solid Christian tradition maintained a Christian identity, although they were powerfully challenged by political discourses (which sometimes encouraged a temporary lapse in their Christian discourses). Subsequently, however, as progressive religious discourses articulated with political discourses, these religious discourses have in turn challenged many of these youth to take these political discourses far more seriously.

For many white youth on the other hand, progressive political discourses were often taken seriously because they were interpellated with these, indirectly through the mediating challenge of counter hegemonic religious discourses. Both sets of Christian youth were subsequently able to distinguish between religious discourses which favoured the dominant discourses and those which undermined these. It would seem that the Jewish youth interviewer found it more difficult to find a Jewish youth grouping which integrated counter-hegemonic political and religious discourses although they both expressed a desire for this kind of community.

CHAPTER FIVE

IDEOLOGY AND RELIGION : A SYNTHESIS

In Chapter One we attempted to retrace how various conceptions of ideology, (from Marx, to Laclau and Mouffe) have substantially different meanings. Before we analyse how the Christian youth who were interviewed, integrated ideology with their experience of religion, it will be necessary to briefly clarify the different definitions of ideology and explain which definition most closely relates to the terms in use amongst the respondents. The original Marxian understanding of ideology relates strictly to ideology as false-consciousness, whereby the interests of the dominant group are hidden behind a mask of objectivity which serves consciously or unconsciously to conceal the scientific truth. The true consciousness in this framework, represents the interests of justice and liberation for the whole community and is based upon the doing away of all ideologies (i.e. distortions).

Later Marxists changed this conception of ideology to mean a world view that is particularly related to a political and economic outlook. Here ideology presents a specific analysis of the present social order, relates it to a future ideal and outlines a strategy to achieve the desired state. This form of ideology is moreover embodied in social institutions and is universal in that everyone is socialised in some particular political and economic ideology. While Marx's major contribution was in analysing capitalism and strategies to overcome it, some adherents of Marxism have attempted to develop a total ideology from this (quite like religion) which claims to hold the answers to people's deepest questions at all levels of life. In this distortion of Marxism, ideology has been transferred from a symbol which points beyond itself to a greater reality, to an idol which excludes the complexity and richness of truth, by dominating that which lies outside of its scope.

Finally ideology at its most general level relates to a particular framework of ideas that interprets reality from its particular perspective. So, for example, one might be a nationalist who perceives the world from the perspective of one's nation or a Christian who interprets the world from the vantage point of Christ. A Christian identity would then create or develop symbols which generate solidarity and enable people to understand what it means to be a Christian here and now. Within this

universal and neutral framework every person has a combination of ideologies that constitute their symbolic universe. So, for example, one can be a Christian, a nationalist and a socialist.

This final conception of ideology is closest to the discourse theory approach (of Laclau and Mouffe) that is implicit in the body of research (in chapters three and four). But the sense in which the respondents understand this concept refers more closely to an action related system as an important instrument for social and political change. This would relate quite closely to the conception of ideology as a world view made use of by (Marxist and other) political scientists as is described above in the second conception of ideology. This conception of ideology which we refer to as politico-ideological worldview, most closely fits the sense in which it is used in this chapter. This understanding was implicit although the particular question put to the respondents was: How do you relate/integrate Christianity with your political commitment? - or in the case of the few who showed no signs of being conscious of such a commitment - How do you relate/integrate Christianity with your life?

Responses to this question fell into a grid which classifies six possible ways of relating one's Christianity to one's politico-ideological worldview. Each of the six positions will be outlined and analysed in terms of what the research into the Christian youth reveals about each. This will lead us into a comparative account of how Christians in struggles in other parts of the world integrated their faith with their commitment, and furthermore what types of structural relationships between church and state this has historically led to. Finally we will critically analyse the relationship between religion and ideology and more specifically between Christianity and Marxism on the basis of theoretical research done on this subject.

The responses to the above question fall primarily into two main types, each of which has three complimentary sub-sections. People were either

- (a) unable to integrate their Christianity with their politico-ideological world view; or
- b) they were able to do so.

Where they were (a) unable to do so, it was either because;

- i) they could not integrate religious discourses with the discourses dominant within their political/ideological consciousness and thus gradually moved apart from religious discourses, or
- ii) they could not integrate a comprehensive account of reality within their dominant religious framework and hence moved further and further into an escapist world where religious experience became one's only reality, or
- iii) in the face of a set of religious values which are contradictory to people's practice in life, people attempted to compartmentalise these two spheres of life into autonomous units, which ensured that ideological and religious discourses were kept separate, thereby curtailing any challenges religion may exert upon one's ideological world views or vice versa.

The parallels on the other side of the coin are merely different responses to the same three sets of problems. In this instance people were (b) able to integrate their religion with their politico-ideological world view through;

- i) re-interpreting their religious framework by manoeuvring it in such a way that it legitimised their existent ideological position,
- ii) re-interpreting the social reality through a process of selective perception such that it appeared to fit the demands of their religious discourses, or
- iii) finally some people were able to integrate their religion with their ideological worldview in a way that allowed both to remain consistently intact and yet encouraged each to sharpen the other through a dynamic interaction that transformed both.

The following analysis of these six types of responses as revealed in the research done with the Christian youth is drawn not only from their responses in the interview schedule, but also from the broader participant observation I have done over the past years in working with Christian youth. Although, for the purposes of clarity, we deal with each type of response separately, in reality people are more complex and share a variety of these combinations.

B.1 Re-interpreting religious discourses selectively, such that they legitimise one's existent ideological position

Norms and values which are founded in a system of meaning, such as religion, generally help people in many societies to discern between what behaviour is acceptable and that which is not. People sometimes however act according to other discourses which are in fact hegemonic and in tension with their historical system of values and norms and actively pursue the hegemonic interests that their stated system of values in principle prohibits.

Where such people nevertheless still feel bound in some way to the values of their traditional meaning-giving entity, such as God, they will attempt to legitimise the pursuit of their new goals in the terms of this God rather than fundamentally question these new goals or alternatively admit that they have rejected the values of their God. It is common knowledge that in recent history, white Dutch Reformed theologians who were faced with just such a context, sought out biblical texts as well as re-interpreted history in such a way that it supported the Afrikaner people's claim to be elected by God to carry out His historic purposes. In this distortion of Christianity, it was God who had granted the Afrikaners the necessary power and leadership and placed them over other groups of people as their guardian. In this way racial oppression was made legitimate since it was interpreted as being part of God's historical purpose, even though it contradicts a basic Christian value of 'love thy neighbour'.

Whilst the same could be true for the majority of white Christians in South Africa, black South Africans are by no means exempt from using the same mechanism to legitimise their ideological interests. Malone explains how when he was asked to join a progressive Christian society on campus "at first I wasn't keen but I saw it was a good strategy for organising unpoliticised Christians into the struggle... but I still had problems when Bafana used to say Jesus was a revolutionary. I thought people were just co-opting Christianity for political ends". Sebo who was a member of a Christian prayer group at school recalled how his white teacher, in an opposite vein, had explained that "the political groups in the townships were bad because they were excluding God by not allowing him to bring change... so we stayed in our bible groups with the other charismatics and believed that change would only come through Christians, not politics".

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In a context where the liberation struggle becomes the hegemonic ideology of the oppressed, it becomes clear that if re-interpreting religious discourses was good for the (white) goose then it is also just as good for the (black) gander. Thandeni puts it quite precisely "There are many ways to fight the enemy... they took the land from us with religion, we will take it back likewise." Phiri adds "I view true Christianity as being for justice and therefore it goes together with our aim of destroying apartheid... so any other Christianity which is in any way against our struggle... I don't take seriously". The danger implicit in this position is that the potential challenges Christianity could offer to one's political commitment where there are tensions between the two, may well be overlooked as irrelevant within this approach. What characterises this position whether it be from the perspective of the left or the right is that it is essentially a politico/ideological logic which dominates and in time dissolves any religious contributions which are not really accorded any intellectual respect.

A) I A failure to integrate religious discourses with one's ideological framework resulting in a rejection of one's religious discourses

This approach is an improvement on the former one in that here, there is at least an honest parting of the ways after one recognises that one's religious discourses are at odds with one's ideological position. For the black and white Christian youth interviewed there was once more a contrasted response. Mathabo was still a practising Christian when she was interviewed but her response reveals that this may not be the case today. "I find it difficult to integrate Christianity with my political commitment because the church is against our politics... it makes rules which prevents the struggle... like you can't get good out of evil... so while the soldiers are killing us, the church says we mustn't fight back... I feel as human people we must defend ourselves... The church preaches justice but doesn't practise it". Mathabo appears to have the critical insight to distinguish between Christianity's stated beliefs and the church's practice of it. Nevertheless the institutional church's marriage to a liberal ideological framework which fails to come to terms with the particular context within which it finds itself, has meant that especially politicised black youth have gradually moved away from Christianity.

Some white university Christian youth experienced a similar drift away from Christianity even though they had been part of progressive Christian organisations on campus. Jeremy expressed "some of the values Christianity gave me have remained central especially love and respect for people... as a humanist I can still identify with the way Jesus could transcend his suffering to see the suffering of others... but I don't agree with the way he died and made it our responsibility... I feel there are other ways of making a message, death's a bit much." Jeremy further explained why he moved away from Christianity. "I couldn't understand why I had to translate political terms into religious ones... rather just use straight political terms... I felt I didn't want to struggle between two frameworks anymore."

Freddy who was involved in the same grouping also admitted "I saw Christianity only at a strategic level in the end and found political circles more and more stimulating at the same time as Christianity became less stimulating... I have never consciously rejected Christianity and although a Marxist analysis did make me question the presence of God, now I'm not a Christian but nor am I a confirmed atheist... my whole motivation is centrally the political struggle now... this is my yardstick of morality... my academic career and my relationships are all totally linked to this... Christianity did equip me with a set of values to test my environment with... it encouraged a critical attitude that helped me to embark upon a process of political struggle." In analysing why Jeremy and Freddy took these paths it is helpful to explain that at the time their Christian movement was striving to prove itself politically relevant, in the context of antagonistic or sceptical left-wing political circles. Hence it is possible that in its attempts to forge a progressive political discourse onto their religious discourses, it is very possible that this was done in a way which blunted the religious contribution to nothing more than a strategic one.

Whilst we have illustrated how people rejected their religious traditions because they were relatively conservative in relation to their ideological perspectives, there were some youth who rejected their religious traditions precisely because they challenged their more conservative ideological perspectives. Tracy revealed that the church on campus was the first place "where issues of justice were raised in a more meaningful way... but I wasn't very comfortable with it... at the same time the external rituals of religious practice, which were important to me, were being rejected." Pat added that at one conference "Father spoke in favour of liberation theology... but I felt Jesus was a pacifist... also I

realised it was dangerous being involved... I didn't want to help others with these costs... I felt religion was being used for political means... but I think I was also a bit selfish..." Although both Pat and Traa continued to equate Christianity with justice today, both are no longer active in either the liberation struggle or in the church.

B. 2 Re-interpreting Social reality selectively such that it fits within the framework of one's religion

Some people for whom religious discourses are a central aspect of their identity, would find it very difficult to reject or fundamentally alter their religious discourses. When they find that their social reality does not conform with these religious discourses, yet are unwilling effectively to transform this reality, they sometimes instead interpret social reality in such a way that it appears to fit the demands of their meaning-giving religious discourses. Hence many white Christians in South Africa have deemed it fit to vote for the political parties which have most effectively twisted social reality (particularly using the media) until it conforms with the image they would like to see rather than anything which resembles reality. In fact people want to believe that apartheid is dead, that each 'nation' is given an equal opportunity to develop its potential, and any grouping which contradicts the propaganda by pointing to some of the uglier and more blatant realities, is regarded with suspicion.

Through this mechanism many white and black Christians have been guilty of subconsciously selecting elements from the given evidence which have enabled them to continue in their ways and any evidence which might have caused them to begin to question this, has instead been disregarded. Mario complained "I don't feel the bishops should make the views in their statements too well known. I know they need to discuss what's happening, but they should keep it to themselves... otherwise it gives us problems with the youth." Here Mario refers to the ripples caused amongst white youth whose dominant perception of reality as fed to them by racist government media which they respect, goes largely unchallenged, until an alternative and recognised authority periodically calls them to conscience through bishops' statements.

A. 2 A failure to integrate an understanding of social reality within the parameters of one's religious framework resulting in an escape from any integration of social realities into an enlarged 'spiritual world' of religion

It is interesting to note how evangelical spiritual religious groupings grow fastest in contexts where there are intense social conflicts affecting the people. Although the bulk of youth involved in such groupings do not fall within the scope of the Christian youth groupings under survey, there were indications of this phenomenon amongst a few of the youth interviewed. Isaac, a black student at university, who came from such a school grouping in a rural area, joined a North American sponsored white evangelical Christian grouping on campus. For his first year on campus this provided for his major community needs and here "we were told communism did not allow freedom of religion... but after a while I began to wonder why they never warned about many other areas where we, as blacks in South Africa have our freedom suppressed... I realised it was easy for churches to programme people especially when good Christian preaching is linked with a warped political understanding. I realised how it had made me suspicious and wary of any political groupings on campus and effectively blinkered me from seeing what was happening around me everyday".

Isaac concluded by expressing how "now I can understand that Marxist criticisms of Christianity have some relevance, especially when much of modern-day Christianity comes from the USA and I realise how big capital could be using this for their own ends. I mean when I think of how I was taught to see violence as a bad thing, it is clear that although I am black I was seeing it only from the perspective of the people at the top... I believe God wants us to live a good life physically and spiritually... where none will starve... my other worldly religion could not really challenge my political understanding as much as the opposite... but I do believe our politics can and should be challenged by Christianity." Another feature of this form of escapism was expressed by Sharon who exclaimed 'I never found politics at varsity interesting, I was more into rag for the 'jorl' .. when I joined the YWCA I didn't like the leadership who said we couldn't go to the beer-club, but we would go there and have a rave and talk religion over the bar... but I wasn't concerned about the South African situation then." Thus, in a society where escapism is encouraged in drinking and 'jorling', religious escapism is just another brand of a very popular product which sells well amongst people afraid to face the seriousness of their present situation.

B. 3 In the face of contradictory values and practices, the separation of ideological and religious beliefs into two compartmentalised, autonomous units

The increasingly loud chorus demanding that politics should not be preached from the pulpit is to be expected from 'Christians', in an environment where people have blatantly disregarded Jesus' basic commandment to love one another and are sufficiently conscious of this to feel some guilt when they are reminded about it. This position has however become so dominant that the majority of people who relate their faith to their lives in this way, would respond with surprise or irritation, (rather than guilt) if ministers of religion actually expected them to sincerely attempt to integrate these two spheres of life in any more honest a way. People within the business sector are, for example, quite conscious that 'turning the other cheek' to your competitor would be one sure way of hastening your bankruptcy. Few who recognise that such an economic system must be based upon values in tension with those of Jesus, would however attempt to contribute to transforming the economy to one more in harmony with Christian values. Furthermore, collective self-justification reinforces this phenomena and individuals feel little need to justify their behaviour when the group with whom they identify does the justifying for them by simply applying a different set of ethics to those which are stated.

Hence Mario, who comes from a devout Catholic family who attend Sunday Mass together, week after week, expressed: "My father's more of a nationalist(NP)... he gets very angry though and says that politics should be kept out of church." Mario's perspective was only slightly different, "they (the Bishops and priests) can speak on politics so long as they keep it to themselves". Whilst this characterisation is perhaps the most prevalent amongst white, Christian, South Africans, it has made a deep impression on older black oppressed Christians who have been fed with the same dominant ideas and have accepted their oppressor's brand of ideology. Sebo explained, "my father is active in the church but he is very much sticking to the government's rules... he even said I must leave the church youth group after some of our members, who were involved in the school boycotts, got arrested.". A consequence of this separation of faith and ideology has meant that many (older) black activists who became politically involved and rapidly transformed their ideological position, kept a relatively static religious discourse intact, precisely because these were so strongly embedded in mutually exclusive compartments.

A. 3 The Integration of religious and ideological discourses in a dynamic way that serves to transform both

Many Christians interviewed, particularly those who have been politically active expressed that their initial beliefs in Christianity had been subjected to a thorough criticism, through the lenses of their newer ideological perspectives. They admitted that the challenge of their involvements had forced them to shed some of their childhood perceptions of God and religion. But whilst some of the illusory dimensions of their previous religion had faded away, for many this was replaced by a deeper experience of religious faith which influenced their lives in a far more dynamic way than anything which had preceded it. More than this however, many expressed that their subsequent, more mature religious belief served to challenge and compliment their ideological discourses in turn.

The interaction between religious faith and ideology took different forms amongst different people. Bheki's experience reflects that of many of the black youth interviewed, "I was born in a Catholic family and brought up as a Christian...but it didn't fulfil my (political) needs and later on I rejected it... but then (later) liberation theology fulfilled me more...I know that Christianity is important for our people, even if its 'pie in the sky' theology... from seeing Christians change and become committed I have gained hope in Christianity, although I still have many questions about Christianity... I am a Christian who will always be asking questions about Christianity, just like I do with Marxism". George, a 'coloured' university student expressed how his deep religious roots were vital in explaining his political commitment. "I've always believed in God .. this is my basis and in terms of this I can understand political action... without Christianity I would maybe be a sympathiser...maybe not even this...I just wouldn't be motivated to act politically without Christianity. I think I'd just get rich and go to church every Sunday!". George's final comment illustrates how such Christians have clearly distinguished between the popular nominal 'Christianity' and that which attempts to effectively transform the sinful dimensions of its social context.

Sebo pointed out that "the struggle challenged my Christianity... I re-looked at the bible and realised there was also a struggle there, where Jesus and many of the prophets had died for their faith. ... now Christianity challenges me... it says to me, if you want to ... from you must

carry your cross.. this is the situation of suffering we find ourselves in now...If I choose the lighter way I know I will also in some way be rejecting Jesus". Erica, a white university student expresses a similar sentiment "The basic Christian values of loving my neighbour have always been important to me, but now I realise that political involvements are also an expression of Christianity...moreover I realise its not like when I leave varsity I will be leaving the world of ideals... Christianity has challenged me to see the struggle as a life-long thing".

Eddy, a Chinese university student adds "Once I saw the link between Jesus' life and my values I got challenged... subsequently Christianity has inspired me and the Sunday masses and services are meaningful... seeing other Christians becoming committed has motivated me. Now Christianity is what motivates me and the kingdom of God is my goal... the political processes of change are part of moving towards this total liberation... when I look at the national- democratic struggle I see how Christianity compliments this... the national democratic struggle challenges my faith but I must admit my faith doesn't yet challenge my politics as much". Maryanne hinted at a similar "tension in that I'm not developing my faith at the pace that I'm developing my political commitment" yet nevertheless preceeded this with "I don't think I would have been emotional about the struggle without faith... I mean straight Marxists are not supposed to be very loving people whereas we feel we should be... this gives me a sense of vision rather than just a political programme. For me faith is the attitude of a lover, where you really care about people and have a total involvement with them. Faith and the experience of detention broke the attitude of the struggle being a part-time thing."

Maureen was similarly impressed by the wholism of religious discourses. "Christianity and Socialist values are similar but Christianity is broader than political analysis since it encourages you to challenge all dimensions of life.. If I'd been in the secular organisations, I don't think I would have been as critical at these other levels of life, including the personal dimensions too". Antonio synthesizes the typical response reflecting a dialectical interaction between faith and political commitment as expressed by many of the interviewees, "If it wasn't for Christianity I would have been too pessimistic to get involved... but Christianity gave me a hope which was realistic because of the community I belonged to, their selflessness and generosity gave me hope.. Without Christianity I would have been more coldly analytical but the symbols of Christianity challenge me personally... Jesus' life, his

selflessness and compassion for people challenge me to want to follow him.. Marxism makes me critical of the society and prevents me from falling into mysticism or a naive hope. ... without Christianity I'd be a cynic, without Marxism I'd be idealistic for a time and then life would contradict it and I'd be a cynic once more.. together they compliment one another."

The research reveals that a major proportion of the Christian youth interviewed, particularly those who are more seriously committed to political liberation, have found the national democratic programme a useful instrument in their quest for the socio-politico-economic transformation of South Africa. The more intellectually developed activists would be conscious of how this line of thought was originally formulated by Marxists in applying Marxism to the South African context. But the majority of Christian youth who are active in the united front would have grasped somewhat of a looser Marxist class analysis. Most interviewees nevertheless experienced few difficulties in integrating their Christian inspiration with such an analytical approach to society. For some this has encouraged a critical reflection on their religious consciousness. People ask where my concepts of God, Jesus, salvation, the kingdom, come from? and whilst we have indicated that a few would as a result 'outgrow' their religious framework, the bigger grouping find that their religious consciousness and praxis subsequently undergo a qualitative purification. So while it would be premature to speak of the possibility of a fusion between Christianity and Marxism, particularly at the theoretical and institutional levels, it is evident that at least young people inspired by either one (or both) are engaged in a fruitful dialogue at a grassroots level of the struggle in South Africa. In this respect our situation might be favourably compared with that of the Philippines where Christians and Marxists who are united in a common front based upon a national democratic programme of struggle, are undergoing a similar ferment in ideas (see Ed de la Torre: Touching Ground, Taking Root).

Marxist Parties and Religion - a Comparative Account

We have illustrated the numerous ways in which conservative or racist ideologies which are essentially contrary to the Christian message have nevertheless succeeded in co-existing alongside or more directly co-opting Christianity to its own ends. While other ideological systems may have political and economic implications which are in keeping with

or at least open to Christian values, Marxism is one ideological framework which has historically emphasized that its materialist roots make it an enemy of religion. This sometimes places an objective barrier between people who share a common cause in socio-political and economic liberation but have different sources of inspiration which motivate them towards this common end. Since this is the converse side of the dialogue between Christians and Marxists active in the liberation struggle in South Africa, we analyse the different historical experiences of the relationships between Marxist parties and religion from other parts of the world. In this light we will highlight some of the theoretical questions and issues which are raised and which require further clarification.

Paul Siegel in **'The Meek and the Militant'**(1) outlines how Engels and Lenin most clearly depicted how Marxists should behave with regard to religion and religious people in calling for the complete separation of church and state. In 1905 Lenin wrote "The state must not concern itself with religion: religious societies must not be bound to the state. Every one must be absolutely free to profess whatever religion he likes, or to profess no religion i.e. to be an atheist as every Socialist usually is."(2) For Lenin this did not mean that the party should not publish educational books against religion; since ideology is recognised as a force in the class struggle, but it did mean that "the propagation of atheism by the Social-Democrats must be subordinated to the more basic task - the development of the class-struggle of the exploited masses against the exploiters"(3). This meant that Marxists should not make acceptance of atheism a part of the party programme and Lenin further added that they should instead welcome into the revolutionary party workers who retain religious beliefs and be "absolutely opposed to the slightest affront to these workers' religious conviction."(4) Lenin thus paves the way for parties to have tactical and strategic alliances with religious groupings but with the assumption that it is only, "when the masses themselves learn to fight against the social facts from which religion arises..... to fight against the role of the capitalist in all its forms"(5) that religion will be eradicated. We will analyse three distinctive ways in which this was interpreted by Marxist parties in the Soviet Union, Cuba and Nicaragua, each within its own particular context.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Religion

The Bolsheviks following Lenin instituted the separation of church and state and in the decree of 1918 on 'Freedom of Conscience and Religious Societies' stated "Every citizen may adhere to any religion or adhere to none. Any limitations before the law related to adherence to any kind of faith or non-adherence to any faith are abolished... Free practice of religious customs is safeguarded in so far as it does not disturb the public peace and does not infringe upon the rights of citizens of the Soviet Republic"(6).

This decree went beyond the United States' separation of church and state in abolishing religious oaths and prayers at state functions since it abolished all privileges that the Czarist government had granted to the Russian Orthodox church including annual state subsidies. Church buildings used for worship were declared state property but provided to congregations free of rent. Nobody was exempt from civil duties such as army service on religious grounds but an alternative service was possible.

This 'Leninist legality' was departed from under Stalin and especially Khrushchev when churches were forcibly closed and altars defiled and with various kinds of repressive measures against the Orthodox Church and other religious denominations there was a great loss to the institutionalised church of its constituency by the late 1950's.

After Khrushchev an alliance was once more arrived at between church and state through which both sides benefitted, with concessions being granted to the Orthodox Church, while the state, through the activity of the Church in the international arena hoped to create the impression of unhindered freedom of belief and conscience in its own land. This has in turn led to a small opposition within the Orthodox Church and especially the Evangelical Christians and Baptists who are opposed to both state interference in church affairs as well as church submission. This opposition from within nevertheless appeals to Leninist norms as expressed in the 1918 law and furthermore generally accepts socialism.

The Communist Party of Cuba and Religion

Although most Cubans nominally belonged to the Catholic Church, few practised their religion beyond being baptised, married and buried in the church. It was felt that the people identified the interests of the church with those of imperial Spain since many of the priests who came

from Spain identified themselves more closely with the aristocracy than with the poor. Hence Castro's 26th of July Movement encountered fewer difficulties with regard to religion than that of the Soviet Communist Party. Its policy towards religion was far more consistently Leninist in its adherence to the principles of complete separation of church and state. In the first years of the revolution this was upheld although the Catholic hierarchy issued pastoral letters critical of the new government and many priests encouraged Christians to enlist in the movement against the regime. After the Bay of Pigs invasion, priests who actively participated in it were captured. A few were deported and Castro warned that the permits of foreign priests who combatted the Revolution would be declared invalid. As a result there was a mass exodus of members of religious orders and priests although only a few were directly deported.

Yet even under these conditions the government declared that although it had taken serious measures to break up the conspiracy of the Catholic hierarchy, it nevertheless guaranteed the right of believers to religious freedom. Tensions between the church and the state subsequently subsided and by 1969 the bishops issued two pastoral letters which reflected a thorough change in attitude. The first condemned the United States' economic blockade of Cuba and asked Catholics to participate loyally in the development of their country. The second counselled Catholics to have a tolerant and understanding attitude towards atheists, to use justified criticisms of religion to purify their faith and to have a positive view of their social conditions. These statements far from being issued as a result of pressure from the government, reflected instead that the church leadership was listening more intently to calls from its own constituency, as well as the Cuban people as a whole.

The Sandinistas of Nicaragua and Religion

The Nicaraguan experience represents something qualitatively new and original, mainly because here, tens of thousands of Christians active within the revolution have proclaimed 'Between Christianity and the revolution there is no contradiction'. Prior to this experience Christians had never before formed so integral a part of a social revolution. One of the major sources of inspiration behind this phenomena was a new experience of living church which has developed especially in Latin America as a result of Vatican II. CELAM, the Conference of Latin American Bishops unequivocally pronounced in Medellin, that the

Church in following Jesus, had to take a preferential option for the poor and oppressed. As a result of this the church has attempted to share in the life of the poor amongst the basic Christian communities. It is from this position that it has reflected upon scripture and discovered the theology of liberation.

The Sandinistas recognised this movement within the church and in their historic programme of 1969 they stated that the revolution "will respect the right of citizens to profess and practise any religious belief"(7). In October 1980 the National Directorate of the FSLN issued a statement on the role of religion in the new Nicaragua. The statement begins by paying tribute to the many Christians who served the Sandinista Front and to the many Christians who were not members of the Front but nevertheless 'professed and practised their faith in accord with our people's need for liberation'. It goes on to say that while in different historical epochs religion has served to justify exploitation, "We Sandinista's state that our experience shows that when Christians, **BASING THEMSELVES ON THEIR FAITH**, are capable of responding to the needs of the people and of history, those very beliefs lead them to revolutionary activism". Hence "all those who agree with our objectives and proposals and have the personal qualities demanded by our organisation, have every right to participate actively in our ranks, whatever their religious beliefs."

In a forthright way it goes on to add, "within the framework of the FSLN, there is no place for religious proselytism. This would undermine the specific character of our vanguard and introduce factors of disunity, since the Sandinista Front includes companeros of various religions and none"(8). Siegel however attempts to integrate these original developments as being consistent with what Engels and Lenin foresaw in relation to the full participation of believers, as well as the fact that religious discourses have, under certain conditions, been a revolutionary force. Siegel should nevertheless realise that Lenin could not have envisaged the participation of religious people in the revolutionary process to the extent that it has taken place in Nicaragua. The reason is clear: Lenin had nothing comparable to liberation theology with its emphasis on orthopraxis within the concept of religion, available to him at that period. Furthermore there was no way of knowing then, how Marxist thought would challenge and influence orthodox theology.

The originality in the Sandinista's approach to religion lies in its recognition that it was in fact the faith of many Christians which led them into the revolution. These experiences have led the Sandinistas to a new respect for religion which clearly moves beyond Lenin's (at best) strategic approach to religious people. Gone are the assumptions that when people are able to control their destiny they will no longer need and hence discard belief in a God of Creation. Whilst there is no need to hide the fact that many in the Sandinista ranks and leadership are Marxists and atheists, preaching a text-book atheism to the believers would no doubt be regarded with the same scorn that religious proselytism would be received with. The dialogue which was born out of the blood and ashes of the Nicaraguan people has led many within this land to say that in their experience there is no contradiction between Marxism and Christianity. There is perhaps less of a concern for theoretical and philosophical tensions within this approach, but no-one doubts its effect in firstly facilitating the liberation of Nicaragua from the Somoza dictatorship, and secondly in defending the newly gained victories of the revolution from the powerful forces of "Yankee imperialism" (as it is popularly known in Nicaragua). This praxis serves as a starting point for some brief reflections on the theoretical 'contradictions' which presently separate Christianity and Marxism.

Christianity and Marxism : Contradictory or Complementary?

This subject warrants a thesis on its own but it is nevertheless fitting that some exploratory contributions be made within the confines of this thesis. To begin with, it is necessary to analyse Marx's critique of religion since it is often seen as the source of the dichotomy. We will then briefly analyse the other side of the argument from the ecclesial hierarchy who attempt to maintain a distinction if not an outright separation between faith and ideologies in order to safeguard the former. We will then conclude this chapter by theoretically explaining why it is that Christians in South Africa, as well as many other third world countries, are openly proclaiming that they hold a Christian faith that complements their politico-economic tools of analysis, (ideologies) amongst them Marxism.

Marx's Critique of Religion

A key to understanding Marx's theory of ideology is contained in one sentence from the Manifesto "The ruling ideas of each age have ever

been the ideas of its ruling class"(9). This means that even the ideas of the working class are imposed by the ruling class to conceal the mechanisms of the existing mode of production. It furthermore means that the ideas of a given age, including the philosophical, religious and political ideas, are more or less determined by the particular mode of production of that period. Hence it follows that to transform the economic mode of production, human consciousness will need to be theoretically liberated from ideologies that conceal the existing mode of production that is exploiting the working class. In CAPITAL, Marx stressed that "Any history of religion... that fails to take account of this material basis, is uncritical. It is in practice, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the rusty creations of religion than conversely to infer from the actual relations of life at any period the corresponding 'spiritualised' forms of these relations. But the latter method is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific one."(10)

Juan Segundo points out from the above that Marx's approach to religious problems involves three steps.(11)

- 1) "that each and every religious form has a specific place in the ideological superstructure of a given age;
- 2) that the prevailing religious form of an age, including those accepted by the oppressed class, derive from the living experience of the dominant class; and
- 3) that the process of discovering this connection abets the revolutionary forces of the proletariat."(12)

Segundo points out though, that while Marx affirms his above statement in relation to all other levels of the social superstructure, (legislation, political parties, cultural forms etc.) he goes against these principles in relation to religion. Instead of examining the specific historical possibilities of converting religion and theology into a weapon in the hands of the oppressed, he takes the easy way by viewing religion as an autonomous and ahistorical monolith belonging to a purely spiritual plane. In this way Marx uncritically sees all religion as "the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness"(13).

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theology and have in the process begun to transform Christianity itself. It is arguable that Marx's attack on religion should be seen within his general criticism of ideology which he perceived as falsifying and hiding reality. Charles Davis echoes Segundo's criticisms by pointing out that Marx's early critique of religion actually does not utilise an historical materialist framework but exists more in the form of purely negative assertions. Whereas "a scientific critique of religion must therefore rest upon a detailed study of the actual, concrete and material conditions of life at every particular time and place." (14) Cochrane furthermore points out that the scientific intent of materialism is not totally pervasive, and thus the question of the existence of God cannot be answered by a materialistic method. (15)

The Ecclesial Hierarchy's Criticisms of Ideology

Church leaders have repeatedly announced that 'faith is not an ideology' or 'faith excludes ideology' particularly in criticising the use of Marxist analysis in liberation theology. Helder Camara puts the case quite succinctly, "With the Gospel message, the social encyclicals, Vatican II and Medellin, we have no need to appeal to any ideology to inspire us in our sacred commitment to foster human betterment... One who has Jesus Christ does not need Marx". Segundo points out that the danger with this line of thinking lies in the fact that many Christians expect to run back over the course of history to find divine revelation and then literally to apply these answers from the past, to the situation we face today, with the confidence of an absolute guarantee. What is missed in the process however is that Jesus Christ puts us into contact with absolute objective truth through a relative ideology. In each historical encounter the truth remains totally obscured behind the ideology in that encounter which is relative and bound up with a specific and changing context.

The essential truth in what is revealed through the density of scripture has no direct ideological translation in totally different historical contexts. Hence Segundo concludes that faith is a process of learning to learn and as such is a fundamental element in the search for truth however provisional and incomplete the historical solutions it discovers might be. So while faith is clearly not an ideology, within each particular context, it has sense and meaning only insofar as it serves as the foundation stone for ideologies. Hence "Christians cannot evade the necessity of inserting something to fill the void between their faith and their options in

history. In short, they cannot avoid the risk of ideologies".(16) This is evident in *Gaudium et Spes* (¶ 10-16) where the standard assumption of classical theology, that faith possesses the solutions, is rejected: "In fidelity to conscience Christians are joined with the rest of people in the search for truth, and for the genuine solutions to the numerous problems which arise in the life of individuals and from social relationships."(17) Hence it makes no sense to try to separate faith from ideologies in order to preserve the former, for without ideologies faith is dead. On the contrary faith becomes mature by way of ideologies which makes possible the real-life liberation of human beings.

CONCLUSION

What is made clear from Segundo's study on the relationship between faith and ideology is that they are not opposites but two anthropological dimensions of our being human. While they are different they may be complementary. All people have a faith which is a fundamental value or meaning structure acquired through relationships in the culture and society in which a person is situated. All people also have a system of ideas (ideology) through which one can effectively implement one's fundamental values. Faith in the religious sense is different in that it places a person within a tradition which has a message and system of values which are considered to be absolute. Yet this frame of reference does not immediately offer the answers to a believer's concrete involvement in a particular historical situation and these too need to be translated into concrete ideologies.

The dangers in relating faith to ideology are twofold. On the one hand ideologies have been set up as secular faiths claiming to possess all the ultimate solutions to the problems of people in the world. In this instance an ideology can become a surrogate faith which in Christian terms amounts to idolatry. Conversely Christians who defensively reject all ideologies have unconsciously bound Christianity to one absolute ideology. Hence claims that all ideologies are superseded practically means that counter ideologies which challenge the dominant one are effectively ignored. In this framework faith becomes a surrogate of ideology.

Faith and ideology should as many Christians are realising, be kept in a creative tension. The tendency of faith to become ideological and of ideology to become idolatry is always present. From the analysis of the

research earlier on in this chapter, we have made it clear that a growing sector of Christian youth committed to the liberation struggle in South Africa are realising their faith through political ideologies and involvements. What has been argued is that contrary to the assumption that this is a deviation from faith, this is instead the only way in which a critical faith can grow to maturity. Whilst there are no guarantees that true liberation will be achieved it is only through the risk of ideologies that this process of faith and liberation may actively be engaged in. But for those who refuse to soil their hands in the earthy struggles for liberation, there remains a contented 'faith' which exists on the plane of eternal certitudes, far above the historical struggles for liberation. But as Bishop Schmitz has said "Let him who is without an ideology cast the first stone".(18)

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The central research question of this thesis has been to identify and to analyse how key subject discourses are relevant in explaining what contributes towards and what prevents Christian youth from undergoing ideological change. The secondary question has been to uncover the range of ways in which Christian youth relate their religious discourses to the politico-ideological discourses they hold. An important assumption in this hypothesis has been that through understanding the dynamics experienced at this level of the research, light could be reflected upon the implications this holds for the church as a particular site of struggle.

In concluding then, we will attempt to draw together the key results of the research in a manner which is conducive to outlining the preliminary implications they hold for ideological change as practiced in the church as a site of struggle. This thesis is but part of the beginnings of a process of doing research into this area of struggle which has thus far been badly neglected. In this sense our research has been experimental and our conclusions are as yet still tentative. It is hoped that this thesis will be followed and built upon by further research which will be capable of exploring this area more broadly. Through this process, the experimental results arrived at in the course of this research focussed upon that sub-sector within the church called youth should be clarified and located within an evolving body of research.

The results of the Central Research Questions

Through the utilisation of the main tools of research, the in-depth interview complimented by the broader participant observation it was revealed that there are at least ten major subject-discourses which are key factors in explaining why Christian youth did or did not undergo ideological change. While certain subject-discourses (most notably racial-discourses) were clearly more dominant in the lives of our sample, than others, it would have been highly difficult to predict exactly which of the subject discourses listed would be the most key ones blocking or encouraging ideological change in each individual case. Certain patterns did however emerge and it is necessary in concluding

to outline from the research done under each of the criteria, which youth were most influenced by which criteria and why?

1. YOUTH has been identified as a period within the psycho-social stage of growth in which people most commonly search for a sense of identity. The relatively high proportion of youth involved in political struggles in many situations world wide furthermore suggests that youth as a social sector are relatively more open ideologically than their parents (who in this instance generally seem to have grown accustomed to the forms of oppression their children resist). In the South African situation the political profile of black youth particularly has been explained by the combined effects of three underlying factors: the expansion of black schooling; in a form which is riddled with defects; compounded by high unemployment for school-leavers. The relative importance of this general subject-position of youth shared by all the respondents, was however weakened by the central fact that it is black and white people who share in common their being young, who are nevertheless locked-in against one another in this violent conflict.

2. ECONOMIC DISCOURSES, specifically those of the dominant classes were well received by most of the youth, yet each sector of youth articulated with these discourses in distinctive ways which corresponded to their respective class position. Hence amongst black working class youth these discourses were internalised as a striving to be free from want in a context where the struggle for economic survival is the dominant experience. Some of the upper middle class white youth, on the other hand, who are in fact free from these wants, expressed the desire to become millionaires. Furthermore, while both sets of youth had accepted the dominant discourses, it was clear how black (or white) working class youth were more receptive to counterhegemonic discourses which more closely corresponded with their experiences and enabled them to overcome their consciousness of inferiority, which the dominant discourses ultimately placed upon them. It was however made clear that although white (and black) middle class youth were able to identify with counter hegemonic socialist discourses, they generally had more to overcome in arriving at this position, since they had comparatively more to lose materially, than their working class counterparts who stood (in the longer term at least) to gain from this.

3. RACIAL DISCOURSES, It was immediately obvious, are a dominant feature of life in South Africa. Each and every respondent

drew attention to its influence in their lives ranging from its role in the economy to their accessibility to toilets. The dominant racial discourses were particularly powerful when passed onto children by parents. Although there, were often contradictions in people's life experiences of these discourse, in the absence of an alternative discourse which competed with the dominant discourses, children were highly susceptible to their parents' perspectives. In this sense the contribution of the 'generation of seventy six' in popularising an effective counter-hegemonic racial discourse (in black consciousness) has served to create a substantially more fluid ideological terrain than was formerly the case. Subsequently non-racial discourses have had a far greater impact upon the overall discursive formations of these sectors of Christian youth who were interviewed. Finally it was found that where race and class positions corresponded and both were subjugating people, they were likely to be more pervasive in effect. When however, their messages were at odds with each other, people were more likely to reject those discourses which attempted to subjugate them.

4. GENDER DISCOURSES: The research reveals that counter-hegemonic discourses encouraging a non-sexist attitude are less developed than those relating to class, race and to a lesser extent, age. Therefore, it featured less prominently as a causal explanation for why young Christians became involved. The absence of feminist discourses was however a major obstacle blocking especially working-class black women from participating within the more politically conscious youth groupings or at a leadership level within the broad-based Christian youth groupings. Where white (and black) middle class young women were less tied to a second-shift of domestic labour and hence were more free to participate in the life of these youth groupings, the quality of this participation was seriously hampered to the extent that sexist discourses remained insufficiently challenged.

5. POLITICAL DISCOURSES: Both political discourses which opened Christian youth to engaging in resistance to the dominant discourses, and those which discouraged this, were respectively analysed. We were able to illustrate how youth (especially white youth) had been socialised in the home and school in ways which legitimised the dominant discourses and subsequent counter hegemonic discourses failed since many youth were apathetic to these concerns and or more interested in having a good time, or were wary of discourses from the left particularly when they were alienated by their style and form; finally there were those who temporarily participated in

such discursive practices but were left cynical when these discourses failed to address and transform their fundamental fears.

On the other hand, there were clear examples of both black and white youth who were socialised in ways which opened them to counter-hegemonic discourses when this was done by parents or (as occurred in '76) by peers. Here we analysed the three different steps through which counter-hegemonic discourses influenced youth:

- i) In the first stage youth were most often mobilised into basic actions which generated excitement.
- ii) Subsequently an informal education process followed in which young people's initial questions were answered.
- iii) Finally youth were consciously organised into political groupings where they were given greater responsibilities and were thus more thoroughly equipped to internalise the new discourses they had initially received more superficially. Many of these youth gave testimony to the dramatic processes of conversion that they had undergone and through which their personal values and lifestyles had been radically transformed.

6. REPRESSIVE DISCOURSES AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE:

The repression which characterises not only the sporadic political confrontations, but is rather an everyday feature of urban black life, helps to explain why many black youth have been brought up in an environment where counter-hegemonic discourses are dominant. As white youth at the open-universities have begun to be exposed to state repression on their campuses, there has subsequently been a greater openness to counter-hegemonic discourses. For the most part the research reveals that instead of state-repression dissuading black and white youth from engaging in political resistance, it has in fact strengthened their resolve to fight back. The slogan 'an injury to one is an injury to all' is evidence of a popular expression (of a counter-hegemonic discourse) which serves to illustrate that although repression does often crush opposition, in situations where it is shared by the collective, (as was the case amongst Christian youth groups) it can serve to strengthen opposition in the face of the state violence.

7. SOCIAL COMMUNITY seems to have played a fairly significant role in explaining the politico-ideological discourses adopted by youth in each of the three growth periods researched.

While younger children were more vulnerable to their parents' discourses, in their later teens a disjuncture between the discourses of their parents and that of their peer group usually meant that either one of these social communities would have to subsequently diminish in importance.

Black youth who opted for discourses of resistance usually had the support of a broader black community in whose eyes they achieved a higher status. A strong alternative social community was however a central pre-requisite for those white youth who in adopting counter-hegemonic discourses, were usually simultaneously cutting their traditional basis of support in the white communities in which they had grown up. Hence the identity of, especially, these white Christian youth groupings was centred around a close community, although this did not mean that these communities were exempt from internal conflicts and divisions. Hence this positive sense of community was on its own insufficient, and was only found capable of developing a closer identification with counter-discourses when it was accompanied by the necessary intellectual formation.

8. PERSONAL CONSCIOUSNESS: In introducing psychological factors which are often deeply rooted in an individual's past, we have attempted to express some of the deeper complexities which are needed to complement the implicit rationality of discourse theory. What has been argued is that the more rational discourses articulate with a personal consciousness and the resultant combinations clarify why some who have been interpellated with counter-hegemonic discourses identify with these, while others would find it more difficult.

INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSES

Through the research we were able to gauge the extent to which the dominant intellectual discourses influence both black and white youth; both those who achieve, and those who judge themselves failures when they cannot succeed. Counter-hegemonic intellectual discourses were seldom received through the formal education process at high school, but at a university level these were more common. It was however found that unless these formal interventions were complemented by a more personalised informal process of education, people seldom remained consistently committed to these counter-hegemonic discourses. These informal networks of counter-hegemonic intellectual

discourses were found to be more a part of the social fabric of life in the urban black townships than for either the rural black youth or white youth more generally.

RELIGIOUS DISCOURSES

The influence of religious discourses upon Christian youth were different in terms of both their content as well as their effect. Many of the youth interviewed distanced themselves from religious discourses when these were either closely bound up with a conservative ideology, or when they addressed youth mainly through a medium better suited to adults. Alternatively, both black and white youth often only assimilated those elements of Christianity which fitted into their dominant discourses, while ignoring the rest. Counter-hegemonic religious discourses were received by black youth who were already committed to political discourses but had maintained somewhat of a Christian identity from their childhood. While white youth were subsequently able to integrate their faith with a progressive political commitment, counter-hegemonic religious discourses usually preceded and allowed the white youth interviewed to be open to political discourses they would otherwise not have taken seriously. Both sets of Christian youth were subsequently able to distinguish between religious discourses which favoured the dominant political discourses and those which encouraged a critical attitude towards these. Finally the Jewish youth interviewed expressed the need for a Jewish youth grouping in which counter-hegemonic political and religious discourses could be integrated.

RESULTS OF THE SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Through the secondary research question, attention was focussed on the inter-relationships between the religious and politico-ideological discourses of Christian youth. This served to deepen the analysis and furthermore explain why it was that certain Christian youth had greater difficulties in undergoing ideological change, compared with others. Through analysing the range of six possible ways in which Christian youth either integrated or failed to relate their religious and politico-ideological discourses, we have attempted to uncover the ideological roots behind different conceptions of what being church means for different people.

To the first couplet of responses we showed how: some people were able to integrate their politico-ideological worldview by consciously or subconsciously manoeuvring their religious framework and selectively re-interpreting it in such a way that it legitimised ones already existent ideological position; others gradually moved away from religious discourses because they found it increasingly difficult to internalise these with the politico-ideological discourses they held firmly to. In either case though, it is the politico-ideological logic which eventually predominates and either dilutes, or dissolves the religious discourses which are not always accorded an equal intellectual respect.

In the second couplet of responses it is the religious discourse which predominates and the politico-ideological discourses which are robbed of all intellectual rigour: While some people were guilty of manoeuvring social reality and selectively re-interpreting it in such a way that it fitted within their religious discourses, others deserted the need for any integration of social reality and escaped instead into an enlarged spiritualist religiosity which engulfed their entire 'world'. The religious discourses in both responses while slightly different, share a key flaw in that they are similarly incapable of honestly facing up to the social realities. This is particularly so when a rigorous analysis of the social problems may necessitate a self-critical look at their religious discourses as well. The consequent possible changes to both ideological and religious discourses are, in this framework, too feared to be seriously considered.

In the third couplet of responses a basic awareness capable of highlighting the contradictions in people's stated values and actual practises does exist and people can subsequently choose one of two options. In the face of contradictory values and practices people sometimes choose (consciously or sub-consciously) to simply separate their politico-ideological discourses from their religious beliefs so that each is autonomous in its own compartmentalised unit. For different people the compartments take on different shapes: either a (church) Sunday/rest of the week dichotomy, or a work/home dichotomy, or a personal/political dichotomy where religion is limited only to the personal spheres, while political interests pervade the broader spheres of life. On the other hand, there are other people who recognise the contradictions between their values and their practices (their faith and their lives) and yet attempt to honestly integrate religious and politico-ideological discourses in a way that opens up each to be dialectically transformed through its mutual interaction with the other.

I have attempted to show that this final position is the most intellectually rigorous way for relating ones religious and politico-ideological discourses with one another. Those Christian youth who expressed this final type of inter-relationship between their religious and politico-ideological discourses were also, not surprisingly, the sector of Christian youth who had generally experienced a greater degree of ideological change and growth, as a result of either one of these discourses. This does not mean that the other Christian youth were less open to growth and ideological change, more broadly. We have simply focussed our attention on the inter-relationship between two of the subject discourses taken from the broader list and it is possible that some of the Christian youth whose discursive make-up made them less open on these particular discourses, were more open through the inter-relationships between others.

The kernel of Laclau and Mouffe's contribution to a more effective practise of ideological struggle would seem to be on this point. They have critiqued the classical Marxist notion that it is the economic base which determines the objective conditions under which the subjective factors of political struggle take place. Instead they have argued that the existent structure of subject positions people hold, which are a product of intra-discursive struggles, actually create the objective conditions which set the limits to political change. They have argued this on the basis that it is not structural place (be it class, race, sex or age) which determines subjectivity, but rather that subjectivity is the product of various discursive practices. The strength in this position is that it emphasises a new step of uncovering from people which signifiers in their overall make-up, are in fact the most key to a transformed consciousness rather than deterministically asserting this in an apriori fashion. This corroborates fairly closely with the results of the empirical research in this thesis, since for different Christian youth there were a variety of discourses and combinations of discourses which proved to be the key signifiers responsible for a change in consciousness.

Where Laclau and Mouffe's hypothesis was insufficiently rigorous though, was in explaining why black (or white) working-class youth were more receptive to counter-hegemonic economic discourses which more closely corresponded with their experiences, than their white middle-class counterparts. Laclau and Mouffe would assert that all social meaning is given by discourses since the relationship between human-beings and reality is always mediated by language. Hence 'experience'

would not be given any conceptual importance within their framework and would instead be enclosed within the concept of discourse. But from the research it would seem that although the dominant discourses were equally powerfully received by both working and middle class youth, it was the working-class youth's economic experience which rubbed up against these dominant discourses and were responsible for creating cracks in the dominant discourses. Laclau and Mouffe would argue that this phenomena can be explained exclusively as a product of past inter-discursive struggles. The correspondence between socialist discourses and working class communities suggests however, that economic experience must be credited with more than an accidental role in explaining why it is that past inter-discursive struggles within working class communities resulted in an embracing of socialist discourses.

Conversely, while Laclau and Mouffe's framework made it possible to recognise that white middle-class youth were also capable of identifying with counter-hegemonic socialist discourses, these youth nevertheless expressed they had more obstacles in achieving this since they had comparatively more to lose and less to gain (materially) in taking this option. We must nevertheless conclude that classical Marxism's stress on the primacy of class has often resulted in a failure to recognise potential allies from the middle class. Here economic experience is over emphasized at the cost of other experiences and discourses. From the research it emerged that religious discourses are but one example of a 'non-class' discourse which has played a relatively important role in explaining why many of the Christian youth identified more closely with socialism through 'taking an option for the poor' for example.

From the research then the limits to ideological change can objectively be explained by the existent structure of subject positions which needs to be discovered for any particular sample of people. In explaining ideological changes amongst Christian youth, we have focussed attention upon the inter-relationship between religious and politico-ideological discourses. While this analysis will help to clarify objectively which subject positions are most open or closed to ideological change, we have further tried to show that the subjective interventions would succeed to the extent that they not only understood the objective conditions, but furthermore address these in a form and content suited to the sample of people in question.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH AS A SITE OF STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

In drawing to a conclusion our research on ideological change amongst a specific sample of Christian youth, there is a logical need to posit the preliminary implications these hold for the church more broadly. From the research on how people integrate religion and political discourses on a micro-scale, some clues are given as to how religious and political institutions could inter-relate on the more macro scale. The present conflict between church and state (1988) furthermore makes a concluding contribution on this theme of the role of the church in a context of a national democratic struggle both necessary and relevant. We focus on two central models which have historically and still do presently characterise the role of the church within society. The former model is based upon an exaggerated conception of the church's potential and a weak conception of its limitations, while the latter reverses this imbalance. The third proposed model flows from a critique of the former two and is only now just beginning to be experienced.

THE CHURCH AS AN ALTERNATIVE SOCIETY

This model arose out of a 19th century European experience, in which large sectors of the population had been proletarianised by industrialisation. Both the church and the worker's parties attempted to address the problems faced by people, but both did it in ways which were mutually exclusive. Hence, while the Marxist parties encouraged workers to join arms under the banner of atheism (which precluded all religious 'unscientific' beliefs) the churches believed there was a 'Christian way' to solve the problems and hence set up its own 'Christian' trade unions, political parties etc. The two major groupings subsequently expended much energy attacking one another and served to further divide and weaken the forces of the oppressed.

Although the South African context is somewhat different from this, the recent (1985) National Initiative for Reconciliation's statement (in opposition to Apartheid) is but one of the many local brands which mirror some of the central sentiments which are held sacred in this 19th Century European church model. Firstly it fails to thoroughly analyse the causes of the conflict which are rooted in the economic and political structures of apartheid. Subsequently it seems to place its hopes in the

reforms of the government by sending a delegation to the state president, while on the other hand it fails to acknowledge that throughout history meaningful changes have come from the underside, from the people themselves. The central flaw in this model, and here the N.I.R. is blatantly guilty, is its ignorance of and indifference to the people's organisations in South Africa. Since all its (downward) strategies focus solely upon bringing the church people themselves together for prayer, worship, discussion and the sharing of suffering. By failing to link the attempts of Christian groupings to those of the people's organisations more broadly, it appears to suggest that the Christian solution to the problem would be at odds with the secular initiatives. The N.I.R. hence serves once more to divide the oppressed and in creating a potential third force, runs the risk of serving the political interests of the oppressors. This would contradict its claimed intention of wanting to lead its more conservative white constituency to unite forces with black Christians in a united and effective opposition to apartheid.(1)

THE CHURCH AS AN OUTSIDE SUPPORTER OF THE PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE

This model has arisen in more recent historical contexts where the secularisation of society has been dominant and the churches have found themselves very much part of a pluralist social structure. Subsequently the church has tended to transform its self-identity and mission by relinquishing its past dreams of exercising political power (in a Christendom) and has attempted instead to inform the consciences of Christians who do. In the process however, it has often withdrawn from the 'worldly' affairs and has focussed upon more 'spiritual' concerns which it has generally understood to be an other-worldly affair. Hence the churches have tended to focus the thrust of its personnel and resources into the administration and smooth-running of the business of church matters.

In societies where social conflicts have escalated such that it has been polarised into two antagonistic forces of the oppressed and the oppressors, however, the churches have been pushed once more onto the terrain of the 'worldly affairs'. While it has often lacked an adequate political analysis of and political strategy for the resolution of these conflicts, it has nevertheless been sincerely motivated with compassion for those who are suffering. Hence it has responded with statements from its leadership structures denouncing state repression. It has

placed its resources and some of its personnel at the disposal of the oppressed and their organisations. Some small sectors of the church even undergo an authentic transformation and become truly committed to the people's struggle. But the overall response of the churches in this model is to remain committed to their 'play-safe' policy and to limit their contribution to one of simply identifying with those (out there) who are struggling for justice.(2)

This model of church appears, most closely to resemble the response of the mainline churches in present day South Africa. All reasonable statements against apartheid, both logical and theological have been made, and they have had but a limited political effect. The economic and moral support that the church has given has undoubtedly been of assistance but is this the peak of Jesus' church's contribution to the process of liberation? There are the small groupings of Christian activists who work on the margins of the church, and from which a small trickle of activists are joining the people's organisations. These are qualitatively (if not quantitatively) a positive sign but is their dispersion into a variety of other areas of struggle, their most effective contribution, when the masses of grassroots Christians they leave behind, remain a disorganised, passive mass.

It would seem that both of the above models fail to recognise the obvious fact, that much of the membership and leadership of the liberation movements are Christians already. The heart of the problem lies more with the church as an institution, since it is the institution that has repeatedly failed to see itself as an integral part of the struggle for liberation. The message it gives to the bulk of its membership is that commitment to liberation is an optional extra rather than the essence of being a Christian. If the majority of Christians are to become involved in the liberation struggle, then those Christians already committed to this have to recognise that the Church itself needs transforming. The church's membership then needs to be re-educated, organised and mobilised around Jesus' central concern of liberation. To achieve this though, what is needed is a model which recognises THE CHURCH as a site of struggle.

THE CHURCH AS AN INTEGRAL SITE OF STRUGGLE

The central emphasis in this model is the question of people's power and to successfully gain people's power all spheres of society with

revolutionary potential are recognised as sites of struggle. Hence workers, students, youth, women and residents are organised as such, around the issues which directly block their progress and yet are co-ordinated by a political party capable of winning power. When we ask what people's power could mean in relation to the church however, it is less clear. While this model has not yet emerged in any developed form in the South African context, the vital task is to extract a proposed answer which is based upon an experience of the South African church's limits and potentialities.

A key limitation of the church which must be recognised in assessing its role in the transformation of South African society is that it is not key to the capitalist mode of production. Whereas, for example, the labour movement or the oppressed people's organisations are in a more directly antagonistic relationship to the fundamental contradictions in South African society, the church is more peripheral in that it is but one of the ideological institutions responsible for the reproduction of the social relations. Furthermore whereas educational institutions have been a key site of ideological struggle in South Africa, they have a more direct relationship to production since students generally aim to improve their economic standing through their education. In addition student organisations in attacking the educational authorities and calling for a better education were also directly attacking the state. The church is furthermore unlike the more centralised ideological institution of the media which is organisationally geared to conveying a message to a mass of people in a short space of time. The church by contrast is the oldest and most fragmented ideological institution and while in previous times it was responsible for both the above ideological functions and more, its role is constantly being diminished with the secularisation of society.

These limitations are not meant to detract from the church's contribution to transforming society but rather to emphasise, what it is that is specific to this contribution. The basic questions that people have about the meaning of life and death are still primarily responded to by religious institutions whether they are expressed in church liturgies on birth, death, and marriage, or in the key calendar days that break up the yearly cycle. This is important in that the interpretation religion gives to these events can have a powerful impact upon how people perceive life more broadly, what their central values will be and what moral code will guide their main decisions in life. Hence as in any site of struggle, the particular needs and contradictions which are raised in this particular

sector should be responded to in a way that enables people to link up these specific needs with the general needs and goals of the struggle as a whole. More specifically put, how can the religious symbols more powerfully convey the central message of liberation in a way that motivates and inspires religious people to transform both their churches and participate in the broader process of social liberation?

Firstly, since the church includes both rich and poor, black and white, organised and disorganised, we cannot use the concept 'church' as though it could explain the behaviour of its diverse membership. One has to recognise that there are numerous political divisions already present below the harmonious image that the church portrays. But one must also recognise that some form of common identity does exist, albeit an, at times, very fragile and weak one. This is both a strength and a weakness, since it means that if the oppressed Christians could be organised into a hegemonic force, they would be likely to pull other sectors of the church with them into the liberation movement. The fact that it is possible is clearly illustrated by the present reality where the ruling class have succeeded in achieving the opposite.

To change this though the church as a site of struggle has to be taken seriously. Assumptions that Christians need to join explicitly political organisations to be involved in political action cannot be allowed to persist. In fact the dispersion of Christian activists into other areas has tended to make the church one of the weakest sites of struggle and the one most open to a third force politics in South Africa. If this situation is to change, it will be necessary for the dispersed groupings of Christian activists (which do exist) to come together to forge a progressive church movement, capable of co-ordinating the struggle in the church. This movement is unlikely to win the support of the whole church once we have recognised its internal divisions but if it were an authentic initiative it could succeed in organising the important sectors of religious people thus far left disorganised and potentially a counter-revolutionary force.

What form could this movement of religious people take? While it is impossible to conclusively answer this at this stage, our past experience does give us pointers which should lead us into a democratic practise of action and reflection. Out of this process more thorough going answers will be generated.

Secondly, it would be inept and unnecessary for this movement to take on a partisan identity. While this would label it and from the outset limit its chances of mobilising the support of the majority of Christians, nothing should prevent it from uniting in action with the campaigns initiated by the democratic people's organisations which respond to the people's needs. Under the guidance of clear leadership this movement would be able to grow until it is democratically able to decide on these issues, in ways which build the liberation movement. As the repressive conditions become increasingly limiting of legal organised resistance, the churches could provide a relatively protected terrain where popular resistance can be continued. This has already begun to be experienced as church services are held nation wide on days of protest even under successive state's of emergency. The Church leadership has also become most vocal in publically criticising the regime under these conditions. If, however, a progressive base was built within the church, the church leadership could more easily be encouraged to consult with the popular leadership prior to making statements. Furthermore if this base could ensure that the decisions resulting from these consultations were both supported and implemented then, the participation of the church in our liberation struggle could really begin to be felt.

Thirdly the role of the church is vital in a struggle which in South Africa hopes to achieve a popular democracy simply because the churches in this context remain one of the most popular institutions in civil society. This is a further strength in the context of an international struggle in which attempts to portray the liberation movements as 'communist' and hence by implication anti-religious are repeatedly made. The church's active participation could hence make it more difficult for the imperialist powers to intervene. More importantly it could weaken the basis for an internal counter-revolutionary force if the church remained faithful to the struggle for justice in a post-liberation state.

This in turn would depend upon how strong the liberation movements' base had grown within the church and hence one of the important tasks facing the liberation movement is how to make people's power a reality within a people's church.

APPENDIX 1 (Taken from 1980 Population Census)

Church/Religion	1960		1970		1980	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
Dutch Reformed (NG)	2 289	14,3	3 006	13,8	3 676	12,5
Reformed (G)	124	0,8	154	0,7	146	0,5
Dutch Reformed (NH)	217	1,4	258	1,2	249	0,8
Anglican	1 403	8,8	1 716	7,9	2 040	6,9
Methodist	1 707	10,7	2 307	10,6	2 978	10,1
Presbyterian	321	2,0	578	2,7	646	2,2
Congregational	291	1,8	395	1,8	467	1,6
Lutheran	651	4,1	949	4,4	1 045	3,5
R/Catholic	1 076	6,7	1 898	8,7	2 701	9,2
AFM	198	1,2	219	1,0	191	0,7
Other Apostolic	299	1,9	712	3,3	132	0,4
Baptist	152	1,0	247	1,1		
A/C	2 313	14,5	2 716	12,5	5 857	19,9
Other	684	4,3	1 271	5,8	2 475	8,4
Subtotal	11 727	73,3	16 427	75,4	22 603	77,0
Jewish	115	0,7	118	0,5	119	0,4
Hindu	328	2,1	430	2,0	512	1,7
Islam	191	1,2	260	1,2	319	1,1
Other	9	0,1	29	0,1	522	1,8
Object, no, uncertain	3 617	22,6	4 530	20,8	5 285	18,0
Subtotal	4 261	26,7	5 367	24,6	6 762	23,0

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE — INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

INTRODUCTION: Where I briefly explain the aims of the thesis to orientate the respondents and express that their responses are confidential

A. FAMILY BACKGROUND

- 1) What work did your parents do when you were born?
- 2) What do they do now?
- 3) What activities in life do you think were/are most important to them?
- 4) What was/is their attitude toward people of different racial groupings?
- 5) What do you think their overall political consciousness was/is?
- 6) Is there any further information which you think is important in understanding your parents?
- 7) In what way do you think your parents influenced you as a child?

B. TEENAGE YEARS:

- 1) What groups did you belong to at primary and high school?
Why those groups?
- 2) Describe what you used to do in the group(s)
- 3) How did you feel about participating in these activities?
- 4) What were the goals you were striving for at this time?
Who were your heroes?
- 5) Are there any other important things which you remember from that time?
- 6) Were there any experiences you remember having, which made you feel uneasy and raised conflictual questions which rubbed against the rest of your life experience and worldview?

C. PERIOD OF GREATEST CHANGE

- 1) 1.1 What caused you to undergo a change in your consciousness
- 1.2 From what did you change and what was subsequently different

I.3 Were any of the following factors important in explaining why you changed?

- a) a grouping of people
- b) a new environment with new roles and responsibilities
- c) a transformed understanding of your past discourses
- d) an original understanding arising out of new discourses
- e) dramatic, traumatic or meaningful choices which crystallised a choice
- f) political environment and interventions of particular political movements

II) Were/are there any obstacles which mean there was a resistance to these changes? What were/are they?

D. PRESENT:

What are the effects of these changes on your life?

a - In relation to your personal values and goals in life?

b - In relation to your vocation/career

c - in relation to your participation in the struggle?

E. 1. What role did Christianity play in your life prior to, during the changes, and subsequently?

2. How do you relate/integrate Christianity with the political commitments you have made in life (or in instances where no political consciousness was evident)

How do you relate/integrate Christianity to your life?

Are there any tensions?

F. Is there anything which I have not asked you which you feel may be relevant to our discussion?

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GROUP INTERVIEW

A. IDENTIFYING THE NEEDS RESPONDED TO BY THE GROUP

1. Why did people join this group?
2. What do you do in your group that you have found meaningful?
3. What important needs of yours has the group responded to?
4. What needs of yours has it not sufficiently addressed?
5. Are your reasons for staying in the group different to when you joined?

B. IDENTIFYING THE IDENTITY OF THE GROUP

1. What unites you as members of the group? What do you share in common?
2. What are the symbols of the group (logo etc)? Do they mean anything to you?
3. Has the group's religious or political views changed in any way? How and why?
4. Are there any activities or aspects of the group that you find difficult to identify with? What are they and why?

C. PERSONAL GROUP FLEXIBILITY

1. Were there any obstacles to change which you had, which the group helped you to overcome?
2. If you had not belonged to this group in what ways do you think you would be different?

- D. Are there any important facts of your group that I haven't asked you about?

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