

PATTERNS OF SOCIAL RECIPROCITY IN THE 'NEW' SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

As discontent amongst the poor continues to ignite flashpoints of unrest across South Africa, issues surrounding how to effectively address chronic levels of inequality dominate the national debate. This has progressively put the spotlight on newer points of economic fissure, namely growing inequalities now surfacing more readily within black communities themselves. This research probes the critical issue of how black communities mediate these internal economic cleavages; it does so by focusing on how resource transfers are reciprocally employed between a purposive sample of Gauteng's black professionals and their communities of origin. Measuring levels, types and frequencies of exchange, surveys were used to gather data on the fiscal, time and in-kind resource transfers of respondents, whilst in-depth interviews captured the qualitative meanings attached to these reciprocity repertoires. The findings of this research pivot on three converging notions of exchange found to be active in this equation: *Economies of Affection*, *Moral Economies* and *Enclave Economies*. Economy of Affection rationales shaped how respondents transfers exhibited primarily within extended family support networks, Moral Economy logics dictated the obligatory aspects of 'giving-back' mores, and national Enclave Economy conditions propelled black professionals into enacting intermediary roles between the economic 'centre' and 'peripheries'. Whilst the question of whether Gauteng's black professionals will maintain these unique bridge-spanning roles over the long-term remains open for debate, the stimulating interaction between these 3 notions of 'reciprocity' provokes reflection on their cogence and interaction also within other contemporary southern hemisphere contexts.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

(Name of candidate and signature)

_____ day of _____ 2010

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my family
for their tireless support,
prayers throughout the journey,
unflagging encouragement
and
faith in the outcome.

My heartfelt thanks.

Acknowledgements

This research is an outgrowth of a decade (1994 – 2004) that the author spent in Soweto, in work which engaged with the dynamics of the symbiosis between emerging black professionals and communities of origin that either nurtured (or sabotaged) their advancements.

In 2006 this research was accepted for Doctoral studies at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) through the Faculty of Humanities, and under the auspices of their Department of Sociology and the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER).

Joint supervision for the project was provided under the able oversight of Dr Jacklyn Cock (Sociology) and Dr Jonathan Hyslop (WISER). The inspirational supervision of Dr Hyslop and Dr Cock imparted both incisive direction and ongoing motivation during each stage of the inception, development and completion of the research. As both advisors to the project and pedagogical mentors, the insight and guidance of these two outstanding academics has been invaluable.

The author acknowledges with deep respect her debt to Dr Cock and Dr Hyslop for their scholastic rigour and also profound thanks for the generous provision of time and energy that they both dedicated towards this project. For any limitations or omissions within the research itself, the author takes sole responsibility.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research

1.1 Aim

The intent of this PhD research is to investigate patterns of social reciprocity, specifically targeting the ‘giving back’ practices of a sample of black professionals (between 25 and 55 years of age) in Gauteng, South Africa. The central research question is:

What forms of social reciprocity exist amongst a sample of black professionals in contemporary Gauteng?

This investigation is conducted on two levels. First by means of gathering biographical and descriptive information about the sample group through a survey which documents the levels, types, frequencies, and coherence or differentiation that were associated with respondents’ giving habits. Here the research investigates the reciprocities of the sample group in terms of the following types of transfers:

- Money (the provision of financial assistance)
- Goods (the donation of a variety of in-kind materials and resources)
- Time (including professional time and expertise)

Secondly, the research focuses on qualitative analysis by means of conducting in-depth interviews which document respondents’ social investment histories, resource exchange mores and current practices. This part of the research elicits an understanding of the rationalities, meanings and subjectivities attached to respondent giving, obligation and reciprocity repertoires.

More specifically, the research makes inquiry around the following key sub-questions:

- Who: who are the primary actors within this equation of exchange?
What significant relational dynamics and alliances structure reciprocities?
(This question is primarily addressed in the findings surfaced in chapter 6)
- Why: why are exchanges undertaken?
What structural circumstances, conditions and/or rationalities motivate resource transfers?
(This question is primarily addressed in the findings surfaced in chapter 7)
- How: how are exchanges executed and patterned?
What are the embedded social schemas that exist that govern how exchanges take place?
(This question is primarily addressed in the findings surfaced in chapter 8)

1.2 Rationale

At the cusp of over a decade and a half into its newly acquired democracy, South Africa exhibits social cartographies of simultaneous ‘exclusion and embrace’ (Volf 1996). On the one hand legislative fiat embraces drastically expanded opportunities for all citizens, while on the other hand exclusionary socio-economic realities (both internally and globally triggered) militate against widespread structural change. Moreover economic demographics of survivalism are still a reality for large swathes of the population (Bond 2004; Barchiesi 2003; Desai 2003).

Critical at this juncture is the upsurgeance of several key realities which fly in the face of the hopes for access to a more evenly distributed resource pie and a further egalitarianised ‘rainbow’ nation. High rates of unemployment (Buhlungu et al, 2007), ongoing poverty (Bhorat & Kanbur 2006), and rising inequalities (Seekings & Natrass 2002) are compromising livelihoods and perpetuating entrenched exclusions, with those already on the margins being especially hard hit. Moreover in the aftermath of the enactment of structurally neo-liberal economic policies in South Africa particularly during (but not limited to) the first decade post-1994 (Bond 2004), coupled with the rise of the spectre of the AIDS pandemic (Hunter 2007), there is an ever-expanding need for a more durable and comprehensive social safety net to meet the needs of the still-marginalised masses (Booyesen 2004).

What these national contextual realities have given rise to are new and re-emergent informal practices of one-on-one giving and reciprocity, that though frequently obscured as ‘hidden transcripts’ (Scott 1990) within the national debate, deserve more concerted attention. While to date academic and policy debates have focused primarily on state deliverables, scant attention has been given to how reciprocity patterns on the individual and community levels are inadvertently subsidising social expenditures in incremental yet significant ways (Morris 2003:2; Habib, Maharaj & Nyar 2008:21; Hyden 1983). It is precisely the giving patterns of a purposive sample of black professionals engaged in such ‘hidden’ resource transfers, which comprises the focus and scope of this research.¹

¹ Whilst the ‘beneficiaries’ of these bequeathments are an important part of this equation, they do not comprise the core of this research. Rather, as indicated by the “central research question” (page 9), this study focuses on the qualitative reflections and quantitative characteristics of ‘givers’. How beneficiaries respond, and how they feel about the structuring of these exchanges, would make for an excellent, but separate, follow-up study to this research.

Moreover during the decade and a half since 1994, many black South Africans have chosen to re-invest in their communities of origin in sacrificial, diverse and unusual ways (Perold & Patel 2007; Habib, Maharaj & Nyar 2008). From providing business start-up resources and capital, to involving themselves in various forms of upliftment and education, to joining networks of volunteers who do HIV counselling or within-family care, these actors are donating their time, materials and expertise in significant socialities of exchange which articulate the transfer of much-needed resources (Modisha 2007; Mosoetsa 2004)².

Coupled with the above, has been the rise of a small but rapidly growing contingent of black middle classes (Southall 2004; Schlemmer 2005) their mobilities now accentuating growing disparities and segmentations within racial groupings. While this rise has signalled the opportunity (for the fortunate few) of increasing upward mobility, it has also been accompanied by residual obligations to relational networks from communities of origin. This has opened up the space for social mobility advancements to ironically be twinned with concurrent and often contradictory allegiances. This study explores the role that reciprocities play as mechanisms that mediate emergent class cleavages within black communities. More specifically reciprocities will be investigated in terms of how they may structure, consolidate, fracture, or placate these patterns of class interrelations.

1.3 Contextual Antecedents

The broader context for this research is a new racially democratised nation emerging from the double helix of ‘racial capitalism’ and the aftermaths of Apartheid. In light of this, it is important to note that while the construction and reproduction of contemporary practices of reciprocity are the focus of this research, yet reciprocities also featured heavily in South African community life pre-1994 (Bozzoli 2004; Brandel-Syrrier 1971), and can be seen as the embodiment of significant repositories of the ethos of ‘ubuntu’ and ‘comradeship’ in the face of structural containments in preceding eras.³

² Modisha (2007) focuses on E.O. Wright’s (1997) concept of ‘contradictory class location’ as a lens through which to view black middle class reciprocities, Mosoetsa (2004) looks at the issue of reciprocities through the perspective of the collapse of waged labour and the ever-increasing reliance on households as the focal-point of social & economic reproduction.

³ Chapter 4 specifically discusses patterns of reciprocity pre-1994, presenting these as the ‘historical precursors’ to exchanges in the contemporary era.

In the decades pre-1994 reciprocities were summarily pre-figured and exhibited in the annals of many black Struggle writings (Biko 2002, [1969]: 38; Jabavu 1963; Kuzwayo 1990; Jordan 1973; Matthews 1966: 142)⁴, to name but a few. Because of this, this examination of the reciprocity phenomenon will primarily be framed as the resurgence of a variety of nascent forms of kinship, community and solidarity, these now being transmuted into new formats in the contemporary context.

In this regard respondents have not joined a social giving wave or movement; they and their predecessors have embodied this investment ethos for decades, long before it was highlighted within discourses of civil society or narratives of philanthropy. In fact these types of reciprocities function within the labyrinth of particular socio-economic conditions that have helped to birth and consolidate their formation, and they are a ‘cultural production’ (Hall 1980)⁵ in tandem with these conditions. This study therefore highlights the specific circumstances (both historic and contemporary) within the social context that have served as the antecedent seedbed for the emergence of expressions of reciprocity.

Additionally this study takes cognisance of not just local dynamics, but also of the fact that patterns of reciprocity have a history derived from the larger context of macro-level systems. More especially within the African continent as a whole, complex patterns of reciprocity surface as a subplot within the residual architecture of post-coloniality (Mamdani 1996; Farred 2005: 13; Crais 2002: 143 & 151; Lonsdale 1992: 316; Hyden 1983:17). They also feature as a subversive backlash in the face of the enforcement of past and current modernist economic and political governance rationalities (Chabal & Daloz 1999; Reno 1995; Bozzoli 2004). It is against the backdrop of these antecedents that this research seeks to investigate specifically how a purposive sample of Gauteng’s black professionals experience and practise reciprocities in post-1994 South Africa, and how they use these exchanges as powerfully organic acts of agency,

⁴ Biko narrates his understandings of reciprocity in terms of conceptions of black ‘self-reliance’ (2002 edition: 38), Matthews describes it as the combined efforts required for ‘overcoming by the sheer weight of numbers’ (1966; 142), while Jabavu, Kuzwayo and Jordan use the format of storey-telling within the oral tradition to exemplify the embodiment of the ethos of reciprocity.

⁵ Particularly of note is the work of Stuart Hall and the Birmingham school on this topic. Hall suggests that culture need not reside in an institutional format, but rather that frequently ‘cultural productions’ are social constructed in tandem with particular historical moments which create these performances.

connection, and redistribution within the rubric of turbulent post-Apartheid social transformation.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Social reciprocities sit at the nexus of South Africa's past, present and future. They divulge information about (1) primary allegiances, (2) expose class formations, and they disclose the nature and types of (3) social capital transfers that often go unscrutinised in the public domain. This study engages with the three themes noted above and how they tend to shape reciprocities in the research context in terms of the following:

- (1) Affinity-based⁶ Reciprocities: The research begins by examining the 'who' question (chapter 6) which explores how respondents decide who is within (and without) of their circles of responsibility and primary allegiance. Here analysis is done on how reciprocities in the research context frequently exhibit as *Economies of Affection* with reciprocal resource transfers circulating within extended family support networks (affinity-based constellations). Specifically, this chapter investigates individual giving levels, as well as proposing a model which presents the criteria/priorities that respondents use in identifying who their giving and exchange recipients will be.

As *Economies of Affection* were found to be active in this context, the discussion also addresses the interaction between 'informal' (filial and community support networks) and 'formal' (state) institutions. Highlighted here is the relationship between a state with historically limited ('weak') provisioning abilities and the compensatory social reproduction and provisioning functions that extended family networks have then needed to take on by default. In this regard the interesting relationship between formal and informal institutions will be interrogated, with attention being given to how these two institutional formats mould and shape each other. Second to this, attention is given to the resilience of customary and informal (though often ritualised) filial and communal

⁶ It is important to note that 'affinity' is used here not so much as an anthropological term with associations strictly related to 'affinal' marriage bonds. Rather it is used in terms of its meaning as a sociological construct which connotes a broader sense of 'family and connection within community' which may, or may not, always derive from blood-line patrilineage.

support repertoires, and the nature of the shifts that these mores are undergoing in the context of changes in the ‘new’ South Africa.

- (2) Position-based Reciprocities: The second segment of the study (chapter 7), addresses the ‘why’ question and explores ‘Position-based’ reciprocities that pivot not on affinities, but rather on class and rank segmentations. Discussion in this section will revolve around how historic economic marginalisations selectively excluded black communities from full participation in the formal market system, and how in response these communities created parallel systems of exchange and remittance tied to the migratory labour system. Analysis will be provided on narratives that disclose the specifics of how exchange patterns devolved and manifest under these circumstances and how objects/commodities of exchange revealed emerging class status.

Second to an examination of these historic patterns of alternative resource generation and transmission, the study then turns to how current shifting class stratifications within black communities are affecting the formal versus informal nature of exchanges in the post-1994 context. In this regard reciprocities are interrogated between black professionals and indigent communities of origin in terms of how they function as types of *Moral Economy* repertoires that in many ways mediate growing class disparities. Provided here is a discussion of both ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ measures of class, looking at indicators of class location as well as class consciousness, and how black professional respondents frequently encounter dissonance between these two facets of their social identity. Also explored is how this dissonance provides clues in answer to the ‘why’ segment of the reciprocity rubric.

- (3) Strategy-based Reciprocities: The ‘how’ question is the final point of inquiry to be engaged. Discussion here focuses on the how reciprocities function as informal but powerful ‘strategies’ (Bourdieu 1986) used to mitigate against the negative externalities of larger global processes of ‘extraversion and introversion’ (Bayart 1993) that perpetuate ongoing *Enclave Economy* conditions in South Africa. Examined in this section are the informal bridge-spanning roles that black professionals regularly enact between various economic enclaves and the way respondents use the intermediation mechanism of ‘Social

Capital' investments as points of leverage in their delicate dance between 'centre' economic actors and extended family and community members yet at the marginalised peripheries.

Second to the above, is the process of exploring how the marked and rapid social mobility of black professional respondents has impacted on their relations with communities of origin. In this regard examination is made of a cycle in which older community members, having 'invested' in respondents through inter-generational social capital transfers in previous years, are now expecting the yields of these 'investments' to be ripe for repayment. As a corollary to this, examination is made of how respondents position themselves in ways that exhibit their more formal financial and material bequeathments to communities of origin, and also at how symbolic social capital transfers showcase their formulation as 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1991) with shared meanings.

1.5 Overview of Thesis Chapters

In order to provide the reader with a sense of the overall structure as well as direction of the thesis, the following birds-eye-view of the project is provided comprising of a short synopsis of each of the study's nine chapters. The first three chapters of the thesis function as the primary pillars that support the internal architecture of the research. Therein can be found the study's overview (chapter 1), the literature review (chapter 2), and the methodology used in the research (chapter 3). Following this are two chapters that explore the research context, more specifically in terms of the past (chapter 4), and the present (chapter 5). The next three chapters then address the key thesis sub-questions and findings related to those queries (chapters 6, 7, and 8). Lastly included is a summary and conclusion in chapter 8. What follows is a brief synopsis of each chapter.

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic, the study's framework and its relevance. It begins by outlining the study's aims and then more specifically the primary sub-questions that frame the research. Next addressed is the study's rationale, which presents the landscape against which the research takes place. Highlighted in this section are key material, social, and economic

‘conditions’ within the research environment that affect how reciprocities unfold. Lastly touched on are three theoretical constructs that underpin the study, key definitions and brief chapter synopses. Probably the most helpful part of chapter 1 is found in the research scheme (Graphic 1.1) which portrays in pictorial form how the study is laid out.

Chapter 2 presents the primary literature review undertaken for the project and speaks to the theoretical domain that houses the study. In this chapter a diagram is created (3 Sphere Model) which represents the core of the research, organising the remainder of the project conceptually around the three constructs of: (1) Affinity-based Reciprocities, (2) Position-based Reciprocities, and (3) Strategy-based Reciprocities. Each of these constructs are explained in detail and accompanied by a review of the literature that emanates from that particular theoretical vantage point. The ensuing three constructs of the 3-Sphere Model are then used to structure the findings of chapters, 6, 7, and 8.

Chapter 3 focuses on a description of the research design and its instrumental methodology. The 4-pronged approach of the research is depicted as: (1) field-work with participant observation, (2) document and literature review and analysis, (3) development and distribution of a 10-page survey, coupled with (4) a series of in-depth interviews. Here attention is given to the development of a triangulation research design which incorporates descriptive data specific to the sample group and secondly qualitative analysis which additionally fills out the picture by providing a more comprehensive set of outcomes related specifically to respondents’ giving habits. Identified as the conceptual notions that frame the research design are assumptions found within the theory traditions of Narrative Discourse, Social Constructionism and a Phenomenological approach. Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of the study’s ethics and research verifications, including validity, reliability, potential threats, and finally the use of the research and proposed return to participants.

Chapter 4 functions as the foundation for this study as it delves into the roots of the reciprocity phenomenon that derive from South Africa’s past. In this chapter an examination is made of the historical precursors that create the backdrop of reciprocity norms against which actors enact their performances today. Here the author delves into the formation of historic ‘Material Conditions’ which structured reciprocities, namely those based on land dispossessions and the

migrant labour system. This is followed with a discussion of a series of historic ‘Social Constructs’ that have had an active role in shaping the nature of exchanges. These include cultural notions of ‘ubuntu’, the comradeship ideologies of ‘solidarity’ of the Resistance Movement, and finally conceptions of ‘class’ that emanate from consolidations on the ground during the period pre-1994. Surfacing both the material conditions that harboured reciprocities and the social constructs attached to giving practices in those times, provides a useful glimpse of the precursors which have housed reciprocities.

Chapter 5 investigates the research setting in terms of the current context. Here attention is given to three themes that significantly impact on the research environment: (1) mobilisations from below, (2) segmentations in the middle, and (3) selectivities at the top. These themes are used as windows through which to view the contemporary class-based aspects of the reciprocity phenomenon. Under the topic of ‘mobilisations from below’ the discussion centres on how several critical circumstances have served as inducements to the vocalisation of various types of solidarity mores, namely the national juggernauts of high unemployment rates, entrenched and ongoing poverty for large segments of the population, and rising inequalities. The conjoined concentration effects of these national dilemmas have indeed induced the resurgence of multiple sites of mobilisations from below that are ever-amplifying their discontent.

Moreover second to the above vociferous rumblings are the noises associated with concurrent changes that are taking place elsewhere. The class interests of disparate groups in the middle are also becoming increasingly disjoined as ‘segmentations in the middle’ grow internal cleavages between the working class and black professionals whose economic mobilities are more elastic. Lastly in this chapter we address increasing ‘selectivities at the top’ amongst the black elite who reap disproportionate returns in terms of national consumables. This equation sets in place a scenario wherein inequalities increasing within black communities, are surfacing the need for new or re-emergent repositories of action that will mediate growing class divides.

Chapter 6 begins the journey of presenting and analysing the research findings. This chapter primarily addresses the ‘who’ question and profile both survey results and interview narratives that identify beneficiary profiles and ‘Affinity-based’ giving priorities. Presented here is the development of a *Circles of Solidarity* schematic which portrays four primary areas of allegiance

which structure giving practices in terms of the following order of priorities: (1) extended family support [pressures from within], (2) shared experiences of marginalisation [pressures from below], (3) faith and political affinities [pressures from above], and (4) race and cultural solidarities [pressures from without]. The argument put forward is that amongst black professional respondents in Gauteng, four specific sites of solidarity (kinship, poverty, religion, and race) define reciprocity habits, prioritising them in ways that identify primary affiliations.

More specifically, chapter 6 focuses on analysing the ways in which extended family networks, community and neighbourhood structures and unique formations of kinship alliance serve as the relational conduits for the transmission of the largest reciprocity bequests. In line with this, the research findings indicate a strong emphasis within giving trends towards informal *Economies of Affection* and a profile of non-institutionally mediated reciprocities. These findings underscore the presence of a vibrant and strong undercurrent of kinship-based micro level (one-on-one) giving practices, but a suspicion towards macro-level giving (inclusive of donations to charitable trusts/foundations and faceless donor institutions) as (predominately) formulated in Western philanthropy. Moreover in the research context practices of giving were conceptualised as birthed out of perceptions of community identity and functioned as measures of social trust.

Chapter 7 focuses on answering the ‘why’ question and interrogates ‘Position-based’ reciprocities that illuminate the role of class in this equation. Explored here are how reciprocal exchanges featured heavily in the original development of stokvels, various forms of saving schemes and burial societies and how similar material transfer mechanisms still feature today amongst respondents. The findings of the research indicate that material reciprocities frequently serve as mechanisms that mediate inter and intra class interactions and thereby entrench notions of a *Moral Economy* that regulates the dynamics associated with complex class inter-relations. In this chapter two angles are used to analyse class formation, ‘objective’ measures of class to indicate class location, and ‘subjective’ gauges of class to denote levels of class consciousness. Survey results map out respondents’ class locations through the variables of income echelon, educational level, work status, and an LSM (Living Standards) measure. Class consciousness, on the other hand is elicited through interview questions that explore identification with the working class and the interests of the proletariat. Respondents’ class locations are then juxtaposed against their class consciousness, revealing a unique dissonance. The deductions of

this research paint a picture of how Gauteng's black professionals find themselves in positions of 'contradictory class location' and how they become highly instrumental in positioning themselves in intermediary roles both within and between economic classes.

Chapter 8 addresses itself to answering the 'how' question and investigates 'Strategy-based' reciprocities which function through the medium of *social capital* transfers. The line of inquiry followed in this section predominately speaks to the conveyance mechanisms and dispositions associated with resource transfers which are non-material. The 'strategy' element behind cross-generational resource flows is investigated, with attention given to the way that black communities in Gauteng used inter-generational social capital transfers during Apartheid as a form of investment (social security) for the future; particularly in the absence of pensions and sufficient or transferable liquid assets. The cogence of this practice to the current context pivots on the older generations' expectation of the repayment of these social capital 'investments', by the younger cadre of emerging black professionals. Moreover, insofar as the marked rise of social mobility amongst black professionals over the last two decades has been pronounced, with families of origin contributing significant social capital support towards these escalations, what do these same families of origin now expect in return from emerging professionals? These dynamics draw our attention especially to the role that social capital transfers have played (and continue to do so) in this equation as a significant means of transfer. Lastly, chapter 8 examines how respondents have become highly instrumental as intermediaries both within and between *Economic Enclaves* and as critical bridge-spanners across households, classes and generations.

Chapter 9 provides the conclusion which reviews and summarises the thesis' touchstone findings. The outcomes of the research are discussed along with an analysis of deductions drawn. This will be accomplished through a look at the implications of the research on both the micro and macro levels. Coupled with this are reflections on the utility as well as limits of the three economic constructs applied in this setting: *Economies of Affection*, *Moral Economies* and *Enclave Economies*. A final segment of this chapter points to respondents' perceptions of how reciprocity patterns have changed over time and how they may alter again and reconfigure in the future, thereby providing hints for possible terrain for future research.

1.6 Thesis Road Map

The purpose of the Thesis Road Map is to create a grid which conceptually organises the research rubric. As the primary findings of the research are located in the core chapters of the study, focus is given to these central sections. On the following page, the main concepts that will be presented and analysed in chapters 6, 7, and 8, are depicted schematically, signalling the way forward.

Graphic 1.1 – Thesis Road Map

1) Chapter	6	7	8
2) Research Rubric	Affinity-based Reciprocities	Position-based Reciprocities	Strategy-based Reciprocities
3) Key Question	‘Who’	‘Why’	‘How’
4) Focus	Kinship Solidarities	Class Solidarities	Enclave Solidarities
5) Theory Framework	<i>‘Economy of Affection’</i>	<i>‘Moral Economy’</i>	<i>‘Enclave Economy’</i>
6) Probe	State Penetration	Market Penetration	Penetration of Globalisation
7) Core Finding	Non-Institutional Allegiances	‘Contradictory Class’ Locations	Trans-Generational Social Capital Flows

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Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1.1 Introduction

Practices of reciprocity impact on multiple spheres of life. From realms of intimacy and household social reproduction to the arenas of public governance and macro-level state and market systems, reciprocities reside at the core of almost all socialities of life. Distinctions have been made between reciprocities that are ‘specific’ (amongst individually specified parties) and those that are considered more ‘diffuse’ (collective and structural in nature), with both types surfacing increasingly within a wide span of interdisciplinary literatures.

In the ensuing segments of this literature review, I will identify three primary streams of thought which undergird the reciprocity literature domain and that lodge it particularly within the historical and literary tradition of Sociology. These three streams create the backdrop against which the remainder of the study is organised.

2.1.2 Organisation of the Literature Review

I have chosen to structure the literature review around a 3 Spheres Model within which reciprocities feature. These three reciprocity rubrics function as the internal scaffolding that structures the research approach, not only here but in the remaining chapters as well.

Each of the following sections of the literature review pick up on one of these 3 Spheres, sourcing the cogent literatures that emanate from that theoretical vantage-point. The 3-Sphere Model that I have developed reflects on how reciprocities have featured in the literature in relation to three key contexts:

- (1) Affinity-based reciprocities in archaic/‘primitive’⁷ societies
- (2) Position-based reciprocities in industrial/modernist societies
- (3) Strategy-based reciprocities in late/‘high’ modernity societies

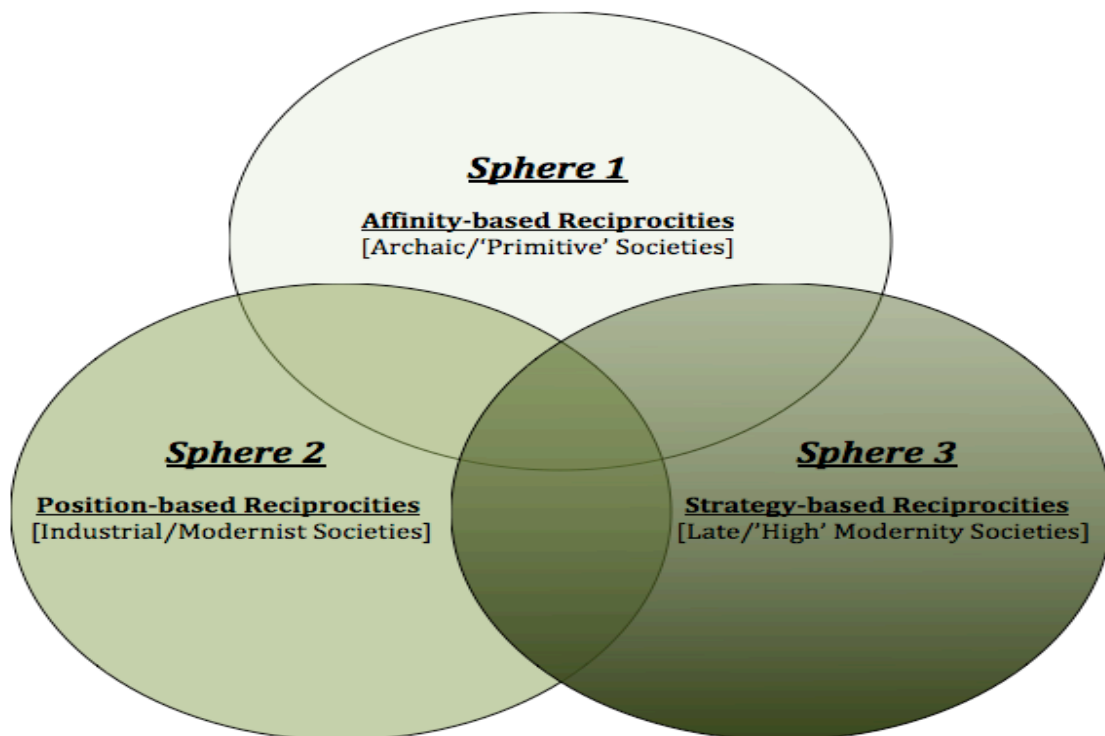
⁷ The most useful examination of the term ‘primitive’ societies can be found in Sahlins work, which provides the following definition: “... ‘primitive’ shall refer to cultures lacking a political state, and it applies only insofar as economy and social relations have not been modified by the historic penetration of states.” (Sahlins 2004:188)

In each of the above-mentioned contexts reciprocities have been understood to function within the labyrinth of a unique set of dynamics. The venn diagram format chosen to expound on these contexts not only highlights each context's distinctives, but also points to possible areas of similarity and overlap. By way of structuring the discussion of these various facets, I will first introduce the different and particularist aspects of each context, before exploring overlaps and points of commonality in the remainder of the study. In order to initially introduce this approach, I will lay out the 3-Spheres theoretical construct first as a graphic, and then explain each sphere more specifically in narrative form.

2.1.3 3-Spheres Model

In the following graphic I have created a ven diagram which categorises various types of reciprocities in terms of how the literature depicts their movement over time.

Graphic 2.1



I begin with (1) Affinity-based reciprocities (discussed in chapter 6 of the research). Affinity-based reciprocities are essentially exchanges that operate on the basis of kinship or relational affinities where transfers occur within what Karl Polanyi (1944) described in his later writings as the ‘household’ level of economic reproduction. In this domain, the division, organisation and distribution of services and assets (land and labour) are governed by principles of allegiance and affinity. Patterns of resource allocation are exercised through personal relationships or by association. Reciprocities categorised in this arena are motivated by perceptions of identity (kin/clan/race associations) or ideological affinities (religion/ethnicity/worldview) solidarities and function as a measure of ‘social trust’.

The second tier of the model features (2) Position-based reciprocities (covered in chapter 7 of the research). Here the emphasis is on reciprocities that pivot on one’s position within a schema of ‘class’ or rank segmentations. These reciprocities fulfil the function of mediating inter-class or cross-strata relations and operate as a measure/indicator of ‘social distance’⁸. In this instance, reciprocities are viewed as the instrumentalities of rank⁹ or ‘class consciousness’¹⁰ and function as mechanisms that govern the interplay between economic or social strata. Class or rank allegiances are seen to be birthed out of shared material conditions, and reciprocities feature as inter and intra class regulatory devices. Since different classes have divergent interests, these reciprocities function as sources of either social disruption or social cohesion depending on their ability to mediate both within and between echelons. Position-based exchanges do not function independently of Affinity-based reciprocities, but rather frequently serve to exemplify the rank segmentations already inherent within filial and community systems.

The third sphere within this venn model follows the movement towards more rigorously transactional (as opposed to deeply relational) reciprocity modes. This sphere focuses on

⁸ Sahlins (2004:196) interrogates the concept of ‘social distance’ but primarily from the vantage point of kinship alliances.

⁹ Here refers both the notion of ‘rank’ in terms of the segmented caste systems in some societies, as well as the archetype of ‘rank’ as a customary, traditional, or indigenous form of social organisation.

¹⁰ In the Marxist view (Lukacs, 1999 edition), dichotomous ‘classes’ are a product of differences in access to the means of production, and each ‘class’ forms as an outgrowth of shared *material conditions*; these conditions then devolving into a collective sense of mutual class interests. In terms of this PhD research, the topic of *class consciousness* is covered in more depth in chapter 7, section 7.3.1. In chapter 6 we look more specifically at the issue of ‘class consciousness’ amongst Gauteng’s black professional respondents.

(3) Strategy-based reciprocities (covered in chapter 8) which pivot primarily on measures of the ‘symmetry’¹¹ (or lack thereof) of resource transfers, whether these be symbolic or otherwise. In this tier, reciprocities are seen to be more figuratively-driven and are viewed as fundamentally interest-based in what Emile Durkheim suggested were ‘organic solidarities’¹² practised in increasingly individuated societies. Reciprocities in this sphere are usually accompanied by a gauge of the degree to which they will/will not be mutually beneficial and reciprocated, and are measured over the interval of *time*. These types of reciprocities resonate with what Pierre Bourdieu (1986) suggested were the ‘strategy’¹³ elements behind reciprocities, whereby social structures are mimetic of economic or other interests.

In the above paragraphs I have delineated several definitive and central qualities that characterise each of the above-mentioned 3 Spheres of reciprocity because each sphere is accompanied by different types of social interactions, as well as deriving from a different set of theoretical assumptions. Moreover, this is not to say that there are not certain overlaps (as is evident in the cross-tier intersections between the model’s circles) but rather to point to the fact that most of the literatures on reciprocity emphasise one of these spheres as their initial point of departure in explaining motivations for giving and exchange.¹⁴

For the purposes of this thesis, I have therefore chosen to organise the literature review according to this 3-Sphere typology for the purposes of creating a construct that not only provides structure but that also reflects itself in discussions in the remaining body of the research endeavour.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 of this thesis will each subsequently interrogate one of the spheres of this

¹¹ Sahlins addressed the idea of ‘symmetry’ as a measure of ‘pooling resources’ (2004:189).

¹² Tier 3 reciprocities resonate with what Emile Durkheim (1984 [1893]) described as Modern ‘organic solidarities’ which, due to their more individuated form, have the potential for the encounter with eventual social ‘anomie’.

¹³ More in-depth discussion on Bourdieu’s use of the term ‘strategy’ takes place in chapter 8.

¹⁴ A possible critique of this model would suggest that it could be interpreted to insinuate a sort of ‘modernisation teleology’ in terms of a prescribed direction of movement within the model. Two points of departure from this view suggest several rebuttals to that assertion. First, it is important to recognise that the model is purely meant to provide some sense of organisation for much of the literature in this domain, some of which is classical literature whose preconceptions are primarily modernist; to avoid mention of that rather august body of thinking (and the Marxist response to it), would be remis. Secondly, and this is the much more substantive point, the findings of this research in fact point to a deconstruction of any pure segmentations within the model insofar as respondents were shown to simultaneously inhabit some aspects of all three of the identified domains thus rendering the ‘progress’ motif a misnomer in terms of a traditionally conceptualised Western and capitalist teleology. This in fact is the underlying point of the research itself: to identify and point to the sharply divergent and yet co-resident, multiple-domain pulls that respondents experienced as they navigated the currents of contemporary political economy in South Africa. To neglect a reading of this text without that in mind would be to render a disservice to both the research itself and to an accurate understanding of the respondent narratives that inhabit it throughout.

model in more depth, each of those chapters in turn investigating how reciprocities amongst a sample of black professionals in contemporary Gauteng feature and pattern themselves through the lens of one of these spheres.

2.2 Affinity-based Reciprocities

We begin here with some more background on the first construct: Affinity-based reciprocities. Several seminal texts dominate the literature landscape in this regard. These include the work of Emile Durkheim's nephew, Marcel Mauss (1990, [1954]) in *The Gift*, Claude Levi-Strauss (1969) in *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, and Marshall Sahlins more recent work (2004) entitled *Stone Age Economics*. Each of these authors offers insights critical to our understanding of how and why Affinity-based reciprocities function.

2.2.1 The *Gift* Economy

Marcel Mauss' writings primarily addresses the 'why' aspect of reciprocities, formulating that gifts function within the larger equation of a system of exchanges. In fact, Mauss asserts that there is no such thing as a 'free' gift at all; gifts in and of themselves generate an expectation of anticipated mutual transfers. "A gift that does nothing to enhance solidarity is a contradiction" (Mauss 2004: forward). In keeping with Mauss' tradition of thought, James Laidlaw (cited in Osteen 2002) entitles a recent article '*A Free Gift Makes No Friends*', bolstering Mauss' (2004: forward) observation that gifts frame and define reciprocities of solidarity:

...each gift is part of a system of reciprocity in which the honour of giver and recipient are engaged. It is a total system in that every item of status or of spiritual or material possession is implicated for everyone in the whole community ... just the rule that every gift has to be returned in some specified way sets up a perpetual cycle of exchanges...

These cycles of solidarity not only bolster kinship relations, but articulate and institutionalise primary affinities.

One of Mauss' other primary insights was that 'gifts' also have the potential to engender obligations that can foster the reproduction of 'vertical'¹⁵ inequalities because of patronage and clientalist forms of relations. In this sense 'gifts' can function not only to solidify communal relations of affinity but can also be used as mechanisms that foster very particular (and frequently stratified) formats of these relations.¹⁶

Later still, Claude Levi-Strauss took Mauss' work yet a step further. In navigating the dynamics of kinship reciprocities he posed the question of 'who' determined how circles of filial community were forged. In his 1949 work on kinship and culture Claude Levi-Strauss described in detail the ties that he believed bound units of indigenous people together. He suggested that instead of the traditional nuclear family (comprising of husband, wife and their offspring) being the unit of self-contained Sociological analysis, rather attention should be given to how 'secondary' family affiliations (nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents) played defining roles in cementing kinship relations.

Levi-Strauss' (1969) research amongst tribes in the Amazon of South America focused on the formation of alliances that arose from marriages between tribes and revealed that it was not the nuclear families [isolated units] which were truly 'elementary,' but, rather, the relations between those units. In so doing, Levi-Strauss inverted the classical view by suggesting that secondary and extended family members were of paramount importance to how families were structured. In light of this, his work focused on the relations *between* units instead of on the units themselves.

The imports of Levi-Strauss' work are of particular significance to this thesis research insofar as they impact both on conceptions of what constitutes kinship and on how these types of affinities transverse boundaries of 'primary' and 'secondary' family affiliation. More especially, Levi-Strauss' findings are of specific relevance because of the way they delineate the significance of extended family relations (key to this research context), as well as the fact that they highlight the secondary-family paths across which Affinity-based reciprocities exhibit.

¹⁵ Examples of the nature and expression of both 'vertical' and 'horizontal' reciprocities are addressed more fully in this text in sections 6.3.3.5 and 6.3.4.

¹⁶ More discussion on how reciprocities manifest as mechanisms that both mediate as well as perpetuate class divides ('Position-based' reciprocities) is also found in section 2.3.4 as well as in more depth in chapter 7.

It was later in the century that Sahlins joined the conversation on reciprocities, underscoring the “interplay in primitive communities between material conditions, and social relations of exchange” (2004: 185). He saw the role of reciprocities in archaic societies as engaged in the process of ‘provisioning society’ on a filial level (Sahlins 2004: 187):

The bias is that of an economy in which food holds a commanding position, and in which day-to-day output does not depend on a massive technological complex nor a complex division of labour. It is the bias also of a domestic mode of production: of household producing units, division of labour by sex and age dominant, production that looks to familial requirements, and direct access by domestic groups to strategic resources. ... It is the bias, finally, of societies ordered in the main by kinship.

Insofar as Mauss, Levi-Strauss and Sahlins all focus on filial exchanges within ‘primitive’¹⁷ communities, their analysis fails to address the particularities of how kinship allegiances may mediate reciprocities within contemporary settings. Taking this a step further, one of my observations is that in fact there is a rather striking paucity of literature regarding how kinship may still nuance reciprocities as practised in societies in transition.¹⁸ In fact this is one of the niches that this research seeks to address itself to.

The broadly accepted assumption/perception that kinship allegiances have been superseded in most contexts today by the values and ascriptions of an individualist modernity, should be questioned on a number of levels. Additional discussion on this subject will comprise part of the investigation featured in chapter 5 of this thesis, wherein exploration is made of what are the unique dynamics at play in kinship patterns amongst black populations in Gauteng today, and how do (or do not) Affinity-based reciprocities exhibit in this context and era.

Having presented some of the classical thinking on the ‘why’ and ‘who’ of kinship reciprocities, the discussion next centres on what the literature says about ‘how’ practices of reciprocities were structured as provisioning mechanisms in archaic communities. What were the principles that

¹⁷ Sahlins is careful to designate exactly what he means when he refers to the term ‘primitive’ societies. Herewith his definition: “It is also advisable to repeat that ‘primitive’ shall refer to cultures lacking a political state, and it applies only insofar as economy and social relations have not been modified by the historic penetration of states.” (2004:188)

¹⁸ I use the term ‘societies in transition’ with caution insofar as it is a foregone conclusion that all societies are as such ‘in transition’. However, the term has been used more specifically in the literature to refer to two-thirds world countries breaching the gap between pre-industrial conditions and fuller states of modernity. See for instance the work of *The Centre for Research in Transitional Societies* (CRTS) that comes out of Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

governed these reciprocity mores? Here the conversation veers closer to the original peoples of the southern hemisphere, to practices that were transmitted from generation to generation amongst the indigenous peoples of the southern African region. Four themes emerge, each serving as a benefit that shaped and perpetuated ongoing cycles of Affinity-based reciprocity:

- (1) Cooperative acquisition cycles, (Nurit 1990)
- (2) Risk reduction, (Cashdan 1985)
- (3) Social storage (Mauss 1924)
- (4) Access to remote resources (Kaplan & Gurven 2001)

2.2.2 Cooperative Acquisition

As the womb that originally birthed the peoples of this continent, sub-Saharan Africa was home to communities of hunters and gatherers that structured their social relations around a system of ‘cooperative acquisition’ (as opposed to the more contemporary Western individual accumulation model). David Nurit (1990: 189) characterises these gatherer-hunters as:

...distinguished from other peoples by their particular views of the environment and of themselves and, in relation to this, by a particular type of economy that has not previously been recognised. They view[ed] their environment as giving, and their economic system as characterised by models of distribution and property relations that are constructed in terms of giving...

Moreover, in this pre-history environment, an extensive network of gift-giving was fostered which allowed for someone who had given a gift to then have the right to demand particular things in return (Kelly 1995, as cited in McCall 2000). Kelly describes these pre-history communities in this way: “The enculturation of sharing is instilled in individuals at a very early age such that ‘the importance of giving gifts and sharing is reinforced throughout life until it becomes deeply embedded...’” (Kelly 1995: 164-165). This centuries-old practice of gift-giving has been referred to as ‘xaro’ (Kelly 1995). Wiessner (1982, as cited in McCall 2000) describes the xaro relationship as follows:

The [xaro] relationship involves a balanced, delayed exchange of gifts, whose continuous flow gives both partners information about the underlying status of the relationship – one of a bond of friendship accompanied by mutual reciprocity and access to resources. In

addition, each partnership links a person to a broad network of [xaro] paths. [Note that 50% of possessions were acquired as xaro gifts (McCall 2000)].

As previously mentioned, Claude Levi-Strauss, Marcel Mauss and Marshall Sahlins all point out that archaic societies were organized around the principles of giving, taking, and giving back. And as Pappiloud & Adloff (2007: 25-26) remind us, “According to Mauss, pre-modern societies in fact *reproduced themselves* through reciprocal gifts”.

Considered to be a universal characteristic of all foraging societies, this type of giving (reciprocity) was the means by which hunter-gatherers could regulate access to material goods, food, land [foraging areas], and other resources. Moreover, the role of reciprocity as a ‘culturally institutionalised sharing norm’ was brought to the forefront precisely because of its utility as an economic instrumentation which organised socialities in very particular patterns. These patterns devolved from the need for the widespread pooling¹⁹ of resources (Kaplan & Gurven 2001) in the face of frequent scarcity and environmental instability; in essence reciprocity became the ‘social currency’ that regulated exchanges necessary for survival.

2.2.3 Risk Reduction

The role of reciprocity in buffering fluctuations in resources can also be seen as a mechanism for risk reduction and as a type of social safety insurance (Cashdan 1985). In the context of hunter-gatherer communities, this was specifically the case in situations wherein the pervasiveness of human food sharing was motivated by the inherently risky and unpredictable nature of the food procurement endeavour. Amongst hunter-gatherers, hunting exploits tended towards being very sporadic in their success, with hunters returning empty-handed on approximately 40% percent of the days that they hunted and with sometimes only a 3% percent success rate for energies expended (Hawkes, O’Connell & Burton 1991). Collective reciprocities therefore produced “higher per capita return rates relative to those that could be gained in solitary subsistence activities” (Alvard 2001, as cited in Stanford & Bunn 2001). Thus group production represented a form of socially and economically positive by-product mutualism which created a social safety net that mitigated against higher levels of risk (Kaplan & Gurven 2001).

¹⁹ I note here that in his desire for specificity Sahlins (1972: 188) does make a distinction between the ‘pooling’ of resources and reciprocity. However, for the sake of my more generalised discussion here, suffice it to say that I treat the term as a subset of the ‘collective acquisition’ process.

2.2.4 Social Storage

‘Social Storage’ has been cited as another benefit associated with reciprocities practiced in pre-history within hunting and gathering communities. Social storage is described as the accumulation of social favours (social bonds of reciprocal obligation) which define some resources as “public goods, so that sharing is seen as a way to pay back past acts of generosity and also a way to create indebtedness” (Kelly 1995: 167). Moreover, it leverages the power to compel the receiver to return something in-kind in the future, so that the giver is lent a type of social currency that could pay off at a later time of need.

Motivations for giving are therefore ubiquitous in that they span both individual and collective interests. As Marcel Mauss suggests in his signature work ‘*The Gift*’ (2004 [1954]), giving actions are perceived to be both self-interested and disinterested, such that they are simultaneously voluntary and obligatory. In light of this, reciprocities are framed in this study as forms of social storage which are both altruistic and investments with potential individual benefits for the future.

2.2.5 Scarce Resource Acquisition

Within hunter-gatherer groups, the fourth cited benefit associated with reciprocity revolved around augmenting the opportunity for the acquisition of remote or particularly scarce resources. Insofar as acts of sharing among foragers were used as a bargaining asset to be bartered against future needs, reciprocity was also used in aid of garnering special kinds of food or resources that might otherwise not be available to the giver. These types of exchanges were used as a form of reciprocity where the return benefits of giving were in *another currency* which may have been of particular value (for whatever reason) to the procurer (e.g. the exchange of meat for other types of food, a particular mate, labour, specific territorial rights, etc.) (Kaplan & Gurven 2001). Thus the acquisition of difficult-to-acquire foods or resources, often involved the coordinated efforts of several individuals with in mind the possibility of payoffs in other mediums that guaranteed acquisition variance.

Reciprocal exchanges in multiple ‘currencies’ therefore diversified both the ways and means by which transfers were conceived and executed. They also solidified webs of relational affinity by

compounding the intricate dance necessary for negotiating a broad range of types of reciprocities.

The four basic principles of Cooperative Acquisition, Risk Reduction, Social Storage, and Access to Remote Resources help to explain reciprocities as expressed in ‘primitive societies’, and serve our purpose in laying the foundations for understanding reciprocities that were a subset of kin and clan affinities in those much earlier contexts. Whilst they are limited insofar as they are time and context specific, they do however, open up a window of contrast in conjunction to this thesis’ investigation of how more recent Affinity-based reciprocities have been shaped. More importantly, they also provide the background for understanding certain subtexts in the discussion of social organisation, for as Sahlins (2004: 197) so rightly remarks: “It is not only that kinship organises communities, but communities kinship”.

2.3 Position-based Reciprocities

The second sphere of the 3-Sphere Model to be investigated here, ‘Position-based Reciprocities’, centres more explicitly on the issue of social organisation, addressing the contours of how hierarchy, class, and stratification processes impact on the patterning of reciprocities. Investigation is made of the development and institutionalisation of particular types of inter-class (and cross-rank) transfers that are a function of access, or lack of access, to the infrastructure (or ‘means’) of production. Here the focus is on how position and power are interpolated into the schema of reciprocities and how social networks of exchange form around, within and between class divides.

2.3.1 Class Structures

This section of the literature review begins with several comments on Max Weber’s theorisations vis-à-vis social stratification. Weber formulated a multi-pronged approach which asserted that three components surfaced as part of the stratification process: (1) *social* class (a subset of access to the means of production), (2) *status* class (vested by customary ascriptions of honour, prestige or rank), and (3) *party* class (as determined by political persuasion). Within these parameters Weber posited that social order moved towards increasing levels of ‘rationalisation’ as manifested in the growth of rational-legal bureaucracy (Weber 2001, [1904]).

Insofar as Weber highlights the structural aspects of social organisation, his insights are helpful and give cognisance to how features such as social proximity become measures of power and/or access points for status. Moreover, my analysis of what comprises ‘Position-based’ reciprocities encompasses both what Weber categorises as ‘social class’ and what he describes as ‘status class’ inter-relations.

What is saliently problematic about Weber’s assertions, however, is his over-reliance on the assumption that increasing levels of social complexity will inevitably manifest in higher bureaucratisation. As Castells points out in *The Rise of the Network Society* (1996), in the context of late modernity reciprocity processes thrive on the informalisation of channels that transverse the standardisation inherent in bureaucracy. So too ‘societies in transition’, finding themselves at the cross-roads between multiple repertoires of transfer, frequently employ reciprocity mechanisms that fluidly move betwixt and between the various tiers of the 3-Sphere Model, evidencing their ability to defy a singularly uniform and ‘rationalist’ teleology of progress.

As the next part of this overview of Position-based reciprocities, we turn to other salient voices that have helped shape how reciprocities were understood to function in the Industrial and then early-Modernist eras. Marx’s work in articulating a materialist and utilitarian slant on social analysis stands as the overshadowing theoretical background for this segment of the thesis, against which all other actors play out their performances. It is important to note that whilst Marx delimited his analysis strictly on the basis of ‘class’, Weber added to this rubric the element of ‘status’ formation. Sphere-2 (Position-based reciprocities) of this thesis therefore employs both Marx’s conceptions of ‘class’ and Weber’s conceptions of ‘status’ as points of reference in understanding Position-based reciprocities.

2.3.2 Class Inter-relations: The Moral Economy

We begin with a focus on conceptions of *Moral Economy* and the ways in which these inform reciprocities between economic classes. The original proponent of the concept of *Moral Economy* was Marxist historian E. P. Thompson (1971) who developed this notion in his pioneering article *Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century*. In his

research, Thompson (1963) demonstrated how highly developed notions of the ‘common good or weal’ amongst the 18th century British peasantry, defined their responses to what they perceived as infringements on these standards by the landed gentry of their day. Essentially, Thompson’s observation was that norms of reciprocity *between* classes were powerful mechanisms that shaped the dynamics associated with acts of revolt and protest on the part of the poor and non-landed classes.

Thompson documents how the peasantry developed a popular consensus regarding what were considered the legitimate and illegitimate procedures for regulating the production of bread. These legitimate and illegitimate procedures included ‘obligations’ by those in positions of power such as farmers, millers, bakers and merchants. Thompson’s research brought significant conceptual clarity as well as empirical validation to the idea that there were ‘preconceived norms’ and unwritten conceptions of justice within the larger commercial marketplace, which structured inter-class reciprocities.

Notions of Moral Economy within the terrain of Sociological literature extend beyond Thompson to include subsequently many other significant voices as well. In his (1978) seminal text *Injustice: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt* former Harvard Sociology professor, Barrington Moore, also created the case for archetypal conceptions of reciprocity and mutual obligation, whose violations, he suggested, served to fuel struggles for justice throughout human history. He couches his discussion historically also within the womb of class conflicts between landed gentry and peasantry, but this time as they together turned the corner into Modernity, from agrarian into industrial communities. He asserted that whether they liked it not, classes were inextricably linked by particular reciprocities of obligation, (albeit these being predominantly exploitative in nature on the part of the gentry).

Internationally, more recently the work of James C. Scott (1976: 165-177) in Southeast Asia analyses grass-roots revolts and suggests that ruptures in norms of reciprocity are one of the essential triggers for insurrectionary motivations. Also the works of John Lonsdale (1992) with the Kenyan Kikuyu, and Goran Hyden (2006) in the Tanzanian context speak to practices of moral economy as exhibited in the African setting, pointing to the legacy of colonial rule and the frequent ‘co-option’ of African elites by both the colonial powers and more recently by the ‘neo-

liberal agenda'. In both the Kenyan and Tanzanian settings, these authors point to inter-class ruptures as key to understanding ensuing levels of civil unrest.

2.3.3 The Welfare State and Social Altruism

Not only can reciprocities be entrenched in (1) kinship allegiances and/or (2) class/rank relations, but in the last three centuries the literature suggests that they have also been explicitly as well as implicitly lodged within the dialectics of governance and state regimes. These types of reciprocities reflect the formation of expectations surrounding perceptions of a government's responsibilities as well as social 'deliverables'. Here inter-class relations are seen to be mediated not only by market forces, but also by paradigms of institutionality, with the state (coupled with religious institutions) taking on the role of chief arbitrator and re-distributor of public welfare assets across classes. What is of cogent interest within the South African context is the history that feeds and has helped shape conceptions of reciprocity between the government and various publics.

A more general reading of conceptions of the 'welfare state' in social history, reveals that a substantial fraction of total income is regularly transferred from the better off to the less well off, and the governments that preside over these transfers are regularly endorsed by (their) publics (Mercier-Ythier & Kolm 2004). I raise this in order to make a case for the fact that publics throughout history have on the individual level participated in reciprocity & 'social giving', as well as on a collective level, (through the instrumentation of state welfare modalities), contributed significantly to the betterment of those in need. The ethic of giving to the 'poor' has not only enjoyed strong support from within most religious traditions, but also from within most forms of collective governance.

Literatures on the sociological features of 'altruism' resonate with this, the term itself being originally used by French philosopher Auguste Comte who derived it as a conceptual opposite to 'egoism'. Later the concept of altruism was adopted by Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill who argued that its true moral aim could best be realised not individually but rather within the realms of the welfare of society, hence bringing it further into the domain of governance structures that regulate such reciprocities.

More recently, and particularly in the work of London School of Economics' Richard Titmuss, the concept of altruism was revisited again. Titmuss spearheaded advocacy for a publicly funded healthcare policy in England during the 1950's and 1960's. In his (1997) text *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy* he vehemently protested against what he saw as the growing 'commodification' of healthcare services, asserting specifically that the provision and exchange of blood should be solidly situated within the public domain where the profit motive could not 'contaminate' it (both physically and metaphorically).

In the above paragraphs I draw attention to public notions of altruism and the welfare state because within those literatures reside two key dialectics that are pertinent to this study, especially at this particular time in South African history. Firstly, international research on social altruism substantiates that social giving is frequently regulated by public conceptions of who are 'worthy' recipients (Bowles & Gintis 1998). Two findings from within this branch of literature come into play here: namely that special preference is usually given to those welfare recipients who are perceived to be in difficult life situations *through no fault of their own*, and secondly, consideration for those recipients who actively *take action* to get out of those conditions (Gintis et al 2005). While initially these findings may seem like a simplistic inversion of the assumptions of Weber's 'Protestant Work Ethic', yet at closer inspection some deeper meanings emerge that have relevance to aspects of the South African experience.

In the broader discussion of 'how' norms of reciprocity pattern themselves amongst Gauteng's black populations, the fact remains that the hitherto experienced conditions of structural violence associated with Apartheid have created 'states of crisis' that disempowered the majority population in circumstances not ascribed to any fault of their own. If vast swathes of the population are therefore perceived to be in hazardous life situations created outside of their own 'responsibility', this would point to a linkage as to 'why' there may be such high levels of reciprocity and giving in South Africa today.

The above is by no means a blanket attempt to assign a majority of reciprocity phenomena to the aftermath of Apartheid in South Africa; it is merely to highlight the connections between the historicity of particular structural governance conditions and to their imports on the norms of reciprocity under study. It is also meant to titillate our imaginations regarding the possibility that

there may also be some linkages between perceptions regarding the current ANC government's responsibility and/or ability to deliver to the disenfranchised masses and the rise of other alternative forms of reciprocity that exhibit on the individual level. Suffice it to say that structural governance historicities are very relevant to the forms that reciprocities take and propel us into the next segment of the literature review which focuses on networks of patronage.

2.3.4 Patronage Networks

Having framed this discussion of Position-based reciprocities as originating from a 'class struggle' lens followed by a 'public welfare' lens, the discussion is now brought back again to the continent of Africa and the significant dynamics as play in this context. Specifically highlighted next will be the impact of colonialism on both the creation and perpetuation of particular types of inter-class reciprocities that served as the intermediary instrumentations used by both colonial and local authorities to consolidate and maintain bourgeois rule.

Here I draw on the relevance of conceptions of 'patronage networks' and how these impact on personal relational expectations as well as collective ones. I engage this not so much from an anthropological or ethnomethodology perspective, but rather from a socio-political vantage point. I begin by excavating conceptions of patronage networks from within the work of Mahmood Mamdani (1996) and his propositions about a 'dual state' system at work on the continent due to 'bifurcations' between 'customary' governance practices and Western legal structures. In his influential text *Citizen and Subject*, Mamdani (1996: 37) puts forward the idea that colonial powers codified a system whereby traditional leaders became intermediaries in a system of indirect rule, fostering a type of 'decentralised despotism' with the accompanying prevalence of patronage networks.

Jean Francois Bayart (1993) develops a similar analysis in his text *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, but with its own constructions. He notes what he calls the reciprocal assimilation of elites, suggesting a process whereby there is an "integration of potentially competing elites into a single dominant class, defined by its access to and control over state resources... Ethnic leaders, civil servants, and state and private sector elites collaborate with each other in order to profit as best they can from their control over the state and its resources"

(Bayart 1993, as cited in Eriksen). Moreover, both Mamdani and Bayart couch their work in conjunction to patterns of inter-class relations instituted during colonialism, citing the effects of the co-option of local elites.

Bayart further suggests that in today's context patronage networks are bolstered through manipulation by international political powers and commercial interests. These external players solidify what Bayart calls a process of 'extraversion'; a system wherein 'Afrique utile' (economically useable, commodifiable or consumable Africa) is co-opted, and whereby 'Afrique inutile' (unprofitable or 'disposable' Africa) is ignored. What Bayart is essentially pointing to is the construction of extra-statal reciprocity networks that hinge on the appropriation of African elites. This type of 'patrimonialism', a term originally used by Weber to describe the appropriation of public goods (material and/or human capital) for private purposes, exhibits as a certain form of reciprocity transfers.

I mention Bayart's assertions in this literature review precisely because I believe he presents a kind of polemic opposite to the terrain that will be explored in this research, namely framing black reciprocities in Gauteng in terms of what I call processes of 'intraversion'. Certainly the forces and impacts of extraversion are a reality, but narratives of reciprocity also play themselves out in South Africa in a landscape of intraversion as personal resources and unwaged labour (mahala) are provided for individual and collective public consumption.

2.3.5 Parallel Authorities

I will briefly touch on one other aspect pertaining to what are perceived to be the reciprocity dynamics associated with inter-class relations. Here I draw on what have been called 'informal' or 'shadow' reciprocity networks. William Reno, in his ground-breaking (1995) work on Sierra Leone examines the role and profusion of informal markets in that setting, suggesting that their commercial power and influence situates them as an alternative to failing state institutions; these non-formal networks creating a 'shadow state' with 'a parallel authority'. In like manner, Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal Daloz in their text *Africa Works* (1999) emphasise the 'informalisation' of African networks of exchange, asserting that formal institutions are little more than an empty shell, within which informal activities take place. I mention these works

because I believe that they significantly inform our discussion on reciprocity; the de-institutionalisation of ‘formal’ networks of reciprocity makes way for reciprocities to take on a myriad of ‘informal’ formats on an individual, local and community level.

Moreover, this study takes cognisance of the fact that patterns of reciprocity in South Africa also have a history in part derived from the larger context of post-coloniality. More especially within the African continent as a whole, complex patterns of reciprocity surface as a subplot within the residual architecture of coloniality (Mamdani 1996; Farred 2003: 13; Crais 2002: 143 & 151; Lonsdale 1992: 316; Hyden 1983: 17). More in-depth discussion on this will take place in chapter 4 of this thesis which more specifically addresses the research context. Moreover, suffice it to say here that reciprocities have featured as a subversive backlash in the face of the enforcement of past and current modernist (and neo-liberal) economic and political governance rationalities (Chabal & Daloz 1999; Reno 1995; Bozzoli 2004).

This brief sketch vis-à-vis Sociological conceptions of the moral economy, the welfare state, patronage networks, and parallel authorities provide us with the backdrop for this thesis’ investigation regarding whether and/or how class relations between the black populations within Gauteng (the ‘Black Diamonds’ as they are variously called, the ‘working class of town and country’ as Pallo Jordan (1997) refers to them, and their unemployed compatriots – the ‘poors’ in Ashwin Desai’s (2003) words) may or may not be influenced by moral economies of patronage that bind them into very particular class-based rationalities of exchange and obligation.

2.4 Strategy-based Reciprocities

The third literature ‘sphere’ to be investigated, Strategy-based reciprocities, pertains to how notions of reciprocity exhibit themselves as repertoires of performance and ‘strategy’ in the contemporary era. The emphasis in this segment of the literature review is on how personal agency contributes to the equation of reciprocities. The contributions of Pierre Bourdieu, Karl Polanyi, Berger & Luckmann, and Anthony Giddens feature heavily in this section of the text, as do the concepts of (1) Strategy (2) Habitus (3) Risk & Trust and (4) Social Capital transfers.

2.4.1 Reciprocity as an Instrument of ‘Strategy’

We begin with Bourdieu, and his work in response to Marxism and the French Structuralism of Claude Levi-Strauss. Bourdieu adopts the language of ‘strategy’ as a means to distance himself from the strict determinism of Structuralism. In so doing he stresses the importance of agency and the interaction between the individual and their surrounding ‘habitus’. Bourdieu (as cited in Peristiany 1966) explains that “social regulations are not comprehended as an inaccessible ideal or restraining imperative, but are rather present in the consciousness of each individual”.

Bourdieu essentially extracts repositories of reciprocity from a collective origination point and instead asserts that the individual initiates reciprocities, even if reciprocal manifestations might be collective. In this sense his model of exchanges becomes much more personally transactional and ‘interest’-based. Bourdieu (1977: 9) also argues that models of exchange must include time as a critical component: “To substitute strategy for the rule, is to reintroduce time, with its rhythm, its orientation, its irreversibility.”

...the giving and receiving of gifts involve the manipulation of the tempo of gift-giving so that the returned gift is not only different but also deferred. Thus, actors participate in the social interaction of gift exchange, not as conscious or even unwitting conformists... but as *strategists* who respond through *time*. (Bourdieu 1980: 106, *Emphasis mine*)

2.4.2 ‘Habitus’ and Community

Whilst Bourdieu does not intend to convey the impression that actions somehow stand outside of the terms of normative constraints, yet he does emphasise that actions are fundamentally interest-based and agency-centred. In this regard actors are not primarily institutionally disciplined rule-followers but are rather ‘strategic improvisers’ who respond dispositionally to the threats and opportunities of various situations (Bourdieu 1980: 53).

Bourdieu (1977: 82, *emphasis mine*) then links the individual to a social context through his concept of habitus; an early definition of which reads as follows:

a system of lasting transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a *matrix of perceptions*...

Bourdieu's conception of habitus links in with the literature on 'community' in the late 20th century, these literatures reflecting on who is considered within or outside of relational networks of responsibility. Aside from (1) kinship and (2) class solidarities as mentioned previously, essentially I suggest that with the onset of later phases of Modernity 'community' becomes evident through shared meanings (Habermas, 1987)²⁰ and embedded practices (Polanyi, 1957).

Scott Lash (1994) proposes that community is discovered by looking beneath shifting signifiers in order to gain access to the 'shared meanings' which are based in mutual conditions of existence. It is therefore shared meanings (or a conjoined 'matrix of perceptions' as Bourdieu put it) which fold the individual's identity into the web of communal existence. As the traditional Sotho proverb suggests, *Motho ke motho ka batho ba bang*, [I am who I am through other people].

Lash (1994) goes on to intimate that beyond shared class or kinship allegiances, community is formed within 'lifestyle enclaves'. I felt it important to mention this notion of community because of its significant function in delineating shared trajectories. By that I simply mean that a critical part of 'community' in Africa has to do with collective survival strategies of which reciprocities are key. In her (1995) work *Umntu Ngumntu Ngabanya Abuntu: The Support Networks of Black Families in Southern Africa*, Fiona Ross explores the social stresses of contingency and indeterminacy that are birthed out of precarious life conditions experienced by marginalised populations. More particularly in her work in the Western Cape (2005), Ross cites the impacts on residents of housing relocations from 'shanty towns' (informal settlements) to more formal residential housing. She found that the consolidation of successful new social arrangements was contingent on the struggle to define new shared visions and a collective future-view.

A second facet of community pivots on definitions of how resources should be distributed within collectivities. In his text *Communitas: The Origins and Destiny of Community*, Roberto Esposito (2009) explores the origins of the concept of community ('cum-munus'). He reminds us that 'munus' connotes the sharing of a gift that exists only in the public sphere and for collective access. As such it is also closely related to the idea of the 'commons' and is oppositional to the

²⁰ Habermas developed the concept of 'shared' or intersubjective meanings in his work on language.

concept of private acquisition. This is particularly relevant in the last decade within the South African experience because of a strong sense of the need to extend the ‘commons’ to the majority population and thereby equalise the playing field; under investigation is how notions of ‘solidarity’ (to what and to whom) within Gauteng’s black communities play a significant role in this redistribution regime.

2.4.3 ‘Risk’ and ‘Trust’

Strategy-based reciprocities also function within the labyrinth of global forces and their influence on how local communities are formed or disjointed. Moreover, in as much as individual agency is underscored here, so too are the unintended impacts of the interdependence of communities within the larger global context. As was mentioned in the discussion on *Moral Economy*, reciprocities often function in mediating certain aspects of economic production so as to mitigate against the market’s frequently latent and undesired externalities. Put simply, we coalesce in smaller groupings (wherein we exercise reciprocities that foster survival) in order to provide some security against un-desirable impacts of larger phenomenon that would threaten our existence/quality of life.

Anthony Giddens (1999) and Ulrich Beck (1992) address this dynamic of reciprocity in their work on the subjects of the ‘risk society’ and ‘social trust’. They frame this discussion in terms of what Beck calls the outgrowths of ‘new modernity’ [Giddens refers to this phase as ‘post-traditional modernity’]. Both speak of global processes that have unleashed local experiences of uncertainty and trepidation, these being the outgrowth of the ‘manufactured’ risks of modernity. Giddens (1990) puts forward the idea that processes of globalisation have put into jeopardy not only our ‘trust’ in traditional modernist institutions (such as the state), but they have also increased our levels of ‘risk’ in the face of the concentrated effects of the widespread nature of global phenomenon. Horkheimer and Adorno, (2002) in their text *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, call this modernity turning in on itself.

Pre-empting the postmodern turn, Karl Polanyi (1957) developed the concept of ‘embeddedness’ almost six decades ago. Polanyi’s work (2001, [1944]) recounts how during the 18th Century, markets were governed by the influence of ‘moral’ principles (such as reciprocity) that could be

seen as ‘embedded’ in the fabric of the social and political order of the day. In the course of the 19th Century (as in the 20th Century), the outcomes of an unregulated market have moved in the opposite direction, producing market forces that have now become increasingly ‘disembedded’ from social regulation.

I raise the above points because I believe that the concepts of ‘risk & trust’ as well as ‘embeddedness’ are particularly relevant within the context of this discussion of reciprocities. The above-mentioned inform patterns of reciprocity insofar as they play a role in processes whereby global market forces are disembedded from the social sphere, rendering any deleterious effects of the capitalist instinct unaccountable to collective socialities. So too, globalisation exerts a disembedding impulse on traditional institutions and thereby creates the need for actors to build alternative social networks that can provide material and ontological security. Not only have global contingencies of ‘risk’ impacted reciprocities but also the particular historicities of the African context have shaped modes of exchange. Moreover the concept of disembeddedness is important here because it offers the backdrop for engagement with reciprocities (which could be interpreted by some), as critical attempts to re-embed market forces into the fold of sustainable moral economies.

2.4.4 Social Capital Transfers

Having addressed some of the contemporary sociological thought on the ‘who’ and ‘why’ of Strategy-based reciprocities, we now turn to the literature on ‘how’ these reciprocities operate. As the last, but possibly most important segment of this Literature Review, I reflect on the burgeoning literature vis-à-vis Social Capital, and the ways (‘how’) its formation and transfer can become the vehicles for Strategy-based reciprocities. I use the term ‘Social Capital’ to infer the value-added nature of networks, where people benefit not only collectively, but also individually from the alliances they are a part of. Social Capital relates to the quantity, quality and benefits of ‘associational linkages’ (Narayan & Pritchett 1999); these linkages being personally defined as opposed to necessarily kinship or class determined.

Whilst Social Capital has been variously described, in this study I refer to it as a mechanism that configures how social resources are made available through networks. First used as a concept

noted by L. J. Hanifan in 1916, the term has gotten broad usage within the last two decades, having been popularised through the writings of (among others) Jane Jacobs (1961), Robert Salisbury (1969), Pierre Bourdieu (1977 & 1986), James Coleman (1988), Robert Putnam (2000) in *Bowling Alone*, and Caroline Moser (2007) in *Reducing Global Poverty*.

The main focus of Social Capital on a conceptual level has been in understanding “the number and strength of social relations that an individual or household can call on” (Insights 2000). On an empirical level, it has been associated with measures of civic and community engagement which are said to be positively correlated to high levels of ‘social trust’ where reciprocity norms are most active.

In his 1986 article entitled *Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu distinguishes between three kinds of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Insofar as ‘economic capital’ devolves from the repositories of class relations and ‘cultural capital’ from clan or affinity allegiances, ‘social capital’ is a subset of what Bourdieu calls ‘strategy’: the “deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this [social capital] resource” (1986: 249). Its benefits have been variously associated with (1) increased information flows, (2) reduced transaction costs (3) consultative decision-making, and (4) insurance against crisis (Insights 2000).

Particularly with in mind the context of South Africa in the last half of the 20th Century, the negotiation and transfer of social capital within black communities is of specific cogence to this study, especially as it pertains to the inter-generational transfers.²¹ Due to the Apartheid government’s legacy of a fragmented social safety net with little institutional capacity to deliver essential services to the majority population (Malluccio, Hadda & May 1999), social capital has been brought to the fore in this research as instrumental in the alleviation of both states-of-crisis as well as possibly a State-in-crisis.

In this chapter an overarching construct for this research has been presented (the 3-Sphere Model), and having conducted a survey of the literature related to Affinity-based reciprocities, Position-based reciprocities, and Strategy-based reciprocities, we now turn next to chapter 3.

²¹ This topic will be interrogated more thoroughly in chapter 8.

Chapter 3 will focus in more depth on communicating the design of project in terms of the research methodology. It is against the backdrop of this literature review that this research then seeks to probe more specifically how Gauteng's black professional respondents experience and practise reciprocities and how they use these reciprocities as powerfully organic mechanisms of change within the rubric of turbulent post-Apartheid social transformation.

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Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1.1 Overview

The research methodology of this project encompasses qualitative analysis as well as data collection about the purposive sample group, and thus this investigation is conducted on two levels. The first is through the administration of a survey questionnaire on individual-level giving habits. This survey instrument answers the ‘who’ and ‘how’ aspects of the thesis question and traces the types, amounts, frequencies and coherence or differentiation of reciprocity practices amongst a purposive sample of 25 to 55 year-old black respondents residing in the Gauteng province of South Africa.

The second part of the research rubric, comprising of qualitative narrative analysis, is conducted on the sample group and rendered through thirty-seven in-depth interviews. Here the intent is to answer the ‘why’ parts of the thesis question, interrogating the social meanings and subjectivities attached to these giving, sharing and reciprocity repertoires.

Central to this research design is the principle of ‘triangulation’. As a social research method, triangulation is understood as a strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research findings. In his 1978 work on sociological methods, N. K. Denzin unpacks the importance of triangulation, expanding its conceptions and utility from a quantitative methodology to its use within qualitative research approaches as well. Later, Patton (2002) suggested that triangulation strengthens a study through the cross-referencing inherent in utilising several different methods or types of data to confirm research findings. For the purposes of bolstering the robust capacities of this study, a triangulation process is therefore employed using multiple data collection mechanisms (descriptive data collection through a survey, and qualitative analysis conducted on interviews) intended to add a textured depth and breadth to the research endeavour.

It is the premise of this research that bringing multiple lenses to bear on a given research topic adds to one’s panoptic capacities, both in terms of observation and interpretation. A sharp and dichotomous distinction between research modalities (viewing them as mutually exclusive genres) is unhelpful insofar as it fosters a fixation with a fractured picture of methodological

options. This is not to say that there are not fundamental differences in assumptions and practices between various methodologies, but rather to emphasise their complementary natures.

Whereas traditional data collection methods frequently focuses on information that was *present*, it is also vital to give credence to the role of highlighting the importance of what is incorrect or omitted. As Catherine Kohler Riessman (1993: 65) reminds us, “Are not omissions also important?” What is excluded may be of as much importance as what is in fact included in renditions of life. I draw attention to this in order to explain that while ‘apples and oranges’ (different methodologies) should not be thought of or treated as the same fruit per se, yet their particularities can well serve as a strength and as the ‘yin and yang’ benefit of a larger triangulation research design.

What I am suggesting is that there are advantages to multiple ways of exploring, and investigating social phenomenon, and that these myriad modalities add a fuller picture (or multiple pictures) to our frames of reference. It is thus the aim of this project to use and generate empirical data as well as explanatory theory about the sample group so as to methodologically employ more than one tradition of inquiry.

3.1.2 Four-Pronged Methodology

In this research project 4 specific strategies were utilised to investigate the phenomenon of reciprocity.

Approach #1: At the conceptual womb of the project, information was gleaned from participant observation. This was generated in the format of ethnographic-style research diary observations and reflections from the ongoing work that I was involved in. For the decade between 1994 and 2004 I was tremendously privileged to have worked primarily in townships and informal settlements (Pimville [Soweto], the outlying areas of Kagiso [West Rand] and more recently in Thulamntwana informal settlement [Orange Farm]). This provided me with a wealth of experiences in observing how reciprocities are activated and experienced (both positively and negatively) in protean ways and multiple everyday practices. It also wet my appetite for going deeper and delving into the ‘thickness’ of the phenomena of reciprocity and learning more about its sociological impacts on individuals and communities. Field experiences gathered from

participant observation during this decade of work served as the initial starting point for this research project.

Approach #2: It was in 2006 that the research endeavour was presented to, and then accepted, under the auspices of the *University of The Witwatersrand's* doctoral programme. This afforded the opportunity of joint supervision under their Department of Sociology and the school's Institute of Social and Economic Research (WISER). It was in this setting that I then embarked on a formalised PhD literature review process that served to structure the theoretical framework for the research. As the second prong of my inquiry, the literature review was conducted with a survey of international as well as national and regional literature, and also inclusive of relevant southern hemisphere writers. Attention was also given to classical as well as contemporary sociological theorists, in addition to literatures reflecting more specifically on the socio-economic context of life in Gauteng.

Approach #3: The third research method involved the formulation of a survey questionnaire from which data could be generated about respondent habits and characteristics. Source material for this instrument was garnered from the template²² of the 2004 nation-wide '*The State of Social Giving*' (SSG) Report (Everatt & Solanki 2005)²³ which served as a helpful and already validated resource.²⁴

²² In the formulation process of this project, in February of 2006 I became aware of Everatt & Solanki's research and their ensuing *State of Social Giving* (SSG) report. It was in the first quarter of that year (2006) that I contacted their research associate Ross Jennings and spoke to him about sourcing their Survey Instrument and about the nature of my own research. Ross was very agreeable to sharing their Survey Instrument with me and was interested in the contours of the studies that I was embarking on. Ross then sent through to me their Survey raw data in an email dated 2006/03/23 and also referred me to Geetesh Solanki who from Cape Town electronically sent me both the SSG Survey Questions as well as their Coding Frame. Survey questions that were sourced from their work are designated with asterisks in Appendix 1.

²³ Everatt, D. and Solanki, G. (2005). "A Nation of Givers? Social Giving among South Africans; Research Report #1". *The State of Social Giving In South Africa Report Series*. Available from:

<http://www.donors.org.za/documents/finalreport-social-giving-survey.pdf> (Accessed 2006/03/04).

This report was first available on the net; later the research findings were consolidated and written up in a text co-authored by Adam Habib, Brij Maharaj and Annsilla Nyar, and entitled: *Giving and Solidarity*.

The State of Social Giving (SSG) report is by far the most statistically comprehensive (nation-wide random sample) research done on this subject to date in South Africa. The SSG report also represents a respected coalition of various reputable players (National Development Association [NDA], the Centre for Civil Society [CCS] of the University of KwaZulu Natal, and the South African Grant Makers' Association [SAGA]) working together conjointly to surface trends and findings on the subject of giving and philanthropy in South Africa.

²⁴ It was felt that the SSG random sample survey would provide the best template to inform the development of the questionnaire used in this study. This was for several reasons. The first consideration was that the SSG individual-level social giving survey is the only comprehensive national one of its kind. This I determined through both a brief Southern Africa philanthropy literature review as well as contact with the Southern African Grantmakers'

In terms of the parameters of the research project, the survey data was used as a mechanism for garnering information specifically about the purposive respondent group. The research did not intend, nor was it structured, in such a way so as to claim representivity to the larger population, but rather focused on qualitative research descriptive of the sample group.

In terms of the survey instrument itself, all questionnaires were distributed and collated during 2007, with a return/response rate of 94 % percent amongst the sample group. The sample group included black professional who were urban, peri-urban, suburban and township dwellers. Females comprised 43 % percent of respondents, while 57 % percent of respondents were male. The survey was tested in a pilot format also on several non-South African citizens as well as non-black ('coloured') Gauteng residents for the purposes of refining its quality. The survey gathered descriptive information about a purposive sample of black professional residents of Gauteng born between 1952 and 1982. The purpose of the survey questionnaire was to examine how reciprocities were organised and specifically patterned amongst this purposive sample of respondents from across the environs of the greater Johannesburg area.

Approach #4: The fourth research strategy utilised in this study was qualitative in nature. It consisted of conducting thirty-seven in-depth interviews whose aim it was to answer the 'why' question; 'why' are people giving? Employing qualitative interviews as an integral part of the research design allowed for scrutiny that would go beyond just the strict measures of behaviour to a categorisation of motivations that regulate reciprocities. Interviews were conducted amongst black respondents working in a broad range of professional work sectors²⁵ in Gauteng. In addition to the transcription of audio-recorded interviews (approximately 20 type-written pages per interview), field notes were also compiled, (approximately 5 pages hand-written notes on each encounter) which captured additional aspects of the interview including location, and the dress, gestures, postures, mannerisms and body language of respondents.

Association (SAGA) which spawned the three primary grant-giving networks in the country, namely the Ilimo Network (KwaZulu Natal), Grant.net (Western Cape) and The Gauteng Network. Secondly, while other philanthropic research has targeted studies on *corporate* social giving habits, (such as The Centre for Development Enterprise's 1998 study, Trialogue's work in their CSI handbook and the research [1994-1999 Report] of the Official Development Assistance [ODA] programme), to my knowledge none to date have been conducted on individual giving patterns outside of the SSG survey.

²⁵ For more on this see sections 3.2.1 (Motivation for Sample), 3.2.2 (Sample Selection), and 3.2.3 (Participant Grid) later in this chapter.

3.1.3 Research Definitions

Research equations are always framed by assumptions which define the study endeavour. These important ‘terms of reference’ inform and delineate the parameters of the central concepts and questions that the research addresses. The following definitions provide a backdrop for this research undertaking:

- (1) Reciprocities are defined in this study as the voluntary and unwaged exchanges engaged in by members of the black middle classes that strategically increase the ‘life choice options’²⁶ of the marginalised²⁷.
- (2) In this project the term marginalised is used to depict those whose life circumstances have been systematically contained by overt or implicit forms of structural violence, which has resulted in a significant limitation of life options. Poverty, inequality, racism and sexism are seen as primary signifiers born out of systems (both national and international) of economic and political oppression and repression which both create and manifest these conditions.
- (3) Increasing life choice options: Within the framework of this research, the social contributions created by reciprocity are described as a type of ‘vulindlela’ (‘opening the door’, or ‘open the way’) mechanism (Chari 2004: 3)²⁸. A vulindlela investment carries overtones of practices that open new channels of affiliation and opportunity for those who otherwise would be imprisoned by fewer choices. This process in and of itself creates the space for the assemblage of new life images for those who have experienced (by means of life circumstances) a down-wards adjustment of aspirations that have exacted costs on their psyche & capacitations.
- (4) Levels and types of reciprocity will be investigated in this project in terms of the frequency of the following behavioural indicators:
 - the provision of *money* (financial assistance),
 - the provision of *goods* (donations of a variety of in-kind materials or resources)
 - the provision of *time* (including professional time, expertise, or mentorship)

²⁶ My use of the term ‘life choice options’ has some overlap with Max Weber’s conceptions of class as rooted in what he calls ‘*life chances*’. E. O. Wright suggests that the Weberian tradition treats location within class somewhat loosely as the ‘*intersection* of people’s lives with class structures’ (Wright, 1997: 150 *Emphasis mine*), as opposed to the traditionally Marxist approach which would ascribe class much more strictly as a direct *derivation* of one’s place within the schema of access to the instruments of the production and reproduction of material resources.

²⁷ This is not to say that reciprocity exchanges do not manifest in a variety of circumstances (for example amongst strata within the economic elite). Rather what this research has uncovered is that reciprocities as practiced by black middle-class Gauteng residents predominately pivoted on the upliftment of marginalised family members.

²⁸ My use of the word ‘vulindlela’ here is not to be confused with earlier politicisations of that term. The ‘vulindlela’ image is invoked in Sharad Chari’s work (2004: 3) on activism in Wentworth, albeit much more as a historical reference point than as a descriptor as it is being used here.

Reciprocity is viewed here as an engagement that actively provides resources for the survival of individuals, families and communities²⁹.

- (5) The signifier black professional is depicted in this study as primarily a designation of class as a 'relational category'³⁰. However, for the purposes of eliciting information about the sample group³¹, the purposive nature of the research targeted interviewees who were employed³² and who inhabited occupational echelons that were categorised according to a typology that cross-referenced work income with three levels of occupational posts³³ within the African 'core middle-class' (Schlemmer, 2005:2).
- (6) The population under study comprised of a purposive sample of black Gauteng residents, between 25 and 55 years of age. Men comprised 57% percent of the sample whilst the remaining 43% percent consisted of women. A diverse sampling of cultural backgrounds, birth languages and religions were also represented in the respondent group.³⁴

3.1.4 Theoretical Framework

Key to any successful research endeavour is the development and substantiation of a cohesive justification for the specific methodologies adopted therein. While the paragraphs above speaks in general terms to the importance and benefit of using diverse means of measurement and

²⁹ Castell's (2000) work substantiates the growth of networks as a 'morphology' that increasingly encroaches on all spheres of life, becoming the dominant way of 'being and doing' in both the first and two-thirds worlds (albeit for different reasons).

³⁰ E. O Wright builds on the idea of class as a '*relational concept*' by suggesting that classes are always defined by their *position* 'in relation to other classes' (Wright, 1985: 34). This study whilst honouring that tradition will also include a descriptive *gradational* rendering of class as a measure of levels of income, education; work status and living standards. This is done for purely statistical purposes, not as a theoretical construct.

³¹ 'Objective' measures of class were indicated in this study according to the four variables of: (1) income level, (2) work status, (3) educational levels, and (4) a LSM (living Standards) measure. For more specifics on this, see chapter 7, section 7.2.

³² Two of the older respondents of the study took early retirement (aged 51 and 55), but came from professional work backgrounds (banking and education) with mid to higher level residual family income levels.

³³ The three occupational levels mentioned above refer to Wright's (1985) categorisations: (1) Entry-level administrative posts (2) Middle level management, and (3) Senior occupational posts. These correlate to Wright's typology which he expounds on in *Classes* (pgs. 85-6, 152-3, and 313-315) wherein he uses the following 3-fold classification system: (1) Experts – higher level professionals, specialized technicians and senior managers with University and post-graduate degrees, (2) Skilled Employees – such as teachers, crafts workers, technicians and sales workers with college degrees, and (3) Semi-skilled Workers – administrative, clerical, sales and other service occupations.

³⁴ In terms of representation across cultural groups, Sotho (northern and southern at 34% percent) and Tswana (at 20% percent) predominated, whilst all remaining black ethnic groups were relatively evenly distributed in the survey group. All nine black South African language groups were represented, including several respondents who indicated 'other' mother-tongues. While most respondents designated themselves as from the 'Christian' faith, 11% percent categorized themselves as subscribing to indigenous beliefs systems, as adhering to the Muslim faith, or as having no faith-affiliation per se.

analysis (both in terms of interviews and additionally surveys), this study must also put forward its rationales for the overarching framework it employs.

Three epistemological traditions converge as the theoretical source-points for this research design: Narrative Discourse, Social Constructionism, and a Phenomenological approach. Each of these in turn is mirrored in the research instruments chosen, particularly Narrative Discourse and Social Constructionism as relates to the interview tool and a Phenomenological approach as relates to the survey instrument.

We begin with some discussion on Narrative Discourse. Friedrich Nietzsche reminded us over a century ago that we are all caught in “the prison house of language” (Nietzsche, as cited in Riessman 1993: 10); inextricably enmeshed in the intrinsic chaos of words, shifting meanings, and interpretive impulses. We cannot escape narrative discourse as it forms the backbone of social interrelations and signification. In like manner, Sociology has since its inception, been inevitably entwined with language insofar as some of our most frequently used mechanisms for data collection (interviews, case studies, grounded theory, biographical methods, document studies, and historical approaches) all utilise methodologies that are bound to the exposition of words. Moreover, even research approaches which focus on the observation of behavioural performances, (only sometimes expressed in verbal exchanges) are still frequently tied to language in their reporting structures, making use of language as the means by which they communicate their findings.

Post-structuralists such as Jacques Derrida (1978), Jean Baudrillard (2001), and Michel Foucault (2003), have over the past five decades increasingly embarked on forays into the individual and collective constructions placed on linguistic discourse. This emergent field often referred to as ‘discourse analysis’ or ‘narratology’, is posited to be a leading-edge frontier in the study of social relations. In many senses Todorov’s (1969) ‘narratology’ term has sparked interest in narrative as the ‘new science’ both in terms of turns in the European theory set (Ricoeur, 1984), and among other world-wide scholars (Rosaldo 1989; Sarbin, 1986). For these and other scholars, interviews are seen as being more than mere storage devices and are viewed as critical in the construction of the repertoires that structure life experiences. Research respondents are therefore not “epistemologically passive” (Elliot 2005: 20), but are central players [albeit frequently

institutionally ‘disciplined’ ones (Foucault (1975)] in the production and performance of structures of meaning.

In this research project I have employed the use of in-depth interviews precisely because as Hammersley and Atkinson (1983: 107) assert, “Accounts are not simply representations of the world; they are part of the world they describe”. No longer can we view the first person accounts found in interviews as singularly realistic descriptions where “language is viewed as a transparent medium, unambiguously reflecting stable, singular meanings” (Riessman 1993: 4). Rather, language is understood in the context of this research as deeply constitutive not in mirroring a world ‘out there’ but also in the creation of meanings inherent in individual and collective social realities, such that stories are *in* life as well as *about* life (Cox 2003).

In-depth interviews were thus chosen as central to this research design because of their qualitative capacity as ‘meaning-making’ constructions. This inherent capacity, links us to our next theoretical reference point, that being Social Constructionism. Moreover respondent interviews are not viewed in this study as a fixed repository, but rather as comprising a mutually constructed (Cox 2003) assemblage of meanings (some tacit while others more covert). This view carries with it the trappings of a heavily constructionist approach, resonating with the conceptual underpinnings of Berger and Luckmann’s original 1966 work *The Social Construction of Reality*. Assumptions of discourse constructivism run deep within the qualitative segment of this study insofar as language is seen as a mechanism which creates, solidifies and transmits repertoires of social reciprocity.

Berger and Luckmanns’ work promulgates the view that social actors over time form typifications (or mental representations) of each other’s actions and that these patterns of social relations eventually become habituated into norms of reciprocal action. When these reciprocal roles become firmly ingrained and routine, then they are said to be institutionalised. My point here is simply that through the mechanism of interviews a window is opened into the rationalities that generate, mediate and govern social constructions of reciprocity.

The third epistemological stream that feeds my research methodology emerges from the Phenomenological tradition. The suppositions attached to the survey component of the research

are described against a phenomenological backdrop which ascribes the primacy of experience and reflexivity as defining social constructs. In that context, my phenomenological methodology asks two critical questions ‘How do we describe the experience (phenomenon) at hand’ and ‘What is the meaning of that phenomenon in one’s lived experience?’ Pivotal here is asking the ‘right’ questions in order to surface participant experience, as well as inquiring about the role and selection of the study’s participants (those who experience the phenomenon) as they are the primary sources which give voice to answering these questions.

The phenomenological framework uses as its starting point the exploration of ‘life worlds’ (from the German term ‘lebenswelt’), a term which phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl (and later Jean-Francois Lyotard, 1991), used to describe the essence of our lived experiences. Applied as a research methodology, phenomenology attempts to capture the ‘lived experiences’ of study participants and thus is dedicated to describing structures of experience as they present themselves to the consciousness of participants.

While a comprehensive discussion of the complexities of phenomenology as a philosophical paradigm is beyond the scope of this research, suffice it to say that aspects of it as a social research methodology have been adopted for the purposes of this particular study. This is principally due to the fact that reciprocities can be viewed as a phenomenon whose presence and impact significantly shapes the ‘life worlds’ of both giver and recipient. In this sense, a phenomenological approach breathes important assumptions into this study because it enhances our capacity and justification for asking questions that elucidate the ‘experience’ of reciprocity.

Discourse Analysis, Social Construction assumptions and a Phenomenological approach have specifically been interlaced together as part of the intentional theoretical framework of this study. This is because they complement and build on each other insofar as ‘life worlds’ are created through discourses which construct reciprocal social protocols.

3.2 Data Collection

3.2.1 Motivation for Sample

Discourses of reciprocity are fundamentally about unmet needs (or created needs) and the ways in which we negotiate meeting these needs with/through others. Key to this study are the tangible ‘deliverables’ around which reciprocities pivot. What I mean by that is simply this: What are people requesting/asking from each other? What are they most frequently exchanging, giving, needing and/or desiring?

The CASE (Community Agency for Social Enquiry) *Youth-2000 Report*³⁵ research notes the primary ‘needs’ around which reciprocities frequently coalesce. In terms of the circumstances that are a reality among many young black South Africans, they identified the following primary conditions, which regularly frame reciprocities: unemployment, crime, HIV/AIDS, lack of education, and conditions of poverty. Likewise, in CASE’s research around the most important priorities that government should address, the following main concerns emerged: jobs, security, housing, roads, schools, water, and health.

In light of the above, below is a compilation of the most frequently identified ‘material’ conditions which reciprocities addressed:

- (1) Poverty Alleviation (Requests for the sharing of material/monetary resources. South Africa weighs in with roughly 45 percent of its population below the poverty line.³⁶)
- (2) Employment (Requests for ‘jobs’ or help in getting formal/non-formal employment whether temporary or otherwise in an environment of 30 – 40 percent unemployment rates.)
- (3) Health (Here refer requests surrounding various conditions that are medically related, notwithstanding the requisite attention needed for care [in family or otherwise] of the parasitic conditions accompanying HIV/AIDS.)

³⁵ In 1999, CASE was commissioned by the Royal Netherlands Embassy to conduct a study on the state of youth in South Africa. The resulting *Youth 2000 Report* provided data on the living conditions, opinions, attitudes, lifestyles and expectations of South Africa’s youth. CASE produced a popular booklet which availed the public of its findings, as the report contained important programme and policy implications on a national level. The Report can be accessed at www.case.org.za/youth.html or at <http://www.yru.org.za/info/main.htm>

³⁶ ‘*Poverty and Inequality in South Africa 2004-2014 Report*’ (2003). Southern Africa Regional Poverty Network (SARPN), Dec 2003, p. 1.

- (4) Education (Help in getting school fees paid, bursaries, or access to better schools, in a post-Apartheid context where ‘making up’ for the deficits of Bantu education is a top priority.)
- (5) Security (Due to the vulnerabilities of women & children [esp. orphans], as well as a culture of violence and crime, many requests are made for refuge, protection and/or advocacy particularly in light of high rates of criminal and domestic violence.)
- (6) Infrastructure (Still a majority of black South Africans –esp. in rural areas & informal housing situations- live in conditions without basic amenities; this surfaces needs such as requests for ‘transport money’, help in getting electrically ‘hooked up’ [whether legally or otherwise] and recurrent needs related to access to basics such as water and sanitation. Additionally appeals for temporary housing are frequently made in light of better work and educational opportunities found predominately in urban centres.)
- (7) Meaning/Signification (The ongoing need for ascribing ‘meaning’ within difficult life situations, more especially trauma de-briefing, spiritual guidance or career mentorship in the face of conditions of personal and/or structural containment or violence and its aftermath.)

3.2.2 Sample Selection

I cite the above 7 areas of reciprocity ‘needs’ (identified on the previous page as well) because they frame how and why the research sample was identified. The sample selection method used for this study was based on *Purposive Sectoral Representation*. The seven identified areas served as the targeted life spheres (work sectors) from which the 37 interviewees were conducted and surveys dispensed. On the following page these spheres are schematically outlined (Section 2.3) in terms of respondents gleaned from each of these sectors.

The Purposive Sectoral Representation method for selecting candidates had two things in its favour. First, it provided a broad range of persons from a wide variety of work fields and situations, each representing in some way one of the 7 life spheres/sectors. Secondly, the sectors (life spheres) resonated well with the ‘lived experience’ of black respondents because they were chosen in line with commonly highlighted ‘need’ areas (as identified by black youth across the nation). On the following page please find the project’s Participant Grid, which designates respondents by means of work sector affiliation. Additionally a letter/number assignment was given to each respondent as their identifying code throughout the project.

3.2.3 Participant Grid

Graphic 3.1

SECTORS: 'LIFE SPHERES'	RESPONDENT WORK ORGANISATIONS & RESPONDENT CODES				
EMPLOYMENT	<u>The Business Place</u> (Enterprise Development Centre) ST1	<u>Naitumela Micro Enterprise Project.</u> (Soweto Partnership) JT1	<u>The Field Foundation</u> (Eikenhof Farm) KJ1	<u>Voluntary Service & Enquiry South Africa</u> (VOSESA) RS1	<u>National Development Agency</u> (NDA) SS1
HEALTH	<u>Wits Health Programme</u> (Medical Research) MM1	<u>Emthonjeni Programme</u> (HIV/AIDS Project) TS1 / SM2	<u>Sunninghill Hospital</u> (Private Healthcare) LN1	<u>Baragwanath Neo-Natal Unit</u> (State Hospital) LB1	<u>HIV South Africa</u> (HIVSA) GM1
EDUCATION	<u>Student Representative Council UNISA</u> (University of South Africa) TM2	<u>Khulumani Support Group</u> (Re-Writing History & Memorialisation) FN1	<u>Studio Mass</u> (Design Firm) AK1	<u>CARE NGO</u> (Education & Prevention NGO) VM1	<u>Institute for Democratic South Africa</u> (IDASA Leadership Unit) MP1
SECURITY	<u>Urban Vision</u> (Homeless Shelter) JB1	<u>Institute for Security Studies</u> (ISS) BT1	<u>Restorative Justice Centre</u> (Crime Diversion Programme) TM1	<u>West Rand Justice Centre</u> (Justice Referral NGO) JL1	<u>Centre for the Study of Violence & Reconciliation</u> (CSVR) MM2
INFRA-STRUCTURE	<u>Anglo Coal</u> (Mining Extraction) EM1	<u>VODACOM</u> (Cell Phone Provider) SM3	<u>Unilever</u> (Engineering) SL1	<u>Transnet</u> (Para-statal Transportation) FM1	<u>Department of Land Affairs</u> (DLA) VN1
MEANING/ SIGNIFICATION	<u>Soweto Pastor's Forum</u> (Pimville & HP Young Adults) TN1 / TT1	<u>South Africa Institute for Traumatic Stress</u> (SAITS) NM1	<u>Soweto Mosque</u> (Moslem Cleric) JR1	<u>The Evangelical Assoc. of South Africa</u> (TEASA) MN1	<u>South African Council of Churches</u> (SACC Social Desk) GC1
POVERTY ALLEVIATION	<u>Salvation Army</u> (Emergency support) MM4	<u>Nedbank</u> (Loan Mgt) SM1	<u>Department of Social Welfare</u> (Social Work Division) EM1	<u>Standard Bank</u> (Investment Portfolios) JM1	<u>Government Pension Funds</u> (Para-statal) MM3

As this study targeted black professionals specifically, work auspices were chosen which reflected this echelon³⁷. The work affiliations of respondents for this study were comprised of: Engineers, Mine Management, Moslem & Christian Clerics, Priests and Lay-leaders, Architect, Lawyers, Business Consultants, Field Workers, senior Government officials from the Departments of Land, Welfare, Pension Funds, and Development; NGO Managers, Medical Doctor, Chemist, Administrator, Business Women, Academic Researcher, persons from the Trauma and Justice fields, Transport industry, Commercial Sales and Banking industries. This large array of types of professional affiliations provided a generous field for data collection and comparison in terms of variations within the sample group.

3.2.4 Procedures

In this study, interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis with respondents answering a standardised set of questions. Insofar as the interviews were ‘in-depth’ and somewhat open-ended, they also featured semi-structured ‘optional prompts’ that could be used when necessary. In this way the sequential, structural, and ‘performance’ features that characterise narrative accounts could be factored in, in addition to more standard content analysis.

Survey questionnaires were dispensed with the researcher in attendance, for the purposes of thereby boosting the highest possible response rates among research participants (94% percent). Research suggests (Huysamen 2001) that this avenue would provide added assurance of a higher response rate than say administering questionnaires by means of postal or email mechanisms. Completion of the survey questionnaire (a 10-page instrument) generally took respondents one hour of time or more.

Interviews were primarily conducted in the respondents’ places of employment or residence (or a place of their choice/designation) in order to foster convenience for them, as well as to be on their ‘turf’ in a place that was natural and comfortable for them where they symbolically had the locational ‘power’ differential in their favour.

³⁷ For more on what gauges were used to identify and measure ‘class’ in this regard, see chapter 7, section 7.2 entitled *Objective Measures of Class*.

The duration of interviews lasted close to two hours on average. This was deemed as a generous amount of time to request of working professionals, particularly as most interviews took place during working hours. Interviews generated about +/- 20 pages of transcription (+/- 13,000 words) which provided a wealth of material for analysis and examination. Interviews were all audio recorded³⁸ (with ensuing transcription) as this is accepted as standard good practice (Elliot 2005: 24) for interviews in the social sciences.

While in other qualitative interviews there are instances in which most of the talk is typically characterised as question and answer exchanges, the point within this study was to provide a container (a 'safe and welcoming space') for respondents to construct a least interrupted nor edited coherent rendition(s) of their giving experiences; an opportunity for respondents to construct, reconstruct or deconstruct the architectures of the interplay between the shaping influences of their interior motivations, and cogent exteriorities, (and visa versa).

3.3 Research Instruments

3.3.1 Survey

The survey questionnaire was developed in such a way that it would capture respondent characteristics and behaviours that could later be collated for analysis purposes. The survey instrument was divided into three parts with designated types of information collected in each section as follows:

- Section I - Biographical data
- Section II - Habits, Attitudes & Affiliation data
- Section III - Experiences of Giving information

Next we turn to a list of the types of data elicited in each of the 3 above-mentioned sections of the survey instrument.

³⁸ All interviews were audio recorded with the exception of a 37th interview in which the Recorder malfunctioned. In light of this, only 36 interviews were factored in for statistical purposes.

Section I: Biographical Data

1. Individual identifiers
 - Name
 - Gender
 - Age
2. Location verification
 - Citizenship
 - Gauteng residence
3. Cultural affiliation
 - First language
 - Province of origin
 - Race
4. Education
 - Highest level of education completed
 - Parents' levels of education
5. Household
 - No. in household living under one roof
 - No. of persons living with you who are not in nuclear family
 - No. of persons outside your nuclear family that you regularly support
6. Employment
 - Employment status
 - Length of employment
 - Type of employment
 - Parents' types of employment
7. Income
 - No. of persons in household earning an income
 - Monthly respondent income
 - Monthly household income

Section II: Habits, Attitudes & Affiliation data

8. Political affiliation
 - Vote in last national election
 - Vote in next national election
9. Religion
 - Faith affiliation (formal/non-formal/non-existent)
 - Faith type
 - Frequency of association
10. Respondent Community involvement
 - Types of volunteer/civic affiliations
11. National priorities
 - Who to turn to for community upliftment?
 - What are biggest problems facing the nation?
 - Effectiveness of government in addressing these problems?
 - Poverty alleviation is whose responsibility?

12. Class structure
 - Existence of 'class pull' in the new SA?
 - Respondent 'class' self-categorisation
 - Primary 'class' indicators
13. Respondent attitudes/beliefs
 - Opinion poll on reciprocity values
 - Cultural proverbs/sayings on reciprocity

Section III: Experiences of Giving Information

14. Motivations for giving
 - Reasons for giving
 - Giving sustains individuals vs. giving sustains the community
15. Recipients of giving
 - Recipient characteristics
 - Giving as obligatory responsibility vs. freewill offering
 - Giving duration
 - Giving effectiveness
16. Causes given to
 - Types of causes
 - Individual vs. institutional giving
 - Local vs. international giving causes
17. Characteristics of reciprocities
 - Giving to known recipients vs. giving to unknown recipients
 - Number of people supported in previous month
 - Religious giving
18. Types of reciprocities
 - Categories of giving: (a) money (b) time (c) goods
 - Amounts: Monetary value of financial giving in previous month
 - Frequency: of giving of time (volunteer) in previous month
 - Frequency: of giving goods in previous month

A full copy of the survey instrument is found in Appendix 1.

3.3.2 Interview

The research's interview instrument was constructed around four structural modes:

- (a) story-telling and the exploration of life experiences,
- (b) an interrogation of sentiments, values and rationalities
- (c) an investigation of proverbs and reciprocity-related idioms
- (d) eliciting 'push & pull' factors that motivated or de-motivated giving

The questions chosen for the interview instrument were broken down into two parts

(1 & 2), each of which contained two sub-sections. The first sub-sections of both parts 1 & 2 of the interview pivoted on a story-telling modality. This was because ‘giving’ is sometimes viewed as a sensitive topic insofar as renditions of one’s own philanthropy can be viewed as arrogant displays of supercilious conceit. Therefore, in order to evade these natural barriers to ‘naming’ the experience of giving, I chose the mode of story-telling as a more natural mechanism for unpacking practices of reciprocity.

The second sub-sections of parts 1 & 2 of the interview instrument, concerned broader reflections intended to address a deeper discussion of giving motivations and associated sentiments and values. Questions here related to the rationalities of how respondents perceived giving was structured, and by whom.

A third component targeted in the interview related to traditional practices and mores of reciprocity. These were probed both in interview questions and in terms of proverbs and idioms that were noted in question #40 of Section III of the survey.

The interview instrument concluded with a question that investigated what were the ‘pull’ and ‘push’ factors that stimulated or conversely discouraged giving. ‘Pull’ elements were described as factors that were positive, and attracted the person to be a giver, the ‘Push’ elements were described as those factors that negatively pressurised or obligated the person into giving (or not giving) against their will. The use of ‘Pull’ and ‘Push’ factors is a methodological feature used for surfacing the propensity towards a particular behaviour and the factors that generate it. It was first used by Miller and Glassner in their sociological study of youth gang affiliation attractors and detractors in 1997. ‘Push’ and ‘Pull’ factors were interrogated in this study through a recounting of instances related to what had been the best and worst giving incidents that respondents had experienced. A full copy of the interview instrument can found in Appendix 2.

While the above paragraphs describe the mediums used for structuring the interview schedule, we turn next to consideration of how the interview content was developed. The content of interview questions focused on 5 Primary Dimensions of the reciprocity domain. Namely they investigated the following:

- 1) Social dimensions of reciprocity
- 2) Customary dimensions of reciprocity
- 3) Material dimensions of reciprocity
- 4) Structural dimensions of reciprocity
- 5) Symbolic dimensions of reciprocity

Below find the content grid used for investigated each of these reciprocity dimensions.

- 1) Social dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Conceptions of community
 - b) Authority/decision-making structures
 - c) Support networks

- 2) Customary dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Traditional practices
 - b) Role of religion
 - c) Push & pull factors

- 3) Material dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Norms of exchange
 - b) Impact gauges
 - c) 'Class' relations

- 4) Structural dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Macro-level responsibility for poverty alleviation
 - b) Global market effects

- 5) Symbolic dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Inter-generational shifts
 - b) Impact of history
 - c) Significance of location

Conclusion: Narration of stories of 'best' and 'worst' giving experiences.

In the above, the interview content development has been presented in rough outline form; what follows provides examples of how the Reciprocity Dimensions Grid (noted on the previous page) translated into the first piloted interview questions. (The remaining parts of this correlation [between the grid of reciprocity dimensions and ensuing interview questions] can be found in Appendix 4.)

Examples follow next:

1.) Social dimensions of reciprocity

a) Conceptions of Community

(To be investigated – How do particular understandings of allegiance, and responsibility shape reciprocities)

Interview Question # 1:

Outside of your nuclear family (spouse and/or children) do you regularly support anyone else? If so, who do you regularly support and why? Who do you feel is your responsibility to support? Explain.

Prompt: With a limited amount of resources, how do you prioritise who (and how) you support others?

Prompt: What are your feelings about supporting others? Do you feel that supporting others positively or negatively impacts you? Explain how or why.

b) Authority Structures

(To be investigated – What patterns of power and decision-making surface in how reciprocities are instigated and negotiated)

Interview Question # 2:

In your experience, how and by whom are reciprocities *solicited* or *initiated*, and who decides when they begin or end. Also how and who determines the types of reciprocities that will be engaged in (e.g. money/time /material resources)?

Prompt: Do you perceive any of the following: gender, age, family relations, status, or wealth, to be factors in how these decisions are made?

Prompt: What is your experience of how you disengage from reciprocity obligations that you do not want to continue?

3.3.3 Data Analysis

In his 1607 text *Pensees*, Blaise Pascal reminds us that all structures are replicated at different levels, so that even the entire ocean is affected by a single pebble. So too, this project's data analysis mechanisms are of critical significance because they serve as the filters through which the study's 'pebble' findings are caught and sorted, ranked, polished and put on display.

Moreover, each 'pebble' in its own structural traits holds hints of the larger patterns and systems that it is inherently tied into.

Two types of data analysis featured in this study, one approach related to the survey information and the other related to the interviews. In the survey, inquiry was undertaken to determine how demographic characteristics (as well as self-reported behaviours and attitudes) exhibited, contrasted and compared within the sample group. Furthermore, measures were put in place to assess differences between the various types of giving that featured within that group, their associated amounts, and frequencies. The next aspect to be explored related to any correspondence between factors such as race/religion/socio-economic status and respondents giving habits. For example, within the sample group were there any demographic or attitudinal characteristics that predisposed some respondents to be higher givers than others? All of this information was deemed important in order to contribute to, and inform, qualitative analysis findings surfaced in subsequent parts of the study.

For the interviews, narrative analysis was used as the data analysis mechanism. Towards that purpose, interview responses were transcribed and then compared across a grid of primary narrative-analysis themes in terms of both form and content. As a methodology in its own right, the narrative analysis field encompasses the investigation of (a) content analysis, (b) an interrogation of narrative structure, (c) as well as a scrutiny of narrative performance. (This is an adaptation of the framework that Mishler devised in 1995: 87-123.) All three of these realms are intertwined like symbiotic sisters in the construction of life renditions. Linguistic units of analysis may vary in length and designation among narrative analysis approaches. While ‘word crunching’ systems (Nud*ist as but one example) may variously analyse word-tied constructs, yet what remains constant within all narrative analysis modalities are the presence of some form of ‘coding frames’ (Berg 1998: 223).

The ‘coding frames’ used for this narrative analysis were based on the Five Dimensions of Reciprocity mentioned earlier, and were tools employed for the purposes of interpreting the presence (or lack thereof) of primary theoretical constructs within the research. (They were also variously used to generate the disclosure of new constructs as well.) Functioning as grids, their purpose was to corroborate and analyse narrative in terms of particular frameworks or conceptual collectivities. Some of these coding frames lent themselves more closely to structure or performance analysis (as mentioned earlier), while others were more content driven.

3.3.4 Qualitative Correlations

The purpose of this section is to speak to the way in which the survey and interview instruments were designed with in mind the integration of the information from these two sources. While the two instruments were different in format and even in the types of data they solicited, yet they were devised in such a way that they would coalesce around and complement each other. In terms of direct correspondence between the two instruments, each of the interview questions had one or more survey questions that measured the same variable. In order to demonstrate how the survey and interview instruments comprise two pieces of one whole, I lay this out more fully in terms of the specific questions that elicit and mirror the same data in both instruments. [For more information on this see Appendix 4.]

The one exception to the above-mentioned principle relates to the survey's Section I – which solicits the respondents' biographical information. For this type of basic demographic information it was deemed unnecessary and redundant to cross-reference. That said, the respondent biographical information was found to be very useful. As the research involved a purposive sample group and did not aspire to be representative of the larger public, its focus was on how the information gleaned from the interviews and surveys could elucidate an analysis of qualitative conceptual patterns within the sample group.

3.4 Research Verifications

3.4.1 Validity

The validity of research has traditionally been defined as its capacity to accurately measure what it intends to measure, indicating that its theoretical constructs as well as its research instruments are veritable and appropriate in terms of the study's stated objectives.

Two types of validity are generally cited, internal validity and external validity. Internal validity is strengthened by means of substantiating that research results are not merely an artefact of the research design itself (Elliot 2005: 20). The triangulation of various research methodologies being used in this study is the primary mechanism used to verify this type of internal validity. Construct validity (as described in the next paragraph of this section) is also a kind of internal

validity gauge insofar as it verifies the appropriateness and effectiveness of measurement tools. This was addressed by piloting the original instruments so as to increase their efficacy through review and revision.

External validity refers to the generalisability of research findings. More specifically, population validity indicates the degree to which the “results obtained for a sample of individuals may be generalised to the population to which the research hypothesis applies” (Huysamen 2001: 37). In this case, because the instruments of this research made use of a purposive sample, their findings were not intended to be statistically generalisable to the population as a whole, but rather were meant to explore an in-depth and purposive ‘slice’ of the Gauteng population and their particular views and experiences of reciprocity.

Lastly, since the variables to be investigated (giving behaviours, patterns and motivations) are social science *constructs*, they can only be measured indirectly, using gauges that indicate their presence. Having said that, this study does make use of the following 3-fold typology which captures the possibility of indicating their presence and/or frequency:

- Time
- Money
- materials

The assertion is made that the use of these three factors does have strong construct validity – that is, that these factors do provide a very adequate categorisation that encompasses a vast majority (but possibly not all) forms of giving.

3.4.2 Reliability

The reliability of a study is gauged by its replicate-ability and the ‘stability’ of its research findings [measured in terms of levels of possible variance (Elliot 2005: 20)]. Put simply, this means that research is only reliable if its results (given the same conditions) can be consistently repeated over time. In this case, whilst the research was primarily qualitative in nature, yet for both the interview and survey instruments a standardised set of questions (albeit with the option of variable prompts) was used so as to increase the stability of the instruments and the overall reliability of the research.

Several other devices were also structured into the research design to augment its reliability. Firstly, in both instruments, the same information was typically elicited several times and in several different ways/questions so as to produce multiple sites for cross-referencing the same answers. ‘Parallel form’ reliability was enhanced in these instances. Additionally, the same researcher was present with each respondent interview so as to mitigate against a non-standard ‘experimenter effect’ specific to biases associated to a variance in different researcher’s attributes (Huysamen 2001: 69).

3.4.3 Potential Threats

Three issues present themselves as potential threats to the integrity of this research. Each of these in turn engages with the conundrum of representation from a different perspective: qualitative, philosophical and practical. The first of these ‘threats’ is the qualitative argument that second-hand representation should take a back seat to self-representation in arenas pertaining to previously subjugated discourses. As D. Posel, J. Hyslop, and N. Nieftagodien suggest in their work on *‘Debating ‘race’ in South African scholarship’* (2001: 47):

In the wake of postmodern and postcolonial preoccupations with the effects of researcher’s/writer’s positionality in the production of knowledge, Winsor Laroke (1996), Tshidiso Maloka, Christine Quanta (1987) and others questioned the extent to which white scholars can effectively and legitimately document the experiences of black people.

The above-mentioned stands as a very legitimate critique. In order to mitigate against at least some of its hazards two mechanisms were factored into the research design. Firstly, feedback was solicited from collegial black professionals who were enlisted to give ad hoc feedback to the project both in its pilot and final phases. This was in order to diminish research ‘distortions’ (that I as an ‘outsider’ might be vulnerable to), as well as to invite multiple perspectives so as to also guard against acquiescence to singular definitions of socially normative or ‘desirable’ (frequently politically correct) research findings. Secondly, narrative was featured as a primary data collection research tool in order to bring the narrators themselves to centre stage as the primary agents enacting their own subjectivities. Narrators own verbiage was then used to structure the research findings.³⁹

³⁹ For instance, see chapter 6, sections 6.3.3.1 through 6.3.3.10 as examples.

The second ‘threat’ relates to the larger philosophical issue of representation itself. Edward Said (1979: 272) makes reference to the paradox of representation:

The real issue is whether indeed there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations, because they are representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambience of the representor. If the latter alternative is the correct one (as I believe is), then we must be prepared to accept the fact that a representation is *eo ipso* implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the ‘truth’, which is itself a representation.

All social research is about representation. C.K. Riessman (1993: 8) reminds us that especially in qualitative research, “Investigators do not have direct access to another’s experience. We deal with ambiguous representations of it...” She goes on to explain that each representation that we create is interpretive and reflects as much about us, as it does about the subject under investigation. No longer can we solely objectify knowledge as ‘out there’ to be clinically discovered and appropriated; rather this research project is cognisant that social research findings are deeply coloured by, and inseparable from, the structural and institutional milieus that shape both the researcher and participants themselves, (the ‘co-researchers’ as some have called them).

“Ultimately it is unclear who really authors a text” (Riessman 1993: 13); moreover it is my premise that researchers, participants, and consumers are all co-dependent in research construction as well as de-construction processes. In answer to the philosophical arguments that surround representation, I would say that this project is not singularly seeking to identify a series of positivist findings but rather that the double inscriptions inherent in this research predisposes it to be “plurivocal, open to several readings and several constructions” (Rabinow & Sullivan 1987, as cited in Riessman 1993: 14).

The third possible research ‘threat’ mentioned here is more practical in nature. As the last and probably biggest potential threat, it revolves around the self-reporting nature of the social giving patterns studied. The fact that the project relies heavily on the individual’s renditions of their own giving behaviour leaves scant room for testing the factuality of these assertions of behaviour. It is important to mention here that considerations around issues of self-reporting in the social sciences are not specific to this project alone, but remain a much larger methodological question impacting the field as a whole. However, while ‘oral narrative sources’ are considered

by some Positivists to be unreliable, yet an equally large number of voices consider oral narratives to be singularly instrumental in the development and conveyance of critically important interpretive realities. (See for example the work of Steiner Kvale, (1996) and Bruce L Berg, (1998). These writers and many more, would posit that the self-reporting and reflexive capacities of oral data collection instruments are in fact their strength.

3.5 Ethics

3.5.1 Public Participation

An overarching ethic of public scrutiny was applied to this research project as a whole, inviting review throughout the duration of the project, over and above requisite academic requirements. As this study's author, I actually view this project as the summation of over a decade of work amongst communities who I have witnessed exhibiting incredible mores of social giving and reciprocity. In no way would I want to dishonour or discredit their memory, rather my desire is in some incremental and interactive form to give credence to a deeper understanding of what I have been privileged to encounter over that time.

One of the foundational premises of this study therefore, (and a principle that the researcher desires to adhere to) is the necessity of incorporating outside input into the research process at every level. This is because of the firm belief that every rendition of life experience (including our own) is somehow 'sacred' in its ability to influence and shape public thinking. Regardless of whether a research project is of premium quality or alternately demonstrates a paucity of insight, once it is in the public domain it becomes a part of the larger collective of who we are as social creatures and how we reflect about ourselves. In light of that, as a researcher I believe it is in the interests of research integrity to open up the conversation to a broad level of participation. In order to further the networking around this project I have therefore probed informal input from colleagues along the way as well as having the privilege of excellent input from two senior and seasoned academic advisors.

3.5.2 Confidentiality

In the interests of strict participant anonymity, all information gathered from the project's interviews and surveys was collated, analysed and their findings disseminated without reference to the personal identities of respondents. In terms of narrative interview material, two key issues pervade respondent information sourcing; on the one hand there is the important issue of the appropriate acknowledgement of sources, while on the other hand is the importance of maintaining the respondent's right to confidentiality. The way that these two interests have been simultaneously negotiated is by the principle whereby all direct quotes from respondents will either be only demographically identified (with no indications of personal name or identity cited) or else prior consent will be obtained should a respondent's names be cited in conjunction with a particular quote.

3.5.3 Use of Research & Return to Participants

Lastly, it is hoped that this research can contribute to a robust conversation on discourses of social giving and reciprocity in the 'new' South Africa. In aid of the this goal, all research materials (including its findings as well as its original transcriptions and data base) will be made available to the public so as to further other research on this topic and related fields as well.

Research respondents will be given priority in accessing the findings of this study through the net or alternately email, upon the completion and academic certification of the project. Should respondents desire feedback along the way, they will also have the researcher's contact details for any further communication they may desire and for any supplementary comments.

It is hoped that the questions raised by this research will be of benefit to participants in their own reflexive journeys as social giving entrepreneurs. Moreover, it is also expected that this project may well generate more questions than it attempts to answer.

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Chapter 4: Historical Precursors

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Embedding Reciprocities in Historical Context

Our journey of exploring reciprocities amongst Gauteng's black communities begins with an analysis of these practices within the parameters of a given historical context. To ignore the antecedent seedbed that has birthed today's practices would be to neglect a key information source that significantly informs behaviours. Moreover what chapter 4 explicitly intends to surface are key historical precursors that have melded and shaped reciprocities amongst black communities.

Two intertwined elements feature in this equation. The one relates to the dynamics of *Material Conditions*⁴⁰ and the second to the meanings attached to and employed within those circumstances, i.e. *Social Constructs*⁴¹. Essentially the argument put forward here is that an understanding of the history of social reciprocity patterns within black communities requires an engagement with both of these aspects: an examination of the material conditions specific to social life in a particular context at a particular time, as well as engagement with the collectively shared values and beliefs of that context – that is, the accompanying social constructs.

⁴⁰ Marx's theory of historical (and dialectic) materialism (1867: Vol 1, preface) suggested that the structuring of society was fundamentally determined by the material conditions inherent in relations of production. More specifically, Marx asserted that class identity ('consciousness') and affiliations were created in the womb of a given class's *shared material conditions*. In this sense I use the term here to connote that whilst a variety of classes did indeed exist within historic black communities on the Witwatersrand (see for instance *Reeftown Elite* by Brandel-Syrier), yet the institutional and structural impacts of Apartheid were such that multiple classes within black communities were constricted of their naturally divergent trajectories. For more on this, see the last section of this chapter which deals specifically with changing class structures.

⁴¹ Berger and Luckmann's (1966) work focused on the ordering of social inter-relations as a human production. They suggested that through a series of reciprocal typifications, behaviours became habituated and inscribed with social meanings. These meanings became part of a repertoire that was 'institutionalised' and embedded (Polanyi) as a social construct. Later Foucault added to the parameters of *Social Constructionism* by proposing that whilst people created these constructs, they also became the victims of the 'disciplining' nature of the institutionalisation of these same (and frequently binary) constructs. Stewart Hall and the Birmingham school also added texture to the discussion by subsequently suggesting that (popular) 'culture' constructs were also institutionally mediated and disciplined. I use the term 'social constructs' here to delineate the shared 'meanings' behind collectively held forms of thought and action.

By use of the term ‘material conditions’ I am suggesting that an understanding of the means of production characteristic of people in a specific socio-economic and historical context is of critical importance because of its significant role in creating, shaping and enumerating the life-choices (work possibilities, housing options, food, clothing and educational levels etc.) of the people inhabiting that particular socio-economic location.

Likewise, it is not only similar ‘material conditions’ that shape social solidarities but also symbolic ‘social constructs’ that involve people in normative conventions that orchestrate their social behaviour and create a sense of community. Essentially the transmission of social constructs requires the continuous provision and renewal of collectively shared representational forms which ensure the ongoing commitment of individuals to normative scripts of reciprocity (Thompson 1991: 87).

Moreover, as the goal of this chapter is to identify and analyse key historical precursors in this equation, this is done by means of analysing both the material conditions and social constructs which have shaped the history of reciprocities in this context as follows:

- (1) Shared Material Conditions – specifically structural issues related to
 - (a) Land
 - (b) Labour

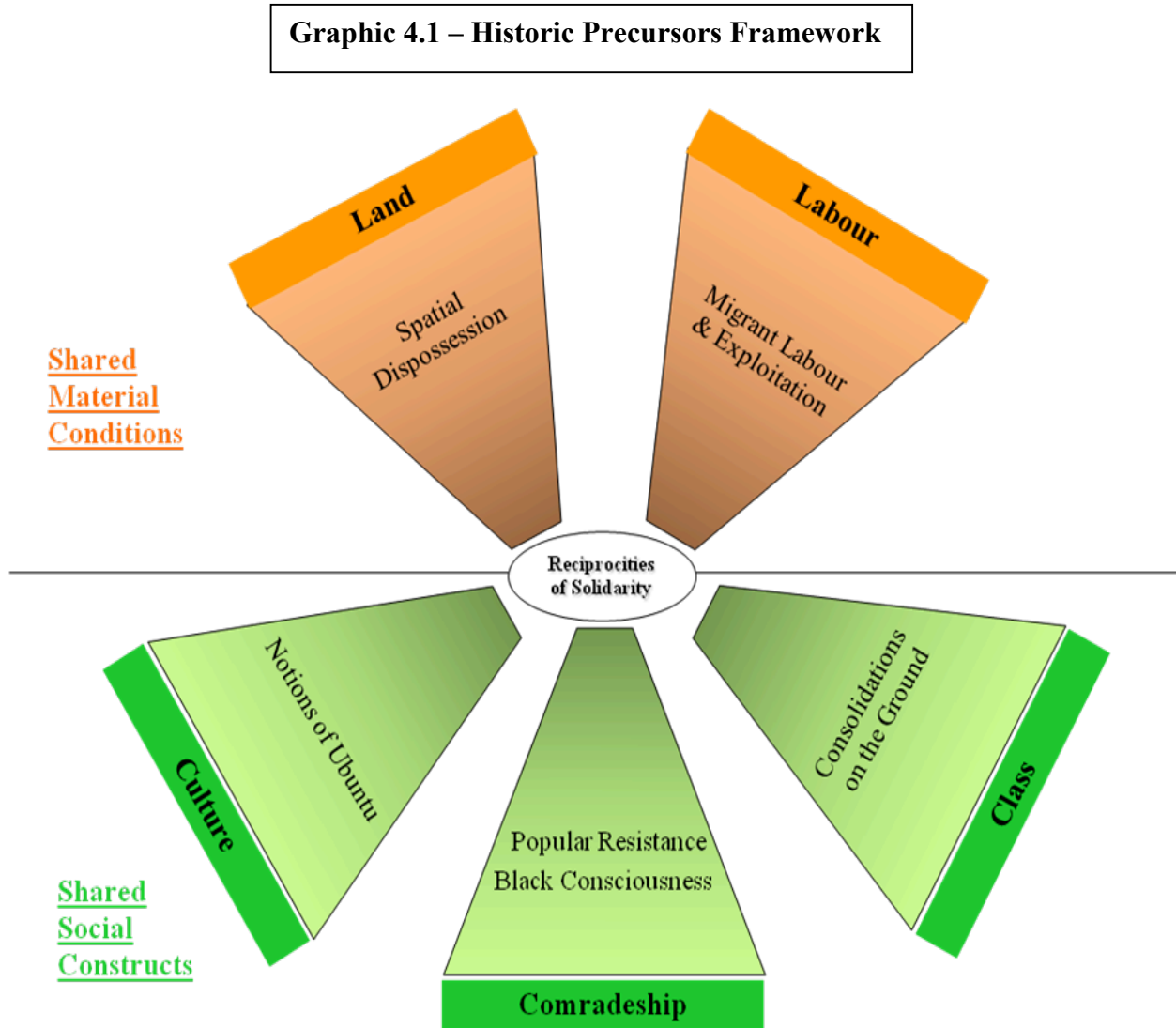
- (2) Shared Social Constructs – specifically those centring on notions of
 - (a) Ubuntu
 - (b) Comradeship
 - (c) Class

Primary to understanding this chapter’s section on ‘shared material conditions’ will be a discussion of how the historic legacies of colonialism and Apartheid enacted a system of land dispossession and labour migrancy which critically and significantly disembedded (some might even say figuratively disembodied) pre-capitalist forms of social reproduction.

In the section on the ‘shared social constructs’ of culture, comradeship and class, special attention will be given to historic notions of ubuntu, black consciousness, and experiences that created grass-roots solidarity during the Struggle.

4.1.2. Chapter Scheme

In the following pie-formation, please find this chapter's content portrayed in schematic format:



The five themes highlighted in this schematic resound not only as critical discourses reflected in the annals of this setting's history but they also follow the interchange between forces that have served to heighten social exclusions (predominately in the upper quadrants) and those that have functioned as mechanisms fostering cohesion and consolidation (predominately in the lower

quadrants).⁴² Moreover it is important to note, however, that the factors identified in Graphic 4.1 have also all had mixed repercussions on reciprocities; multiple outcomes manifesting simultaneously in the construction of solidarities.

4.2 Labour

The aim of this first segment of chapter 4 is to chart shifting dynamics of reciprocity as shaped by *changing processes of labour exchange*. In order to better understand the distinctive mark that historic structures of labour have rendered on black communities, the author briefly touches on two significant labour-related segments of the South African story and their impacts on reciprocity patterns:

- (1) The Colonial Legacy
- (2) Apartheid and ‘Cheap Labour Power’

4.2.1 The Colonial Legacy

With the incursions of colonial occupation, black communities experienced a major shift away from pre-capitalist modes of labour and production. Moreover, this shift should not be depicted as a sudden and all-encompassing juxtaposition of two economic worlds colliding, but rather as a ‘mixed’ transition in which entrenched elements of pre-capitalist life remained resiliently (if even subversively) active in the face of increasing capitalist encroachments (Berman 1990: 428)⁴³.

What changed with the advent of colonialism, however, was the extent to which reciprocities exhibited as adjuncts to new forms of race-based structural and systematically exploitative labour patterns. In response to these racially encrypted labour protocols, changed forms of social

⁴² In no way am I suggesting here that these factors have a predictable or linear relationship to either social cohesion or social disintegration. Rather, my point is that some kind of grouping is necessary in order to classify their initial impact, whilst leaving room for their subsequent outcomes to be ‘mixed’ (creating both embedding and disembedding impulses) over time.

⁴³ In his analysis of the nature of the shift away from pre-capitalist existence, Bruce Berman (1990: 428) puts forward the following description: “The process of articulation was neither a facile instrumental transformation of indigenous societies to ‘serve the needs’ of metropolitan capital nor a structurally determined incorporation of pre-capitalist forms into a functional relationship with the capitalist mode of production, but rather, as J.M. Lonsdale has put it, an essentially *syncretistic* process, an ‘ever-changing kaleidoscope of struggle, class conflict, within whichever of the endless range of social relations of production that *combined and uneven development* has thrown up’. ... Colonial Africa thus presents us with a syncretistic complex of capitalist *and* pre-capitalist social relations of production and exchange.”

relations devolved within black communities. The encounter of pre-capitalist societies with capitalist development, more specifically impacted the realms of:

- (1) Social reproduction
- (2) Economic reproduction
- (3) The transmission of Structural reproductions

We will engage next with each of these areas in turn.

In his seminal text entitled *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry* Colin Bundy (1988) describes the variety of ways in which African Pastoralists ('pre-colonial cultivators') were transformed into a 'peasantry'⁴⁴ in response to the incoming influences of the colonial market economy in the 19th Century (Meintjes 1982)⁴⁵. More specifically as colonial-capitalist powers extended their control over social formations, so too did they exert a restructuring influence on black communities on the level of household social reproduction. Two aspects of this will be mentioned here, shifts in divisions of labour and changes pertaining to family dislocations.

Bundy (1988: 246) suggests that "a whole range of interlocking pressures and problems" were unleashed in terms of the costs capitalism exacted from social reproduction functions. Reflecting on this, he cites some of the 'native' narrative presented to the Beaumont Commission⁴⁶ early into the turn of the century. Bundy (1988: 246) recounts that given the opportunity to present complaints before the Commission, Mpefu (a local African community member), described his displeasure with the rupturing of traditional family labour structures as follows:

I am all by myself because little children have been made to pay taxes; they have to go out and work.

⁴⁴ Here it is important to define my use of the term 'peasant'. More especially a distinction should be made between 'primitive subsistence agriculture' and 'peasant land cultivation'. The most helpful articulation of this distinction that I have found to date refers to Bundy's work on this subject: "In primitive society, surpluses are exchanged directly among groups or members of groups; peasants, however, are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers" (Bundy 1988: 5).

⁴⁵ Meintjes adds to Bundy's definition of peasantry as follows: "a class of petty agricultural producers who sought to sell a portion of what they raised in order to meet the demands of a cash economy and a colonial state".

⁴⁶ The Beaumont Commission was tasked with identifying additional possible land for the 'Reserves' during the first two decades of the 20th Century. Hearing submissions and presentations from a variety of constituencies from throughout the country, much pressure was put on the Commission particularly by 'natives' under the leadership of Gumedde, to re-negotiate the terms of the 1913 Land Act. The Commission however, responded in its final published report in 1917 to the contrary and denied these revisionists their requests.

Moreover, as a result of the exploitative labour regimes enacted by colonial rule, divisions of labour in African households were influenced by changes in the *types* of work engaged in, as well as the *age-groups* most frequently conscripted for these labours. As Mpefu asserts above, targeted most often for agricultural (and later manufacturing and mining work) were the young and able-bodied. As aspirations towards higher levels of specialisation within the black labour force were frequently systematically squelched, so too inter-generational dynamics within black families changed as the productivity value (the surplus extraction potential) of older family members was reduced significantly and redirected from external labour arenas and back into rural subsistence activities.

Additionally exacerbating changes in social reproduction dynamics were processes of family dislocation. It is important to mention this phenomenon due to its inception in the oppressive environment of sharecropping existence which later evolved into forms of labour migrancy. As one sharecropper explained it, success in cultivating the land frequently brought about the failure of its acquisition (Van Onselen 1996: 409):

I was sick and tired of being allocated a field and then being evicted once it had been cultivated and the soil proved fertile. You were chased away as soon as they discovered that you could produce a good harvest from soil that had previously been considered useless. You tamed the land and they got rid of you.

Suffice it to say that social reproduction costs were immense in the transition away from traditional modes of subsistence, affecting how division of labour functions were apportioned within communities as well as dictating the migratory location of where these labour functions would take place.

Second to its impact on social reproduction within households, the shift away from pre-capitalist modes also made itself felt in terms of alterations in economic reproduction and changes in the creation and transmission of wealth within black communities. In his text *The Seed is Mine*, Charles van Onselen (1996) describes in biographic detail the life of Kas Maine, a black South African sharecropper at the turn of the century, and the social and structural forces that induce his family to move from the highveld to labour migrancy and industry. Onselen (1996: 116) narrates that in Kas' desire to incorporate a level of personal agency into his existence, he asserts himself (at the expense of his job) in the face of his 'white boss' with these words:

You know, one day God will allow us to purchase property – just like you – and I will hire you, and overwork you just as you are doing to me.

Kas' assertion of economic self-determination insinuates itself not in terms of the acquisition of livestock or a traditional 'homestead', but rather in terms of personal 'land ownership' in this new system of capital formation. Thus additionally associated with new conceptualisations of the use and role of personal land 'ownership' were also assumptions about the invisible but very real tie between land-owners and the nature of the requisite labour relations needed for survival within a capitalist system.

Accompanying changing conceptions in the arena of economic reproduction, was the inauguration of a shifting system of stratified exchange currencies, primarily enacted through the ways in which money was strategically withheld from, or required of, local populations. Colonial rule was accompanied by the introduction of a formal monetary system, but this system was in many ways stripped of its potential to egalitarianise inter-group relations because colonial leaders would in some instances pay their labour-force 'in-kind' [labour in exchange for commodities such as bread, maize or beer (Shiraishi, 2006)].

The colonial practice of 'labour in-exchange for subsistence goods', birthed a practice in which the exchange of goods of a different economic calibre became laced with inter-class overtones. This ensured that 'elite goods' were separately circulated from the throngs of everyday goods. Limitations of consumption were thus set up for the poor, whilst in many regards a higher standard of life for the leisure classes was ensured and safeguarded.

This resulted in the further solidification of an already tyrannical social stratification system. Subsistence commodities therefore became a general purpose currency interchangeable betwixt and between a variety of tiers of the social strata, whilst 'elite' goods circulated as an exchange currency primarily used only amongst the rich (Battuta, 1929: 336). Interestingly, sites for the intra-group ('in-house') re-distribution of some of the very basic commodities amongst black communities became locations for group bonding (such as was the case in 'shebeens'⁴⁷) wherein

⁴⁷ The term 'shebeen' first surfaced circa 1787 as a description for an unlicensed or illegally operated drinking establishment.

collective consumption of some of these subsistence rations (such as beer) became a symbol of diffuse solidarity (Shiraishi 2006)⁴⁸.

The second way that elite structures were maintained through fiscal manipulation was opposite to the first: as opposed to withholding currency, in some instances monetary currency was required of local populations, forcing them to gain the necessary coins needed for payment (of taxes for instance) from labour they officiated outside of the realms of subsistence existence. An 1893 *Report of the Mine Managers Association on the Native Labour Question* (Callinicos 1982: 23) delineates the following requirements placed on local populations:

It is suggested to raise the Hut Tax to such an amount that more natives will be induced to seek work, and especially by making this tax payable in coins only; each native who can clearly show that he has worked for six months in the year will be allowed a rebate equivalent to the increase that may be determined by the state.

Moreover, whilst during the pre-capitalist era reciprocities were more significantly within-group and inwards focused, during the colonial period reciprocities became additionally individualised and also more markedly structured as transactions birthed out of a system of externally-imposed racial and economic stratification. In this regard, structural reproductions were also altered in such a way as to highlight new power equations, both within black communities themselves, and betwixt them and colonial power structures.

Here again we turn to Bundy (1988: 246) and his depiction of presentations made by black Africans to the Beaumont Commission in the first two decades of the twentieth century:

Mapafuri described how economic losses weakened Africans politically: ‘We have lost our herds, and the only thing you can do is say “Do this! Take that Away!” and we obey your orders.’

The formulation of power differentials at the turn of the century rested not only on the role of newly imposed state powers, but also on what van Onselen (1996) indicates was the background of local and regional demands for the ‘proletarianisation’ of the African peasantry. This played itself out not only in terms of the cross-racial power dynamics imposed by colonial rule, but also in terms of tribal divides that harboured internal intra-group segmentations. Meintjes (1982:

⁴⁸ Shiraishi notes that even until today many African traditional rituals surrounding reciprocity (for example stokvel pay-outs) are still accompanied by the ‘beer party system’.

127-130) describes the ways in which inter and well as intra-tribal differentiations between chiefdoms were actually fostered by the demands of the larger capitalist-colonial equation:

The political conjuncture which contributed to the emergence of this peasantry is examined in detail; it was not simply market forces, but also the support of missionary, trading and even administrative interests in alliance with one another which fostered the existence of the peasantry. Their support was important in the defence of the colony against neighbouring chiefdoms. But as the independent chiefdoms came under colonial rule, so the need for these peasant 'allies' diminished. And with the mineral revolution after the 1880's the balance of power in favour of peasant interests in the political economy shifted. Capitalist industrial and agricultural interests acquired greater sway with the government ...

Particularly interested in the nature of shifts within African societies in the transition away from pre-capitalist modes of production have been a cadre of revisionist⁴⁹ historians whose works have showcased varying levels of *agency* within local communities. Most notable amongst these thinkers were the writings of Peter Delius whose original work focused on the Pedi of the Eastern Transvaal, Jeffrey Peires who wrote on the history of the Xhosa of the Eastern Cape, Jeff Guy whose doctorate focused on the Zulu, and Philip Bonner's work on the Swazi. Each in turn shown a spot-light on pre-capitalist societies through detailed empirical work that emphasised a balance between the importance of the role of outside structural forces combined with critical local power dynamics at play. All, however, featured the ways in which the encounter of these pre-capitalist societies with capitalist formation either accentuated already existent stratifications within black communities or alternatively created conditions which gave rise to new and significant changes in social, economic and structural reproductions.

In summary, the legacy of colonialism necessitated shifts in social reproduction patterns within black communities in terms of altered configurations of divisions of labour and family dislocations, economic reproduction was influenced by the introduction of a monetary system that redefined wealth creation within black communities, and changes in structural reproduction fostered shifting patterns of political alignment in line with the proletarianisation of indigenous peoples.

⁴⁹ In chapter 17 of his text, entitled '*Class and Race, structure and Process*', Christopher Saunders (1988) notes the movement in South African historical works away from structuralist interpretations and towards more 'revisionist' approaches. In so doing, he notes that "The early work of the liberal Africanists tended to present African societies as classless and undifferentiated. Now an attempt was made to understand the divide between rulers and ruled, chiefs and commoners, as the major cleavage or contradiction in pre-colonial African societies."

4.2.2 Apartheid and ‘Cheap Labour Power’

Within the first quarter of the 20th Century, the burgeoning impacts of increasing industrialisation and growth in the mining sector were making themselves felt within black communities in Johannesburg. With the discovery of diamonds in Kimberly in 1869, and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, a flood of migrant labour feeding the mining industry was unleashed. Moreover, Johannesburg’s population exploded to approximately 100,000 by the mid-1890s and the area experienced a large influx of black workers. By 1907 the Witwatersrand mines pushed into place as the third leading extractors of gold in the world, and by 1910 South African gold outputs were controlled by six leading mining houses.⁵⁰ The enormous wealth and profits flowing out of these enterprises continued to be channelled and monopolized in the hands of a few European ‘Randlords’.

Due to the booming prospects of gold extraction, a malleable and ‘cheap labour force’ became an increasingly significant factor to the mining and manufacturing industries. This of course was not the first time in the region’s history that a ‘labour influx’ had been introduced in order to satiate and serve capitalist interests. Similarly, a subjugated labour force had been appropriated (whether locally or internationally imported to South Africa) in waves of people (from Madagascar & Indonesia [late 1600’s], India [from the late 1860’s and onwards], China [importation specifically to the Transvaal between 1904 and 1910]⁵¹). Yet throughout all of these eras, it was also the local black communities who were the majority populations appropriated as an indispensable part of the labour force undergirding the industrial complex of the country.

By the beginning of the 20th Century and in order to feed growing mining interests, Johannesburg’s urban black populations had nearly doubled in size. Accompanying this growth was the mushrooming of large tracts of informal black ‘hostel’ accommodations around mining

⁵⁰ Bernstein (1996: 4) goes on to suggest that these primary mining houses provided the “principal origins of the huge conglomerates whose dominance is a striking feature of South Africa’s economy today”.

⁵¹ Between 1904 and 1910, 63,695 Chinese labourers were brought to the Transvaal under contract to work on the Witwatersrand gold mines. By 1906 the Transvaal government introduced the Asiatic Registration Act (variously known as the ‘Black Act’) which required the compulsory registration of all Asians over the age of eight. For more on this ‘experimental’ importation of Chinese labour, see Richardson (1982) which explores the impact (both internally and externally) of this indentured labour system.

sites throughout the area. In line with this influx of labour came a patterning of reciprocities in black communities that pivoted on hospitality towards these newcomers (Bozzoli 2004: 45)⁵². Moreover not only commodities such as food rations were shared, but also goods such as temporary housing were offered on demand amongst many black community members.⁵³

The suggested correlation between the early 20th Century's influx of black labourers into Johannesburg and corresponding patterns of reciprocity based on hospitality, is not meant to imply that cultural mores of hospitality did not exist before this period amongst many of the region's original peoples. Certainly generous and often ritualized forms of welcome were practised towards visitors in eras gone by, as elaborate forms of reception for travellers, kin and even outsiders (Tedla, 1992; Nussbaum, 2003).

Reciprocity is by definition, however, a two-way street; in these early days how were waves of incoming labourers benefiting the community in return? Reciprocities were returned in several ways. Firstly, when hospitality was extended by urban family and community members [which it must be noted was not always the case], incoming labourers would essentially become relationally indebted to their accommodation hosts (Ashford 2005:28)⁵⁴. These relational debts could then be called upon and 'settled' at a later time, once the incoming labourer had secured specialized skills so as to 'return the favour' to their benefactors. This resulted in a system of

⁵² Bozzoli (2004: 45) tracks patterns of 'accommodation' reciprocity to migrant workers from their early 20th century origin and into the mid century when black township dwellers "nurtured their kin; [and] cultivated their own capacity as city patrons by offering to their siblings, cousins, children and home folk access to living space ..." She also points to the development of this system in a commercial sense, whereby in Alexandra "standholders rapidly built rows of rooms on their land, letting each tiny room to a whole family. The stand became the 'yard', and the standholder became the landlord and the patron to dozens of poor newcomers to town."

⁵³ Interview: KJ1, Eikenhof, 3 October, 2007.

Repeatedly in the Interviews undertaken for this project, the theme of housing migrant workers was voiced. KJ1 describes it this way: "So what I saw is my grandmother, my family, then [would] open up their homes to those people... So I was exposed you know, to a lot of people coming in and out, just being accommodative for the time and leaving. We were not related to them – we didn't know them, they were speaking different languages." See chapter 5 for more in depth discussion on this theme.

⁵⁴In his Soweto ethnography, Ashford (2005: 28) makes the observation that these norms of sharing and reciprocity worked best when "capacities for giving [were] relatively evenly distributed". However, "... when some people's needs are permanent and their capacities for [immediate] reciprocity limited, habits and ethics of sharing come under strain." My point here is that it was precisely the transfer of a variety of social capital resources at *different points* in the productivity lifecycle that made this system effective. For more discussion on the inter-generational nature of these resource transfers, see chapter 8.

patronage that benefited both giver and receiver at different critical junctures in their productivity life-span.⁵⁵

During the Apartheid years, the second means by which reciprocities were ‘re-paid’ was through an informal system of long-distance remittance. This informal system was entrenched particularly due to legislation (Group Areas Act of 1950 and Pass Laws) that hindered black families from remaining residentially intact in urban areas. South African migrant workers’ remittances to their families in the rural areas represented a substantial part of subsistence income for their rural counterparts. A study by Posel and Bowles (2005) found that amongst South African migrant workers in 1993, almost half of urban wages were sent as remittance to geographically distant relatives. Of the 9,000 households surveyed in that 1993 study, virtually all migrants in the sample had sent remittances ‘back home’ in the year preceding the survey.

Whilst it is not the particular focus of this research thesis, it is important to note that as Posel and Bowles (2005: 381) suggest, “Migrants’ remittances provide a rare window into the allocation of resources within a household, as intra-household transfers are typically not measured in surveys.” The practice of remittance⁵⁶ as a form of intra-household transfers still remains very much a part of the reciprocity landscape in South Africa today, particularly amongst the poorer echelons, but not limited to them.

What shifted during the Apartheid era, however, was the move from reciprocities which hinged on the co-operative ‘in-flux’ of fellow black labourers, to reciprocities which later focused on mitigating against the Apartheid government’s spurious ‘Influx Control’ regulations (Posel 1991). From labour in-flux to influx control; how did these externalities serve to shape black reciprocities? According to the ‘Cheap Labour Power Thesis’ (Wolpe & Legassick 1976) this historical juggernaut was compounded by the maintenance of a pre-capitalist agricultural system in rural South Africa which provided the opportunity for urban employers to pay below-

⁵⁵ Interview: FM1, Braamfontein, 8 November, 2007; Interview: BT1, Pretoria, 9 November, 2007.

Two interviewees for this research, FM1 and BT1 spoke at length about the critical role that their Rangwanes (Sotho word for ‘uncles’) had played in providing them with housing and opportunities when they had originally come to Johannesburg. Essentially these ‘uncles’ had opened up networks of connection for them which kick-started them into education and later employment. Within their stories, the ‘Rangwanes’ each played a pivotal part in bridging for them the migration from a rural to urban setting.

⁵⁶ This research suggests that reciprocities enacted by black professional respondents towards lower echelons are a form of ‘remittance’, only transposed into a more contemporary format.

subsistence wages to migrant workers (and thereby maximise their exploitation of cheap labour power). Essentially, this added to the burden of social reproduction within black labourers' lives as they struggled with bearing the primary costs of their own urban survival, whilst simultaneously supporting [through regular remittance (Posel & Bowles 2005)] their households back on the Bantustan 'reserves'.

By way of synopsis, reciprocities within black communities during Apartheid were significantly punctuated by the ebb and flow (influx and influx-control) that regulated migratory labour. This resulted in reciprocities that frequently pivoted on mores of hospitality, which often exhibited in patronage relationships as well as a system of remittances to unemployed or rural family members.

4.2.3 Summary

As we pull together the various strands of the reciprocity story embedded in the South African labour equation the following patterns emerge:

- During the pastoralist and pre-capitalist eras, intra-community reciprocities were frequently characterised by the exchange of social capital through a network of primary social reproduction relationships.
- These exchanges were often mediated by common filial interests and were [as Polanyi (1944) suggests]⁵⁷ deeply embedded in the mores of communal subsistence.
- With the incursion of colonial occupation (as well as increasing inter-group tribal expansion) came the induction of reciprocities based on new systems of social stratification that infused reciprocities with racial transcriptions.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ In his analysis of early African exchange systems, Polanyi (1944) posited that in 'pre-capitalist' contexts the needs of *society* determine economic behaviour as opposed to the set up in other more formalised and modern market economies wherein the needs of the *market* shape and determine social behaviour. What Polanyi was pointing to was the 'embeddedness' of pre-capitalist labour exchanges within community life and the fact that reciprocity protocols were deeply nested within the spheres of social relations and not primarily seen or experienced as purely economic transactions. The assertion is therefore that in pre-capitalist contexts reciprocities structure themselves not singularly in terms of what Adam Smith or Max Weber defined strictly as pure 'economic rationality' but rather in terms of what Bourdieu describes as social capital transfers based on relational 'networks of connection'.

⁵⁸ Additionally important to note is the role that increasing modernisation has played in fostering 'individualisms' that have tended to dissipate traditional bonds of social cohesion.

- The accompanying shift away from pre-capitalist modes of production dislodged traditional divisions of labour and additionally resulted in the ensuing rupture of subsistence patterns.
- The formalisation of migratory labour regimes during Apartheid manifested in the extortions of ‘cheap labour power’ and further to this, the disruption and dislocation of traditional family constellations.
- Added to the above, labour influxes and influx control legislation created reciprocities that shaped themselves around patterns of long-distance household remittances.
- In tandem with the above patterns of urban (and rural) hospitality, also became entrenched as reciprocity mores which functioned to offset the social reproduction costs of the migratory labour system.

4.3 Land

The second approach used to examine the research’s historical precursors addresses material conditions birthed out of the land issue; how did the dynamics of land ownership or dispossession impact on the shaping and/or resurgence of reciprocities in black communities? Sam Kariuki and Lucien van der Walt (2000: 19) suggest that from the founding of the ANC in 1912, “land and the agrarian question [have] been a key political issue and a central component to the struggle in South Africa”. Moreover it is to this terrain that we turn next as we explore what Granovsky (1940: 3) explains is the crucial role that land plays in both social and material development:

Land is the indispensable foundation of any human activity. Without it, there can be no agriculture, no industry, and no urban settlement. The first task of a landless people is to provide this foundation for its existence. But land is more than a mere foundation. It is the source from which men [sic] obtain their food. Land is therefore, and indispensable means of production ...

Several critical junctures serve as signposts in the land question, namely the cumulative impacts of the 1913 Land Act with its restrictions on agrarian land ownership, the Group areas Act of 1950 with its added residential exclusions in urban areas, and the more hidden restrictions associated with both of these spatial disposessions. Each of these in turn will be explored in the following sections, accompanied by their relationship to the shaping of reciprocities.

4.3.1 ‘Super-exploitation’⁵⁹ and the 1913 Land Act

On the heels of two centuries of significant Dutch and British colonial expansion from the southern-most tip of the continent and increasingly into its interior (1652 – 1850), by the mid 1860’s the emergence of commercial and capitalist farming by white settlers was increasingly evidencing itself throughout the Western and Eastern Cape and northwards into Natal. The expansion of these settlements sustained itself through ever growing regimens of land annexure. Particularly in the Eastern and Northern Cape, however, this “period of open frontier was characterised by the fragmentation of frontier society, together with multiple small-scale interactions across the colour line, governed by *situational* as much as racial criteria” (Bonner, 1983:67). Bonner goes on to explain the co-dependent (and one might add frequently dysfunctional) nature of the relations between these racially and economically disparate, yet intimately conjoined, entities (1983:67):

Rather than isolation and insecurity heightening a sense of group solidarity and separateness from other racial groups, the weakness and isolation of the constituent elements of trekker society seems to have forced them into relations of symbiotic dependence with local African groups, which helped to accentuate further their differences one from another. This is not to say that racial prejudice did not persist... What it does indicate, however ... [is] the intimate relations of dependence of which this was both the effect and the cause.

With the extension of white settlement, came the ever-encroaching threat to black peasant⁶⁰ farming. In fact it could be said that indigenous populations responded so well to the market incentives provided by white capitalist settlement during the mid to late 19th Century, so much so, that during this period black rural cultivators posed a threat to the white farm monopoly (Bundy, 1988). Bundy’s argument⁶¹ suggests, however, that this “should not be misinterpreted to mean that ‘left alone’ all members of an African peasantry would have prospered.

Demographic factors, as well as long-term price trends for agricultural produce, were of themselves sufficient to militate against any widespread peasant prosperity” (Bundy 1988: 244). Coupled with this was the fact that white capitalist agriculture was encouraged and bolstered at

⁵⁹ Bond uses this term in the title of his *Africanus Journal of Development Studies* 2007 article: “Two Economies – Or One System of Superexploitation”. I borrow this term both linguistically and conceptually from his work.

⁶⁰ I refer here to my previous annotation regarding the term ‘peasant’, and Bundy’s (1988: 5) definition as follows: “In primitive society, surpluses are exchanged directly among groups or members of groups; peasants, however, are rural cultivators whose surpluses are transferred to a dominant group of rulers”.

⁶¹ For a critique of Bundy’s premise, see Ranger’s (1978: 99-133) comments in *The Roots of Rural Poverty* article.

the direct expense of potential peasant production. Additionally, the constraints later enacted by the state, “placed restrictions on Africans ... [which] stifled further attempts by Africans at commercial agriculture, and forced them into migrant labour” (Redding, 1993: 513).

Throughout the 19th as well as 20th Centuries, in addition to the appropriation of labour (as discussed in the previous section), land dispossession served as an accompanying form of exploitation of local populations. Consolidating the hold of this strategy was the formalisation of the *Land Act of 1913* which the South African Legislature used to regulate the acquisition of land by ‘natives’. This was the first major piece of segregation legislation passed by the Union Parliament, and remained a cornerstone of Apartheid land policy up until the 1990’s. The Natives Land Act of 1913 and supplementary legislation in 1936 essentially sanctioned the land divide on a ratio of 92% percent of the land mass annexed for ‘white’ use and ownership, and the remaining 8% percent for ‘black’ settlement and occupation. “This contributed to the dual process of undermining agricultural commodity production developed by Africans during the previous half century, and stimulating the transitions from sharecropping and other rent arrangements to labour tenancy, and from labour tenancy to (unfree) wage labour, in a gradually capitalising white agriculture” (Bernstein 1996: 5).

Bond (2007: 4-5) recounts that Berlak Yudel in the ‘*Draft Thesis on the Native Question*’ of the Workers Party of South Africa, in 1934 summarised this transition as follows: “... the bulk of the population is to be found on the land, engaged in agriculture ... But the special characteristic of this peasantry is that it is a *landless peasantry* ...” Constricting the natural mobilisations characteristic of peasantry, was the vice-grip of spatial expulsion from traditionally owned lands; the outgrowth of this dispossession was the collapse (or some might argue mutation) of a whole system of land production originally based on small communal reserves.

Also contributing to land expulsion was the precursory *Glen Grey Act*, which effectively had done away with communal land rights, and additionally had prohibited individual tenure options for members of the black population. Then with the enactment of the 1913 Land Act, the primary intention was to eliminate the perpetuation of independent rent-paying African tenants and cash croppers residing on White-owned land. This was done through restricting African residence on ‘white’ land to labour tenancy or wage labour, and through prohibiting African land

ownership outside of the Reserves. The end result was that indigenous people lost their land (and grazing lands for livestock) and with this, their livelihood.

Identifying these ‘super-exploitation’ mechanisms at work was South African Communist Party intellectual Harold Wolpe, who in his 1972 article entitled ‘*Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa*’, articulated the ways in which capitalist surplus extraction mechanisms opportunistically fed off of and benefited from racist political domination. In this sense a vampire state and a vampire economic system colluded in the systematic destruction of pre-capitalist relations within black communities.

The deleterious impacts of this joint ‘state and capital’ corroboration were far-reaching in terms of their power to systematically compromise livelihoods. They also, however, ironically served to open up spaces for other loci of social alliance. Alliances birthed out of ‘colonialism of a special type’⁶² also inevitably entrenched reciprocities of a ‘special type’ – those pivoting on common interests albeit amongst disparate classes. As is seen next, this realignment of allegiances was the case not only within black communities, but in white communities also.

Featuring as a key sub-narrative during the period 1911–1928⁶³ were growing alliances between white rural and white working class interests (Barber 1991: 85). Essentially white rural interests opposed the extension of the Reserves proposed in the 1913 Act, due in part to their underlying desire to see African tenants remain tied to white farms. Added to this were increasing ‘native’ labour shortages associated with the luring of black workers into the urban industrial and mining sectors, thereby forcing white farmers to feel the pinch of competition for a labour force they knew was essential to their way of life. These interests found a natural ally with those of the white urban working class who felt that their own work-security, particularly for those working within the mines, was increasingly becoming threatened by the in-flux of a cheap black labour force which had the potential to undercut their value to the mining industry (Barber 1991).

⁶² This phrase was originally used by the South African Communist Party in their 1963 “The Road to South African Freedom: Programme of the South African Communist Party” manifesto.

⁶³ Of particular significance during 1921 was the threat of a serious economic slump and industrial down-turn in South Africa, coupled with the Smut’s governments’ loss of support especially amongst the English working classes of Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

As mine owners endeavoured to keep wages low by restructuring work so as to employ more African labourers (at substantially lower wages), so white workers (reimbursed at much higher remuneration levels) felt that their privileged positions in the mines came increasingly under threat.⁶⁴ In this regard both white rural and white urban working class interests coalesced together around their desire to see African tenants remain bound to working the land on white farms.

Moreover, simultaneously during this time, black rural and urban working class interests were also becoming increasingly conjoined at critical junctures, not only due to the overlaps inherent in migrant work, but also in the face of the impetus of common ‘Struggle’ mobilisations that to some degree subsumed class locations to issues of racial or ethnic identity. This is not to say that early political mobilisations were not localised or largely spontaneous, but rather to point to their power to span class divides. For example, the ‘umanyano’ [women’s fellowships within the black Methodist Church] used broad-based prayer meetings to discuss the possibility of mobilisations that were an outgrowth of their conditions of poverty. Schools boycotts and the boycott of trading stores in the Herschel region of the Transkei (1922 – 1926) grew out of this religious platform that bridged multiple class strata.

In fact these types of religious alliances within black communities in and of themselves also show-cased and created a stage for new social locations. The consolidation of a black ‘bourgeoisie’ was reflected in this context insofar as the founders of the ANC were largely comprised of a strata of black lawyers, doctors and other ‘*kholwa*’⁶⁵ who were considered to be ‘converts’ or black persons educated in mission schools. In her research of black elites on the Witwatersrand during the 1960’s, Brandel-Syrrier found that “almost two-thirds of the [black Reeftown] elite belonged to the two largest missions in the Transvaal and three-quarters to the three mission churches ...” (Brandel-Syrrier, 1971: 260).

⁶⁴ In 1922 a white worker’s strike was held in response to deteriorating work conditions experienced by white workers, particularly in the mining industry. The strike, however, failed -153 white mine workers were killed and hundreds more were wounded. Moreover one of the outcomes of this loss was the development of the new PACT government alliance which resulted in the protection of white job reservation through the imposition of the ‘colour bar’ system.

⁶⁵ ‘Kholwa’ is an Nguni word meaning ‘believer’ and referred to new Christian converts or those educated in mission schools.

Linkages between local struggles and national campaigns also bolstered *multi-class* black solidarities (Lodge 1983) which, for instance, enlisted the support of thousands of black women from a variety of walks of life in aid of the cause of the anti-pass campaign. ‘Struggle solidarities’ inclined various classes within black communities to conjoin their interests together so that even though internal class stratifications in black communities did very much exist (Brandel-Syrier 1971), these division co-existed for a long time, locked together by the ‘structural and political restrictions’ of the day (Limb 1992). According to Limb (1992 n.d) this happened in such a way that classes became:

Drawn into a single fraternity by their economic interest and this led to a consciousness that all Africans have a common political destiny. This was the prerequisite for an all-embracing African nationalism ...

In summary, the enforcement of land dispossession legislation (Glen Grey Act and Land Act of 1913) on black communities during the first 3 decades of the twentieth century impacted changing class coalitions by either birthing, or variously displaying, shifting patterns of allegiance. Moreover white rural interests made strange and new bed-fellows with the urban white working class, whilst multiple classes within the black community (albeit in some instances spear-headed by the educated ‘*kholwa*’) partnered together in the interests of resistance efforts. In both cases these solidarities manifest in reciprocities that crossed natural ‘class’ divides in the interests of much hoped-for economic as well as political benefits (Bozzoli, 2004: 107)⁶⁶.

4.3.2 ‘Native Land’ and the Group Areas Act of 1950

In order to further monitor the regulation and distribution of black workers serving the mining, agriculture and urban sectors, legislation was enacted by mid century in the form of the *Population Registration and Group Areas Acts of 1950*, which defined the “four ‘population groups’ and their mutually exclusive areas of urban [and rural] residence” (Bernstein 1996: 10). As a further consolidation of the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, this mid-century legislation served as the apex of ‘Grand’ Apartheid, forcing all Africans to “become ‘citizens’ of first eight, and

⁶⁶ Bozzoli (2004: 107) speaks to the regimentation of ‘comrade’ reciprocities, citing even the ‘protocols’ enacted when a comrade needed assistance when isolated and harassed by security forces.

then ten ethnic homelands” (Bernstein 1996: 11). Masondo (2007: 70) describes the outgrowths of this trajectory as follows:

... the Reserves subsidised the way the black working class was subjugated as forced necessary labour. Subsistence agriculture in the Reserves contributed to the social reproduction and maintenance of migrant workers. Put differently, the Reserves took care of the worker in his old age or illness (or youth). Capitalism thus benefited from the continual existence of the pre-capitalist mode of production. The Reserves took care of those who were not yet immediately useful (children) and those who were no longer useful (retired or ill workers). Since capitalism treated workers as means for capital accumulation, physically disabled workers – victims of widespread occupational hazards – as well as old workers no longer functional for capital accumulation were thrown in the Reserves.

In his text on South Africa’s ‘Agrarian Question’, Henry Bernstein (1996: 12) points out the irony of this equation; “... in a not unfamiliar paradox of capitalist development, at a time of rapid economic growth the Bantustans were undergoing a shift from ‘cheap breeding grounds for black labour’ to a dumping ground for a growing relative surplus population as agriculture and industry became more capital intensive”. Coupled with relegation to the Bantustan ‘homelands’ (areas already exhibiting overcrowding, twinned with processes of desertification and intense soil erosion) was urban influx and Pass control legislation which in the ensuing 1960’s was responsible for the relocation of 4 million African people into segregated urban and rural areas (Kariuki & Van der Walt 2000:19). As the result of ‘endorsements out’ to rural areas and specified urban re-locations, by the time of the 1970 census, roughly 47% percent of Africans officially resided in the Bantustans (Bernstein 1996: 13)⁶⁷.

In light of the above, it is no wonder why reciprocities in the form of family ‘remittances’ (to rural or disenfranchised relatives) took on a strong and entrenched tradition amongst black urban communities of that time. Left in the rural Bantustan areas, the very young, the old, and the disabled needed a means of sustenance in the face of (1) the ‘super-exploitation’ of black communities’ land and labour, and (2) the absence of a national social safety net that would willingly subsidise their social citizenship rights.

⁶⁷ This figure rose to 54% by 1980.

In addition to a system of kinship remittances, however, another type of patronage was also simultaneously making itself during the first half of the twentieth century. In his text '*Citizen and Subject*' Mahmood Mamdani (1996) suggests that in the post-colonial context a bifurcated state system was evidencing itself throughout Africa through a pattern which pivoted on the cooption of traditional leadership structures (in the case of South Africa, those being the traditional leadership structures associated with the Bantustans⁶⁸). This cooption process revolved around the following dynamics (Bernstein 1996: 13):

... the South African [Apartheid] State aimed at, and to a considerable extent achieved, the creation of a collaborationist petty bourgeoisie in the Bantustans as a counterweight to popular opposition. This petty bourgeoisie had its base in 'homeland' administrations, including their 'tribal authorities'...

What this system heralded was a process whereby the representation of 'African' interests to state authority structures was typically undertaken by intermediary black traditional leaders or civil servants.⁶⁹ The development of this type of state-endorsed patrimonial system created networks of patronage support critical to social advancement for the few, but not the majority within black communities.

To re-cap, key to understanding reciprocities during the first half of the century is an awareness of the rise of two elite 'leadership' strata within black communities. On the one hand the '*kholwa*' developed against the backdrop of mission school education and served as leaders for much of original populist Struggle thought and action (Bozzoli, 1979: 146⁷⁰, Eidelberg, 1999: 54), whilst on the other hand state-endorsed traditional leaders monopolised positions of power within black communities in the Bantustans (Southall 1982; Southall & Bank 1996). State-mandated Group Areas legislation impacted each of these sectors through the consolidation of the Apartheid ideology of spatial segregation which bolstered and enforced migratory labour patterns as well as artificial divides between rural and urban existence. Moreover these divides

⁶⁸ It is important to note here that Mamdani's assertions have come under increasing scrutiny over time, and that they remain controversial in their own right. Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) members, for example, would find Mamdani's propositions to be problematic and singularly hegemonically aligned to the ANC's meta-narrative of events.

⁶⁹ The point made here is that whilst 'native' Bantustan leaders were endorsed by State structures, 'popular opposition' (Struggle) leaders were not accepted as the *state-legitimised* 'voice of the people'.

⁷⁰ Bozzoli (1979: 146) compiled the 1978 History Workshop material within which Kelwyn Sole draws particular attention also to the role of the black petty-bourgeoisie in the development of a local 'intelligencia'.

fostered the emergence of two separate yet parallel seats/sites of black power, one amongst community and Struggle leadership in urban township settings, and one amongst traditional leaders in rural contexts. For each of these, however, it reinforced a system that tied urban and rural black communities together in a twinned (yet later competitive) co-dependency, both on each other and in regards to the larger Apartheid State itself.

4.3.3 Summary

The following provides a synopsis of the previous discussion on how reciprocities have been shaped by the history of the land issue in South Africa:

- Land dispossessions enacted against African populations in the early parts of the 20th century (e.g. Land Acts of 1913 and 1936) resulted in a 'Bantustan' system that concentrated the effects of super-exploitation, converging impacts on particular racial bands and spatial locations.
- As an outgrowth of this, rural agricultural production developed by Africans in the previous half century was fundamentally decimated and made untenable as a sustainable source of livelihood for black communities.
- The dynamics of a system of land tenancy and a landless peasantry divided black households, forcing able-bodied members to the urban areas in search of work and creating reciprocity networks of 'parallel lives' that bridged between the earning and the non-remunerated, and between rural and urban divides.
- 'Endorsements' in and out of the rural areas and to and from the urban 'locations' became ritualised with particular types of reciprocities, (for instance the provision of 'Christmas food' and 'new clothes' dispensed at Easter) which fostered specific reciprocities associated with these geographic 'passages' of migratory labour necessitated also by Group Areas legislation.
- Simultaneous to these developments were shifts in class structures within black communities that coalesced around the emergent leadership roles of the educated (frequently but not always 'kholwa') in urban areas and also rural traditional leadership structures in the Bantustans. Moreover, the emergence of these two separate yet parallel seats of black leadership power reinforced a system that tied urban and rural black communities together in a twinned (yet later competitive) co-dependency.
- During this time reciprocities related to the land equation manifest not only in financial household remittances that bridged urban and rural

bifurcations, but more specifically also manifest in a pattern of ‘in-kind’ exchanges related to infrastructure containments due to limits on the amassment of capital⁷¹ within black communities.

Shared Social Constructs

In addition to a discussion of the impacts of the shared *Material Conditions* associated with the historic Land and Labour rubrics, the second half of this chapter will address three shared *Social Constructs* related to reciprocities. Featured in this section of chapter 4 will be three themes that echo profoundly throughout much of black South African history, namely the themes of:

- (1) Cultural notions of ‘Ubuntu’
- (2) Comradeship and the Ideology of Resistance and Black Consciousness
- (3) Changes in Class structures.

Each of these will be explored in turn, with in mind their influence on the patterning of reciprocities.

4.4 Cultural Notions of ‘Ubuntu’

In this next section, conceptions of ‘ubuntu’ will be interrogated in terms of values and experiences that pre-dated the Struggle, but that still highly influenced ensuing modes of collective action. This will be done by means of surfacing meanings surrounding original traditional notions of ubuntu, and secondly through an exploration of the ways that notions of ubuntu have since been appropriated as part of a political rhetoric campaign that has stripped the notion of much of its original intent.

4.4.1 Traditional Practices

Whilst popularised notions of solidarity frequently emanate from discussions surrounding the Struggle, certainly conceptions of solidarity also pre-date the Struggle. Moreover, the precursory traditional notion of ubuntu was deeply and culturally entrenched in social relations in pre-

⁷¹ Here I refer to ‘containments’ specifically in relation to the dearth of State-endorsed financial infrastructure options open to black communities. It was only in the late 1970’s that NAFCOOC [National African Federated Chamber of Commerce] in partnership with white capital, was permitted to set up the first ‘African Bank’.

Apartheid times, with the influence of this value still cascaded into sequential eras. The government's *White Paper on Social Welfare* (1997) defined ubuntu as follows:

The principle of caring for each other's well being ... and a spirit of mutual support ... Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through a recognition of the individual's humanity. Ubuntu means that people are people through other people. It also acknowledges both the rights and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being.

As a rule of conduct or social solidarity ethic, the Nguni word 'ubuntu' embraces ideas of community self-reliance, mutual assistance and social responsibility (Portilla-Diggs 2006).

South African Bishop Dandala (2003 n.d.) suggests that "Ubuntu is not a concept easily distilled into a methodological procedure. It is rather a bedrock of a specific lifestyle or culture that seeks to honour human relationships as primary in any social, communal or corporate activity ... It essentially states that no one can be self sufficient and that interdependence is a reality for all."

South African psychologist Nhlanhla Mkhize (2003 n.d.) goes on to indicate that the 'self' is bounded in community is several traditional African cultures in South Africa.

The African view of personhood denies that a person can be described solely in terms of the physical and psychological properties. It is with reference to the community that a person is defined. The importance of the community in self-definition is summed up by Mbiti 'I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am'. It is this rootedness of the self-in-community that gives rise to sayings such as *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (Nguni) / *Motho ke motho ka batho babang* (Sotho). These roughly translate to: 'It is through others that one attains selfhood.' The Venda saying, *Muthu u bebelwa munwe* (a person is born for the other), also captures the interdependence between self and community.

Ubuntu conceives of community, rather than self-determination as the essential aspect of personhood. "This [is] possible because one identifies with one's position in the structure of socially sanctioned roles and therefore one's self-image corresponds to the image that other's have of one. One's self-respect and respect had from others [is] a function of one's roles. Such a person would lack neither integration nor self-realisation, since the very self (including expectations, aspirations, and life-project) is given unambiguously by one's social location" (Yurkivska 2002: VI).

Not only does ubuntu function in line with the parameters of social location, but also in tandem with economic location (notwithstanding that these are conjoined). Nussbaum (2003) suggests that traditional wisdom envisions ubuntu to call upon us to believe and feel that: 'Your pain is

my pain; my wealth is your wealth.’ In this regard notions of ubuntu feed very snugly into practices of patronage, dovetailing not just social capital, but also material capital into the purview of communal consumption in networks of support between those that have and those who do not.

Various traditional cultural notions of ubuntu (Letsema, Ilima, Izimbizo and Vuk’uzenzela for instance) also embrace practices of borrowing, lending and investment as described by Nussbaum (2003):

Typical of *ubuntu* is a tradition called *ukusisa*. A family in a rural village would ‘lend’ a cow and a bull to a newly married couple recently arriving in a village and wait until an offspring was produced before taking back the original cow and bull. The offspring would stay with the newcomers, leaving them both with their own ‘seed capital’ and their dignity. This mutually beneficial transaction is based on kindness, but also with the idea of reciprocity, sharing wealth in the interests of building the community as a whole.

These types of investment ties have functioned to both create and maintain community bonds.

4.4.2 Political Appropriations

Whilst within the public domain many over-simplified and glorified connotations are associated with ubuntu, critics suggest that in fact deeper meanings surround this concept and layer it with ambiguity. Kamwangamalu (1999), for instance, argues that although communalism is the opposite of individualism, the ‘ubuntu culture’ does not negate individualism. Rather, he argues that “communalism is the recognition of the limited character of the possibilities of the individual, [and] limited possibilities whittle away the individual’s self-sufficiency” (Kamwangamalu 1999:29). So too, ubuntu has also been characterised by Yurkivska (2002: VI) as potentially restrictive; “The ubuntu practice stipulates that the person is expected to surrender to the cultural norms set forth in society”, and this creates the possibility of such social relations “becoming like a spider’s web: suffocating, oppressive, precluding the survival of any free, revolutionary, critical spirit”.

The post-Apartheid era has also been marked with the cooption of conceptions of ubuntu by government.⁷² In this regard Mokong (2007) suggests that notions of ubuntu have been appropriated by the state in attempts to garner community engagement in upliftment efforts that exonerate the state of its complicity with poor service delivery. “Particularly those in positions of power tend to manipulate and abuse ubuntu values to advance their narrow ends ...” (Mokong 2007: 263). Mokong goes on to assert (2007: 266) that this type of abusive and exploitative rhetoric on the part of government runs the risk of legitimising the “current untransformed capitalist economic order”.

4.4.3 Summary

By way of summary for this section, the following reflections are made:

- Within the South African setting, notions of ubuntu have bounded the individual into community in ways that have mediated social locations so as to create networks of support.
- In this regard notions of ubuntu have created expectations surrounding conceptions of the parameters of communal social and economic responsibility.
- These bedrock precepts have impacted heavily on both the experiences and rationalities that shape reciprocities because of their power as culturally embedded mores.
- In traditional and cultural imagination, ubuntu values have also been associated with notions of social and economic investment. These notions of investment have stemmed from, as well as fostered, conceptions of ongoing social patronage.
- Lastly, in the post-1994 context, conceptions of ubuntu have been co-opted in the political rhetoric of government, in the interests of enlisting broad-based support for upliftment initiatives.

4.5 ‘Comradeship’ and Ideologies of Resistance

The second *Social Construct* that will be investigated relates to the impact of conceptions of ‘comradeship’ during the popular resistance movement and ensuing mass mobilisations. These

⁷² For example, see the prolific use of the ‘Ubuntu’ motif and verbiage in the outgoing speech of President Thabo Mbeki given in his closing nation-wide address on television (SABC 3 and e-TV, 7:00 p.m.) on Sunday, 21 September, 2008.

are highlighted not only because of the way that they solidified a comradeship of collective action during the Struggle, but also because of their effectiveness in inspiring current community mobilisations that showcase reciprocities being enacted yet today. Two themes will be investigated here in more depth under the banner of conceptions of comradeship, namely the development of:

- (1) Modes of Collective Action
- (2) Impacts of Black Consciousness Ideology

The discussion begins with a look at the early phases of South Africa's resistance movement, this being the birthing container for grass-roots reciprocities of solidarity during the Struggle.

4.5.1 Modes of Collective Action

As a decade that saw the 'official' entrenchment of an Apartheid government, the 1940's ushered in a time of intentional and widespread resistance. "Most important was the transformation of the ANC [African National Congress] from a small, mostly petty-bourgeoisie formation of 'responsible' opposition to an organisation of mass action" (Bernstein 1996: 10) By 1943 a Youth League was established, and the 1952 Defiance Campaign saw the ANC's membership spike within months from 7,000 to over 100,000 members. Key constituencies representing a spectrum of race alliances (including 'Coloured' and Indian groups) joined with black and labour coalitions⁷³ in 1955 to organise the Congress of the People that inscribed the *Freedom Charter* which remained the programmatic statement that led the national liberation struggle for the next four decades.

Increased Apartheid legislation in the early 1950's⁷⁴ as well as Pass laws and ongoing struggles against Bantu education, culminated in the March 1960 Sharpeville massacre in which 69 people were killed in the act of a non-violent protest against Pass laws. This event in particular was significant in marking the shift into an even more incursive and violent repression by the Apartheid regime, culminating in the declaration of a 'state of emergency' (Bernstein 1996).

⁷³ During this time the *South African Congress of Trade Unions* was established in 1955.

⁷⁴ Bernstein (1996) suggests that here refers the Natives' Settlement of Disputes Act of 1952 – targeting the obstruction of labour unionism, the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953 – aimed at retarding the Defiance Campaign, and the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1956 – also an attempt to bar union activism.

As “land, labour and livelihoods”⁷⁵ were increasingly put under pressure, a wave of protest fomented and breached in 1973 in a series of Durban Strikes in which black workers⁷⁶ took to the streets as a “militant agency of transformation” (Sitas 2007: 40). Within weeks all of Durban’s major industrial complexes were crippled by the spread of strikes in which 30,000 factory workers downed tools and demanded a ‘living wage’. As a momentous chain of events mushrooming across the country loomed on the horizon, the Durban Strike unrest was met with some acquiescence; Vorster’s government consented to ordering an investigation into wage levels and even some amendment to legislation regarding the right to strike. Though these reforms proved to be mere ‘window-dressing’ on the part of the state, they did for the first time breath life into a recognition of the right of African workers to withhold their labour. These forms of resistance also provided new mass access to channels that had previously been the sole domain of government.

The key to understanding the significance of the Durban Strikes within the public imagination of black South Africans of that time, lies in its ability to (1) ignite a consciousness of resistance comradeship, and (2) instil in workers a sense of the power of collective action. Both of these provided a vital foundation that perpetuated and drove the ensuing unrest of the 1976 Soweto uprisings and critical protests, boycotts and stay-a-ways in the 1980’s. By 1985 an indefinite ‘state of emergency’ was called, and within the following two years 34,000 people were detained and 22,000 charged. These served as critical opportunities for collective action responses to the ongoing and severe repression enacted by Apartheid’s political and ‘military-industrial’⁷⁷ complex.

The profound impacts of collective action utilised as a mechanism for empowerment were undoubtedly felt in the domains of economic and social reproduction as well. By that I mean that these bursts of popular energy connected with a new wave of community organisation and action in township populations (Bozzoli, 2004) that “contested the impositions, high costs and oppression of daily existence” (Bernstein 1996: 14). These birthed two public sentiments that

⁷⁵ I borrow this term from Sitas’ and Hart’s 2004 article *Beyond the Urban-Rural Divide: Linking Land, Labour, and Livelihoods*.

⁷⁶ It is important to note that the Unionist cause was also upheld by liberal *white* (as well as other race group) strike leaders such as Rick Turner, Halton Cheadle, Paula Ensor and others.

⁷⁷ I refer here to C. Wright Mills’ (1956) insightful outlining of the *collusion* between political, military and economic elites.

are important to note in terms of understanding reciprocity expressions in post-Apartheid South Africa: (1) collective action was used as a mechanism for direct or indirect opposition to state abuse or neglect, and (2) collective responses were used as mechanisms to combat adverse economic effects and encroachments associated with ‘super-exploitation’ and capitalist economic formation.⁷⁸ Moreover, both political and economic repressions were addressed by means of the solidarity of ‘collective comradeship’ in action.

4.5.2 Impacts of Black Consciousness

Experience and action, however, were not the only bulwarks of comradeship. It was also during this time that the impacts of the ideology of Black Consciousness were first felt. In fact reciprocities featured significantly as a theme in Black Consciousness writings and in South African township community life in the pre-Apartheid setting as well as in the womb of ‘Struggle’ activation (Bozzoli 1987 & 2004; Brandel-Syrier 1971).

Reciprocities can be found summarily pre-figured and exhibited in the annals of much of black Struggle literature. Biko for instance, narrated his understandings of reciprocity in terms of conceptions of black ‘self-reliance’ (2002 Edition: 38), while Z. K. Matthews described reciprocities as the combined efforts required for “overcoming by the sheer weight of numbers” (1966: 142). Jabavu (1963), Kuzwayo (1990) and Jordan (1973) all used the format of story-telling within the oral tradition to exemplify the embodiment of an ethos of reciprocity. Moreover, as the Solidarity theme was deeply embedded within the body of black South African Struggle thought, we turn next to probing its manifestations in the Resistance Movement.

Throughout the 1960’s, black resistance found a home in the ‘bush campuses’ of designated ‘black’ Universities birthed out of the *1959 Extension of the University Education Legislation Act 45*. Within these institutions (in such campuses as the University of the North and Zululand University, among others) the face of Black Consciousness took on a more consolidated form and substance. Influenced by the Black Power movement in the West, and even more so by African intellectuals such as Franz Fanon, the Black Consciousness movement sat at the epicentre of an intellectual mobilisation of Africanist ideas.

⁷⁸ For example, the 1973 Durban Strikes could be interpreted as a collective response to economic oppressions.

It is worth citing at length Ari Sitas' (2007: 40-41) description of this juncture in time:

In 1972 the Dar es Salaam school – especially intellectuals like Walter Rodney, was beginning to argue that Europe had underdeveloped Africa, which started the whole dependency theory on our continent. Related to it, a Fanonist tradition was running through Francophone networks that emphasised the revolutionary potential of the peasantry and the urban poor to violently overthrow colonial relations of power. Fanon's works – which had been translated into English and banned by the Apartheid government – were circulating actively in Black Consciousness circles. There was also the Dakar 'moment' when a lot of the Diop-based arguments about the restoration of the dignity of an African past [were] beginning an endogenous take on history, slavery, colonialism and their cultural implications.

An Afro-centrist view was gaining popular support in aid of a post-colonial mindset.

As Biko emerged on the horizon and spear-headed the mobilisation at Fort Hare and the Durban Medical School (Natal University), an all-black students' movement (the South African Students' Organisation [SASO], and the University Christian Movement [UCM]), gained momentum. Articulating and building into a strong sense of pride in African culture and capacity, a new generation of visionary leadership was emerging.

Critical to the spread of a voice for, and ethos of liberation, was the idea that black people must articulate and determine their own destiny 'outside' of the confines of what Biko suggested were the well-meaning intentions of vocal white liberals or the subjugated confines of living under the shadows of the 'mind of the oppressed'. In good Fanonist tradition, the psychological liberation of the oppressed hinged on conceptions of 'blackness' not as 'negation' but in terms of agency.

During the 1970's, the proliferation and influence of the Black Consciousness movement shifted more actively into the mass and public domains. By 1971, and in order to solicit adult participation, SASO branched out into the establishment of an adult wing (which later became the umbrella organisation) in the form of the Black People's Convention (BPC). During this time emerging vectors of change rippled into townships and Black Consciousness thinking increasingly became a shared frame of reference amongst multiple sectors of the black population.

Additionally buttressing the widespread growth and influence of the Black Consciousness movement was its correlation and support from its association with 'Black Theology'. Under the active auspices of the black Methodist Church as well as the South African Council of Churches, Black Theology gave voice to a "theological articulation of black consciousness in the religious realm" (Mofokeng 1993, as cited in Prozesky 1990: 39). Additionally, the call of 'Liberation Theology' with its anti-Apartheid sentiment was especially well communicated in the *Kairos Document*. This document co-authored in 1985 by a joint group of South African ecumenical theologians, focused on the *Kairos* [Greek for 'decisive moment'] nature of the times, and argued that it was wrong for the Church to focus on reconciliation 'before addressing the need for justice'. Graybill (1995: 115) provides this description:

Rather than preach negotiation and reconciliation, [the Kairos Document] advise[d] churches to urge confrontation until the state indicate[d] it [was] willing to undergo fundamental change. Instead of trying to convince those in power to change, the churches should commit themselves to the struggle of the oppressed against unjust structures.

As 'disruptive' forms of religion that highlighted the need for justice in the public arena, Black and Liberation Theologies ignited the imaginations of black South Africans, both young and old. Leonard (2008) asserts that in fact it was the Black Consciousness movement's link with the church, an important social institution for older and more conservative blacks, as well as the poor, which created the leverage that the movement needed. She posits that this critical linkage also expanded the movement's reach further than it might have, had it remained a student movement in the urban areas.

The significance of Black Consciousness to ensuing reciprocity practices must be examined on several levels. Firstly, the preeminent values and ethos of a movement that advocated for black cultural pride and dignity and appropriated religious motifs to help power activism for justice, inspired a culture of, and ideological ferment for, the pressing need for change. This impetus for transformation was also given sanction with the backing of the Church, which fundamentally added cross-generational legitimation. Thus by 2004, when a decade into the newly enfranchised democracy had passed, with little change in livelihood for many black South Africans, new social mechanisms devolved in order to address ongoing aspirations. The contradictions inherent in an ideology that necessitated change and a reality that defaulted on this

change, created a conundrum; in this regard reciprocities were activated which were able to simultaneously honour Black Consciousness identity and aspiration, whilst simultaneously supporting the Struggle ideals of comradeship (Modisha 2007, Bozzoli 2004: 107⁷⁹).

The second key to the relationship between Black Consciousness and reciprocities relates to the movement's inception on university campuses; the fact that it started amongst the educated is critical. This 'restructured consciousness' essentially emerged among students who later were to comprise the new South African petty-bourgeoisie. Following decades of Bantu education that had left scant room for the structural acknowledgement⁸⁰ of a petite bourgeoisie class of educated black intellectuals, now within black communities the doors were thrown open for their imports and cross-pollination. Sitas (2004) suggests that as emerging and current tensions increasingly challenged the horizontal (and in some instances vertical) bands of solidarity between the 'amaqabane' (Struggle comrades), reciprocities helped to provide elasticity to the 'elastic band' that held the movement together.

4.5.3 Summary

To sum up, conceptions and enactments of comradeship have had a significant role and influence in shaping how reciprocities have manifested historically in black communities.

- Two critical notions dominate the discourse on black South African solidarity in the 20th Century, namely the notions of (1.) 'ubuntu', and (2.) 'comradeship'. These bedrock concepts were birthed out of the womb of traditional cultural practices as well as Struggle experiences and Black Consciousness ideology.
- Both of these notions have been vehicles which have motivated and melded reciprocity practices, but each in different ways. Whilst ubuntu was originally conceived of as a cultural more, more recently it has been appropriated as a political economy motif. Moving in the opposite direction, whilst Struggle comradeship was initially conceived of as a

⁷⁹ Bozzoli (2004: 107) recounts that in the codification process of 'comradeship' in the townships, Comrades were instructed that "They should offer other mutual assistance and, of course, solidarity" to other Comrades. Such themes feed into the underlying ideologies of support that influence patterns of reciprocity yet today.

⁸⁰ Certainly a class of the more educated (teachers, nurses, civil servants and such) did exist amongst the black 'Reeftown elite'. What changed with Black Consciousness, however, was the recognition afforded these up-and-coming ideologues, and the mass-support and broad-based endorsement given to them within the 'African' community as the *sanctioned shapers* of black public imagination.

political economy notion, now it has been exercised increasingly as a social more.⁸¹

- Additionally, particularly the notion of comradeship has underscored numerous formations of collective action, from Resistance protests during the Struggle, to labour strikes and current mobilisations on the ground⁸² in response to increasing capitalisation.
- Moreover, reciprocities of collective action were not only entrenched in the historic philosophies of Black Consciousness and the Struggle, but their verbiage has more recently been co-opted to undergird ‘African Renaissance’⁸³ rhetoric.
- Due to the fact that the theme of comradeship and mutual solidarity can be found deeply embedded within the body of Black Consciousness thought, current reciprocities are essentially a resurgence of a variety of nascent forms of community, as opposed to somehow existing within the vacuum of a ‘new’ paradigm.
- Lastly, the currently rupturing mainstream of black Solidarity politics indicates that the Apartheid era’s marriage of class and race has now been replaced by new class alliances; a subject to which we will turn next.

4.6 Class

The fifth and last angle used to investigate the historical setting focuses on the *Social Construct* of ‘class’. Examined in this section are South Africa’s changing class structures with particular attention to how reciprocities have mediated class formations, differentiations and ensuing segmentations.

4.6.1 Consolidations on the Ground

In a transcript from Inkululeko Publications taken from an ‘illegal’ clandestine South African Communist Party (SACP) publication (1962: 2-3) and entitled “*The Road to South African Freedom*”, the following words resound:

⁸¹ The above comment is made in light of the findings of how ‘comradeship’ was viewed by the black professionals involved in this project. Note must be made that it could be said that on the political stage (for example within the *South African Communist Party*) notions of ‘comradeship’ are still being invoked as a motivation for increased transformation.

⁸² Please see Chapter 5 section 5.2 ‘*Mobilisations on the Ground*’ for a full discussion on contemporary grass-roots activations in this regard.

⁸³ For example, see the prolific use of the ‘ubuntu’ motif and verbiage to support *African Renaissance* conceptions in the outgoing speech of President Thabo Mbeki given in his closing nation-wide address on television (SABC 3 and e-TV, 7:00 p.m.) on Sunday, 21 September, 2008.

The workers of the towns, the Africans employed in factories and in transport, in steelworks and power stations, in shops and offices, comprise the most dynamic and revolutionary force in South Africa. . . . African workers constitute the core of the African National Congress and the Communist Party. They have repeatedly come out on nationwide political general strikes and have been the leading force in every major struggle of the liberation movement.

Race and class became conjoined during the Apartheid era in such a way that the potential for any contradictory interests between the two often became blurred. Frequently, black populations were collectively viewed as the ‘labour force’ (regardless of important and distinct within-community class differentials), whilst the ‘white’ population was frequently viewed as automatically conjoined to ‘capitalist ownership’ (regardless of diverse class and political allegiances even within white communities); this created an artificial and frequently uneasy marriage between race and class.⁸⁴

In this regard, a virulent conjuncture was birthed at the intersection of race and class. By this I simply mean that ‘colonialism of a special type’ hinged on the double helixes of concurrent capitalist class as well as imperialist race extortions. This resulted in two artificial processes being enacted simultaneously and a third one being enacted organically:

(1) On the one hand, during Apartheid class differentiations within black communities were squashed due to state-imposed structural limitations, causing multiple strata within black communities to share similar material conditions and thus egalitarianising their circumstances.

(2) Secondly (and organically), this resulted in a temporary amalgamation amongst multiple black classes in the interests of transformation – hence the title of this section ‘consolidation on the ground’.

(3) Simultaneously, however, during Apartheid the segmentation of black communities was also encouraged when it could be appropriated to serve white capitalist interests; this meant that the seedbed for future class differentiation would emerge in line with the trajectory of successive cycles of capitalist formation.

Turning first to the ‘silencing’ of class differentiation within black communities (#1 above), we look at how whole swathes of the black labour force developed under the hegemony of race-

⁸⁴ This is not to say that both class and race segmentations did not exist within the African labour and workforce communities. To the contrary, differentiations did most certainly exist, but the point here is that their natural trajectories were consistently curtailed and ‘disciplined’ by the Apartheid State.

based regimens of labour. It is worthwhile here to again quote at length from the SACP document (1962: 1):

The special character of colonialism in South Africa, the seizing by Whites of all opportunities ... [has] strangled the development of a class of African capitalists. All positions of economic strength and influence are held as the jealously guarded monopoly of members of the White race alone. There are very few Africans who make profits by the exploitation of the labour power. ... African traders and shopkeepers ... contend with innumerable colour bars and special restrictions, and because their capital is usually too small, their businesses are rarely very big or very profitable. ... African business men are not allowed to own fixed property.

The intellectuals and professional groups among the Africans share with their people all the hardships and indignities of colonialism. The largest group, the teachers, receive salaries far below those of their White colleagues ... they have to work in appalling conditions in overcrowded classrooms ...

During Apartheid, class consolidation ‘from below’ emerged within and amongst disparate black classes precisely because of their common material conditions; regardless of whether they were mine labourers, black shop-keepers, or even teachers.

Truly Wolpe’s assertions in his 1972 “*Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power*” thesis were correct: the conjuncture of race and class during Apartheid magnified the powers of capitalist exploitation significantly precisely because of its ability to treat a majority of black classes as predominately ‘pre-capitalist’ and thereby somewhat uniform. This fed into a merging process between black classes which provided them with provisionally shared and collective interests. Hence the rolling out of the second theme previously mentioned: (2) This resulted in a temporary amalgamation amongst multiple black classes in the interests of transformation.

What Wolpe was less reflective about during the 1970’s, (and Franz Fanon would have corrected him on), was the potential for both paradigms of black class uniformity *and* differentiation to be used opportunistically by the state. And it is here that we turn to the third (and opposite) process mentioned previously that was artificially set into motion: (3) Segmentations within black communities were encouraged by Apartheid authorities when they could be appropriated to serve white capitalist interests. Attempts were regularly made to seduce black tribal and civil service leadership structures into collusion with Apartheid powers, thus inadvertently entrenching social stratification within black communities. Mamdani (1996: 16) speaks of this cooption process as

the “bifurcation inherent in racial domination”. Additionally, where it was convenient to ‘divide and conquer’, ethnic as well as class distinctions within black communities were also emphasized and even mandated (for instance in the Group Areas Acts of 1950), but even more subtly solicited by the offer of the seduction of capitalism itself. The SACP document (1962: 2) goes on to say:

The exceptionally sharp contradictions of South Africa, and their own conditions of life, which are a challenge to their self-respect and human dignity, face *African intellectuals* [bourgeoisie] with a clear-cut choice. Either they align themselves with the struggles of the masses, or else they accept the role of assistants and agents in maintaining White colonialism.

The subsequent impacts that the race-class conjuncture would have on the critical decisions that would face future generations of the black ‘middle classes’, (who in a post 1994 world would find themselves less limited by structural constraints) have been immense. And it is here that we again turn to Wolpe, but this time to his later writings (1988: 49):

Classes ... are constituted not as unified social forces, but as patchworks of segments which are differentiated and divided on a variety of bases and by varied processes. It is true that a more or less extensive unity may be brought about politically through articulation, within a common discourse, of specific interests which are linked to the common property which defines classes. But, and this is the fundamental point, that unity is not given by concepts of labour-power and capital, it is constituted concretely through practices [such as reciprocities], discourses and organisations. One might say that class unity, when it occurs, is a conjunctural phenomenon.

Michael Burawoy (2006: 50) later pointed out that “Wolpe didn’t see what Franz Fanon saw: two very different opposed projects [collectivist versus neoliberal values] that existed side by side, [and] that vied with each other from *within* the decolonisation struggle.”

Essentially, Apartheid created conditions that both conjoined black classes (inadvertently) in the interests of the Struggle, and opportunistically differentiated black classes in the interests of capitalist accumulation. The contradictions between these opposite, but simultaneous impulses, were initially hidden within the larger narrative of a grand National Democratic Revolution (NDR) that played out into the last two decades of 20th century. Increasingly, however, these divergent tunes have begun to play out discordantly, opening up the space for (and some would even say necessity of) reciprocal relationships between classes that exist within same-race groups.

4.6.2 Summary

By way of a re-cap, reciprocities within contemporary South African have been critically shaped by public constructions surrounding economic access and issues of class location. These constructions have a history that exemplifies the role of changing class structures over the past decades, these shifts having pivoted on the following dynamics:

- During the Apartheid era, two opposite yet simultaneous impulses made themselves felt.
- On the one hand, during Apartheid because of the forced imposition of similar material conditions multiple black classes were conjoined in the interests of transformation. These consolidations were motivated by shared structural constraints and later by the foment of the Resistance Movement.
- Simultaneously, on the other hand classes within black communities were also systematically segmented by the Apartheid State. These bifurcations were instituted and perpetuated in the interests of capitalist accumulation.
- In this regard the dual mechanisms of class amalgamation as well as stratification were both opportunistically appropriated by the state, and at the costs of black communities.

4.7 Conclusion

Our journey of exploring reciprocities amongst black South African communities began with the de-construction of the origins of these practices within a particular historical setting. Several important reciprocity patterns surfaced in this analysis of the setting:

- Hospitality and reciprocity mores associated with the regimens of migrant labour.
- A system of reciprocal remittances between urban dwellers and unemployed or rural family members.
- The traditional notion of ubuntu; which still exerts a strong pull due to its deeply culturally embedded nature.
- The impacts of the ideology of Black Consciousness which consolidated a reciprocity ethos in the interests of the resistance movement.
- Class consolidation ‘from below’ which created the necessary social structures through which reciprocities could effectively flow.

These important historical precursors highlight the fact that the past often eclipses the present. “This is the history where you’re supposed to be going to”⁸⁵ said respondent GC1 in his interview with me. “I think having a sense of history and having a sense of where you come from, allows you to know what you need to ‘give back’.”⁸⁶ As the traditional African proverb⁸⁷ suggests, ‘The past is always before us’. With this history in mind, we turn next to chapter 5 which addresses itself to the contemporary research context.

⁸⁵ Interview: GC1, Marshalltown, 31 October, 2007.

⁸⁶ Interview: ST1, Cresta, 16 October, 2007.

⁸⁷ African indigenous proverb, anon.

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Chapter 5: Contemporary Research Context

5.1.1 Reciprocities: Solidarities Constructed, Deconstructed and Reconstructed

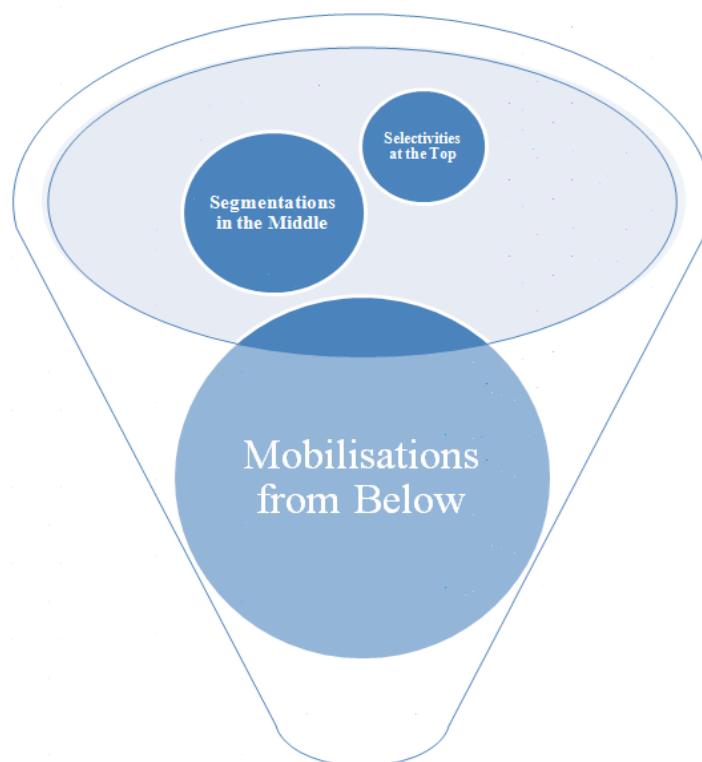
Having engaged with key issues pertaining to the historical background in chapter 4, we now turn in chapter 5 to the contemporary research context. Reciprocities are explored here in terms of how they are constructed, de-constructed and re-constructed in light of the ‘new’ environment of the first decade post-1994. Also investigated are the conditions that currently frame reciprocities amongst black communities in Gauteng, paying particular attention to how these are articulated through the following:

- (1) Mobilisations from Below
- (2) Segmentations in the Middle
- (3) Selectivities at the Top

5.1.2 Research Context Graphic

The above-mentioned three categories will serve as the framework that will structure this chapter, with these three themes pictorially depicted below:

Graphic 5.1 – Current Context Graphic



In regards to the first sphere of ‘Mobilisations from Below’ primary focus will be given to the subject of compromised livelihoods. This section will address how livelihoods are compromised both materially and physically for those at the margins; materially in terms of growing inequalities, poverty rates and spectres of unemployment, and physically in terms of rising levels of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the realities of living with accompanying opportunistic infections.

Current realities as regards the second sphere, ‘Segmentations in the Middle’ will highlight the contradictions between expanded opportunities on the one hand, and growing disparities on the other. These conditions are housed within the space of increasing class bifurcations in the middle, which mark growing segmentations between a stagnant working class, and a professional class whose upward mobility prospects are more elastic.

Addressed last are ‘Selectivities at the Top’ with a look at the presence of a fast-consolidating economic ‘elite’ who reap an incommensurate proportion of the national wealth pie. Here we will focus on how this stratum is declining in its inclusivity whilst simultaneously inclining in the breadth of its influence and power.

Next an investigation is made of each of these three orbs in turn, analysing how they reflect the current conditions which house reciprocity practices in the post-1994 research context.

5.2 Mobilisations from Below

Coupled with the dawn of a new ‘rainbow nation’ in 1994 were high expectations for nationwide political as well as economic transformation. A decade into this national ‘experiment’ has brought mixed results. The experience of many of those at the bottom of the economic pyramid is that government has lost the script of delivery to the majority of South Africans, choosing instead to align itself with a conservative fiscal mandate that assumes that market forces freed of external restraint will necessarily maximize not merely growth but also the welfare of citizens (Masondo 2007).

Only scant attention was given to poverty in the GEAR strategy and little mention is made of how a free market economy will stratify more evenly the distribution of public goods and

services. This assertion is made in light of the national government's movement from the more socialised 'reapportionment' agenda of the RDP (the Reconstruction & Development Programme) towards a shift to what some have called a loosely right-wing 'structural adjustment' type of agenda in GEAR (the Growth, Employment & Redistribution strategy) and more recently ASGISA (Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative in South Africa). With the onset of Zuma's presidency and a move to the 'left', communities on the margins have yet to see if the state's promises of commitment towards poverty alleviation will indeed effectively trickle down to a majority of those on the ground.⁸⁸

The above scenario is exacerbated by what has been termed the "commoditisation of state services", particularly as it relates to four of the main national public consumables: water, transportation, electricity and telecommunications (Bond, 2004:7). These four consumables relate directly to issues of ownership as they sit at the heart of access to satisfactory national infrastructure. The unbundling and partial or complete privatisation of each of these 'public consumables' in turn has led to the pursuit of cost recovery policies that pass on higher costs to residential customers⁸⁹ while at the same time protecting large corporate clients through bulk or package allotment deals; between 1994 and 1999 corporate taxes were reduced from 48% percent to 30% percent (Bond, 2004:4). Moreover, overall rates have also risen due to cuts in cross-subsidies that have been rescinded and cross-cutting redistribution, restitution and land tenure mechanisms have been emasculated of much of their power to successfully bridge the gap for the poor (Wegerif 2004).

The good news is that while many South Africans may not have more available disposable income, yet they may experience a better standard of living due to national infrastructure benefits 'handed out in-kind and not in cash'. While service delivery quality control is questionable, yet it is impossible to deny the fact that free and subsidized healthcare, school children's nutritional schemes, subsidized education, and also housing subsidies contribute in a very significant way to a better quality of life for millions of South Africans. So too, the extension of grants to twelve million South Africans has also been good news for roughly a quarter of the population.

⁸⁸ By the end of 2007, figures generated by the *Development Indicators 2008 Report* showed that the ANC government had not reached the halfway mark for its 2014 targets.

⁸⁹ For example, here refers Eskom's November 2009 proposal of annual 45% percent increases, with these sharp cost swells projected to continue over a 3-year period.

Additionally, although the recent downwards spiral in international markets has impacted the nation as a whole, the Presidency's policy unit, in their *Development Indicators 2008 Report*, points to the important benefits of trends of overall economic growth: from 2% percent in 1994 to more than 6% percent in 2007 and with the prospects of the recovery of those rates with in mind the 2010 World Cup.

Where the national cartography leaves its most profound chasm, however, remains in the cleavage between rural and urban infrastructural support and development. According to the South African Regional Poverty Network (SARPN), (2008), a full two thirds (65% percent) of South Africa's poor live in rural areas. It is at this juncture that geographic as well as gender divides further splinter the national goods and services equation, leaving the very slimmest remainders for rural black women and children (Everatt 2005: 3). That demographic sector seems the least likely, in the near future, to experience an increase in their share of the pie of national consumables, the 'fruits' of their South African liberation struggle. Making a contribution towards mitigating against these dynamics (in a small and incremental way), may be the fact that while reciprocities amongst black community members may foster strong urban connections, yet the highest social giving rates can still be found within the circles of rural existence where due to infrastructural containments and poverty, reciprocities given 'in-kind' feature most prominently (Everatt & Solanki 2005: 29).

Moreover, in response to ongoing disenfranchisements, rumblings from below are making themselves increasingly heard. As we round the corner on the last two decades, the advent of this century has been accompanied by an estimated one-seventh of the population (over seven million people) still living in informal shack settlements on the fringes of South Africa's towns and cities. This has provided tremendous impetus for discontent and activation for change seems inevitable. Ever since the 1994 transition and the inauguration of a post-Apartheid government, resistance 'from below' has been marked and increasing, with attempts to silence it proving futile. In an article entitled '*Patience of the Poor Stretched*', Patrick Lawrence (STAR, July 22, 2008) points to the fact that the number of protests by black communities over faltering service delivery since 1994 has steadily risen, reaching the epidemic portions of 6000 per year. Coupled with this has been a decade in which there has been widespread non-payment of service charges

in townships across the country, representative of a ‘culture of non-payment’ that some suggest stems from the rent-boycotts of the 1980’s.

Indeed from Cape Town to Johannesburg multiple activations have surfaced out of previously ‘hidden’ communities, mobilising pockets of resistance across the country in the face of the growing privatisation of public services, government-backed evictions and municipal water and electricity disconnection cut-offs. (Notwithstanding the HIV/AIDS debacle which is also seen as a public service delivery failure.) These widespread yet miniature resistance movements claim that the government has sold out to a capitalist agenda (Modisha, 2007: 120)⁹⁰ that has betrayed them, failing to follow through on their original Struggle ideals.

Ballard, Habib and Volodia (2006) chronicle the upsurge of multiple mobilisations ‘from below’⁹¹ in their text *Voices of Protest*, suggesting that the efficacy of South Africa’s governance indeed hinges on how close it keeps its ears (and attention) to ‘the ground’. What Desai (2003: 3) adds to the equation which is not often heralded, is the “disruptive vibrancy and reactive energy” that is birthed at precisely these margins. That life ‘in and between the cracks’ proves to be the context for mobilization, resonates with the Struggle’s social idealisms. In Desai’s words (2003: 10), “The ‘poors,’ or what others have variously called the ‘multitude,’ ‘the unwaged,’ ‘slaves-in-waiting,’ the ‘metropolitan militant,’ ‘the mob,’ and ‘the wretched of the earth,’ have come to constitute the most relevant post-1994 social force from the point of view of challenging the prevailing political economy.” Having intuitively picked up on this adjusted power equation (Hart, 2007: 61)⁹², Gauteng’s black professionals are engaging with its contingencies with new repertoires of response and action which specifically showcase the critical conjoining role that they play in the national drama.

Political anthropologist James C. Scott’s work on ‘infrapolitics’ (1990) highlights the oppositional nature and activities of refractory subordinate groups and how their activities often operate in ‘offstage’ realms rather than in the direct ‘onstage’ eye of the public. So too, do the

⁹⁰ More specifically, Modisha (2007: 120), refers to South Africa’s transitions of political democratisation and economic liberalisations as “competing imperatives” within the larger discourse on transformation.

⁹¹ For example Ballard et al (2006) reference key mobilizations from across South Africa, including but not limited to: *The Treatment Action Campaign* (TAC), the *Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee*, the *Landless Peoples Movement*, the *Anti-Privatisation Forum of Gauteng*, and the *Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign*.

⁹² What Hart (2007: 61) points to specifically is the amassed and significant *electoral power* held in the hands of these ‘discontents’.

dynamics of reciprocities within the ‘new’ South Africa exhibit the contradictions between the seen and unseen, the hidden and public transcripts that regulate how collective actions are used to influence (some would even say manipulate) both political and economic outcomes. Certainly in the ‘new’ South Africa, the power of collective actions to impact the economy through labour strike action has been immense, and those underestimating the power of collective sentiments ‘from below’ to reconstruct electoral politics would best be advised otherwise in a post-Polokwane political environment.

5.2.1 Overview

A synopsis of this discussion on the impacts of popular mobilisations on reciprocities surfaces a number of important observations. Firstly, mass action as a political and economic ‘solidarity’ motif was not limited to the Struggle era; it is still very much with us today in the form of populist activations on the ground (Ballard, Habib & Valodia 2006). What has changed, however, has been the role that the black petite bourgeoisie has played in these community mobilisations. Whilst during the Struggle the educated echelons (‘kholwa’) within black communities often rose to leadership ranks within mass mobilisations (Eidelberg 1999), in today’s constellation of social and economic location the black petite bourgeoisie no longer as frequently play the role of radical change instigators (Dixon 2004). Instead, many of today’s black bourgeoisie work at new social formations through the less controversial and ‘off stage’ mechanisms of one-on-one reciprocities that simultaneously sooth Struggle sensibilities whilst still courting the values of ‘incremental’ transformation. At the same time, in the face of post-1994 state policies that are not as active as they could be in addressing the systemic causes of economic inequalities, traditions of kinship and community reciprocities do not pacify the need for structural change⁹³ and thus widespread yet miniature ‘resistance’ rumblings from ‘below’ make themselves felt with increasingly powerful ripple effects.

Moreover, in terms of the lived-experience of the impoverished, the post-1994 reality has continued the legacy of livelihoods that are compromised on a number of key fronts. This has been the case both materially and physically for the ‘poors’ (Desai), and next we turn to an

⁹³ In the same way that the Vorster government’s feeble attempts at tweaking bits of legislation could only temporarily offset the burning agenda behind the Durban Strikes, so too today’s government cannot placate the needs of the poor majority without broad-scale and real structural change.

investigation of some of the core issues in this equation; namely the impacts of (1) inequality and poverty, (2) unemployment, and (3) the spectre of HIV/AIDS. We begin by investigating how growing levels of inequality are further conflagrating the fraying edges for those on the margins.

5.2.2 Growing Inequalities and Poverty

As we move into engagement with the research context during the 1990's and into the early years of the 21st Century, (1994 – 2004) we note that the national landscape during this period has been particularly marked by growing levels of inequality which have compounded the effects of already-existent conditions of poverty. This segment of our discussion is of critical importance because of its cogence to understanding the material conditions and vicissitudes that create the context for reciprocity patterns in Gauteng today. Attention is given here to how labour (living-wage employment) has been interpolated as a component of social citizenship available only to the minority and not majority of South Africans.⁹⁴

Today, both poverty and inequality, two twins which are inextricably connected yet each particularistic, exist at the nexus of the larger national dilemma of compromised delivery to the many South Africans who expected to partake in the material benefits of the 'new' rainbow nation. In the *Poverty and Inequality in South Africa 2004-2014* report, researchers concluded that "in public discourse the two [issues] – poverty and inequality – are normally linked and treated as an expression of the same problem. In reality, they are very different" (as cited in UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs 2004: 1). According to this report, in terms of poverty South Africa weighs in with roughly half of its population below the poverty line (R367 a month). While these rates are unreasonably high and birth their own contingencies of instability, yet as the World Bank Global Poverty Monitor reminds us, in this regard South Africa is *not* one of the countries in the world with the highest absolute poverty rates.⁹⁵

What is specific to the South African landscape, however, are unusually high rates of unequal income distribution, (measured in terms of the gini coefficient). The *Poverty and Inequality in South Africa 2004- 2014* report (2003) goes on to explain that South Africa has the third most

⁹⁴ Of interest on this topic is how inequalities and poverty are framed in the national political discourse. Pressley's article (STAR, 28 September, 2009) highlights how academics across the spectrum have confirmed a growing gini coefficient, whilst government publications continue to balk at releasing figures that confirm these findings.

⁹⁵ Nigeria and India, for example, would have higher absolute poverty rates than a country like South Africa.

unequal income distribution in the world. Ari Sitas and Gillian Hart (2004) describe the surfacing of this type of information as “an explosion of statistical information that maps the contours of persistent and growing poverty, shrinking employment, and collapsing livelihoods.” Not only do statistics bear out this reality, but also public perceptions compound it; herein the problem of ‘relative deprivation’ whereby extreme levels of poverty and affluence exist in close proximity to each other so that the poor feel particularly acutely aggrieved when they compare their situation with that of their better off fellow citizens (Lawrence 2008). The inequality divide is further exacerbated by the fact that in an environment of an estimated poverty rate of 53% percent (Statistics South Africa 2008) government resources are already stretched to the breaking point with increasing demands being put on a social safety net that already provides for one in four citizens to receive social grants.⁹⁶

In fact, inequalities are *growing* in South Africa, as suggested by the *United Nations Development Report* (2003: 70). The key point here is that inequalities are largely evidencing themselves not only between historic racial groupings, but also and increasingly *within* racial groupings (Seekings & Nattrass, 2002 & 2006). In the ‘new’ South Africa the social typographies of poverty are slowly shifting, and surfacing conflict flashpoints irrespective of race, flashpoints whose cleavages hinge on issues of economic access. As social activist Ashwin Desai (2003: 3&6) reminds us, the “poors, as they have come to be known in the South African vernacular, are very much still with us, and are increasingly becoming vocal, giving impetus to new forms of resistance”. This has given rise to the observation that “While democracy has come to South Africa, equality has not” (Marx 1998: 61).

This economic divide has been exacerbated also by international trends, reflected for instance, in the sharp rise in food prices. Statistics South Africa (2007) reported that within the 7-year span between 2000 and 2007, food prices had increased by 45% percent, with this jump particularly jeopardising the already constrained nutritional needs of the poor. Zola Skweyiya, [the previous minister of Social Development] having just visited a number of townships in rural areas,

⁹⁶ This statistic garnered from Thabo Mbeki’s “*State of the Nation Address of the President of South Africa*”. Pretoria: Joint Sitting of Parliament. February 2007. Social grants are defined here as including old age pensions, child support and disability grants. In his speech Mbeki cited roughly one quarter of the population (11 million) as benefiting from these grants.

reflected that in fact “the rich are getting richer and fewer whilst the poor are increasing in number and getting even poorer” (Desai, 2003:3).

The macro-economic, structural and political reasons for increasing inequalities are myriad (and are outside of the purview of this Thesis), but suffice it to say that while some sectors of the South African population have indeed benefited from the ‘transformation agenda’ of the national government, a vast majority still remain caught within the vice-grips of economic marginalisation. As Karl Marx suggested back in 1867, “From day to day it ... becomes clearer that the relations of production in which the bourgeoisie moves do not have a simple, uniform character but rather a dual one; that in the same relations in which wealth is produced, poverty is produced also” (as cited in Bond 2007: 1).

It is at this juncture that I would suggest that the problematique of the South African poverty equation has fundamentally to do with the historic twinning together of the concept of waged work with the idea of social citizenship. Whilst the conjoining together of these concepts is not unique to South Africa, it does have a particular history specific to this country: this ideological conjunction was first used as one of the ‘legitimations’ of the Apartheid regime’s disavowment of responsibility towards the unemployed majority. The marriage of social citizenship with employment “reproduces a logic that is similar to the one that had constructed ‘migrant labour’ as a juridical-bureaucratic category in systems of ‘influx control’ of Apartheid South Africa” (Barchiesi 2000: 4). The ‘masses’ were simply not bestowed with the full extent of citizenship rights (with the incumbent political, economic and social protections they entailed), because these benefits were essentially tied to the African migrant worker’s ability (or inability) to find and maintain contracted paid employment (Barchiesi 2004: 4).

In many senses the conjunction between social citizenship and employment still exists as a salient reality for those South Africans who till today exist in and at the margins.

Multiple forms of disenfranchisement remain entrenched in South Africa today, compounded into what Sharad Chari calls the conjuncture of “stigma, constraint, spatial confinement, and institutional containment” (Chari 2004: 2). Using Loic Wacquant’s work on urban ecology as an analytic framework, Chari suggests that this conjuncture is “less a springboard to assimilation in society than what Wacquant calls a walled-in ‘dissimilation’” (Chari, 2004: 3). Its outcomes

manifest themselves in what African American sociologist Julius Wilson calls the ‘concentration effects’ of poverty which compound exponentially each singular effect into a combined syndrome much larger than the sum of its parts.

5.2.3 Summary

It is across the conjuncture of these ‘concentration effects’ that Gauteng’s black professional respondents reach simultaneously backwards and forwards over the divide between the haves and have-nots. Gauteng’s black communities are caught at the intersection of this quandary, and are in many ways playing out its conflictual dynamics (Laurence 2008). As growing levels of inequality increase particularly within black communities, reciprocities function as mechanisms that mediate inter-class disparities (Seekings & Natrass 2002 & 2006). What refers here is a situation wherein the black middle classes become a sort of cohesion factor within the national soldering process (Modisha, 2007: 131)⁹⁷, finding themselves in the niche of gluing together the fraying edges between those on the margins and the ‘furiously consolidating’ small economic elite. The question remains as to whether such an enterprise is attainable, notwithstanding sustainable, and what types of new repositories of structure and action will be required for its furtherance.

5.2.4 Unemployment

A second aspect that directly impacts on the research context relates to the employment conundrum. Moreover as unemployment rates sore to between 30 and 40 % percent [broad versus ‘adjusted’ definitions], in order to sustain already compromised livelihoods those on the fringes increasingly turn to the reciprocities enacted by kith and kin as essential supply networks. Moreover even in the face of legislative protections and advancements since 1994, yet (and as we shall see next) the vicissitudes of employment remain.

Today the growth of contractual labour is primarily construed as a public safeguard, yet the protections it offers still only shelter a fraction, namely 66% percent, of the South African labour force. Currently one third, 34% percent of labourers still remain categorised as within the

⁹⁷ Modisha (2007: 120-143) describes the ‘mixed’ impulses of the black middle classes, suggesting their roles as agents with multiple allegiances and as intra-class mediators: ‘capitalists with a soul’.

‘informal sector’ and therefore reside outside of the regulated work domain. With the ensuing Labour Relations Act of 1996 to bolster their statutory rights, however, those currently employed in the wage economy boast a strong 31% percent union membership rate (Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs 2002).

Reflecting on the emergence of this waged (albeit at markedly substandard levels) and contract labour scenario (notwithstanding a significant ‘informal’ sector), the question arises regarding what have been the impacts of this equation on reciprocity practices within black communities. Unintentionally, the phenomenon of contractual labour itself, has resulted in unanticipated consequences that have enacted what some would categorise as a mixed package of outcomes. According to Ponte (2000), with the penetration of market economy mechanisms such as contract labour, channels of labour are becoming disembedded from social context and are becoming increasingly individuated. For the upper and professional echelons of today’s black South African society (small though growing in number), this has proved a boon for advancement as personal merit, affirmative action and BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) legislation have ballooned their economic prospects. Employment mobility is rife amongst this sector, as head-hunters vie for the skills of these highly individuated and skilled black professionals. However, for the remaining black majority, devoid of formalised skill sets and quality education, a highly ‘individuated’ work procurement environment is not only threatening but virtually hopeless due to disproportionately high rates of unemployment and because the current market already harbours a glut of un-skilled labourers.

Other factors that add further complexity to this picture include the unintended consequences of post-Apartheid labour legislation. The Labour Relations Act of 1995 essentially made it more difficult and expensive to maintain as well as dismiss workers. Consequently, employers have increasingly opted for non-standard forms of employment that circumvent both added costs and the possibility of unionisation (Bhorat & Kanbur, 2006). Kenny and Webster (1999: 216-243) refer to this phenomenon as the ‘casualisation’ and ‘re-segmentation’ of the labour force. Research indicates that atypical forms of employment are on the rise in South Africa, substantiated by post-1994 figures that corroborated that 85% percent of manufacturers still employ temporary workers (Kotze 2003).

Added to the vulnerabilities of non-standard workers (and their unprotected status and conditions), are the problems faced by the self-employed. The May 2000 “*Poverty and Inequality Report*” commissioned by the government, found that 45% percent of self-employed workers earned less than the poverty line. This scenario creates the backdrop for what Desai (2003: 2) calls the “ubiquity of a relatively unstable and un-unionised workforce” that furthers the gulf between the “unionized and better skilled on the one hand and the masses...on the other”.

Further threatening the possibilities for economic security for many South Africans are also the effects of surplus labour and the ensuing problem of unemployment. Conservative estimates of South African unemployment rates in 2007 [the ‘broad’ definition] put it as high as 34.3% percent, highlighting that the demographics of this figure bear down most heavily on young adults (ages 18 to 35) who carry the burden of filling the majority of this unemployment quotient. Due to the prime significance of the unemployment issue for South Africa’s future prospects, the ANC has targeted the goal of halving overall unemployment levels by 2014. By the end of 2007, however, figures generated by *Development Indicators* (2008) showed that the ANC government had not even reached the halfway mark for its 2014 targets.

5.2.5 Summary

While unacceptably high rates of unemployment are a stark statistical reality, their vicissitudes encroach in multiple ways upon the ‘lived experience’ of those who are perpetually under their threat, monopolizing larger and larger chunks of individual and collective energies. “Moreover, the wages of a shrinking portion of the population in formal employment are the main form of safety net for increasing numbers of [the] unemployed...” (Barchiesi 2003: 10). This dynamic exacerbates for Gauteng’s black professionals the oft purported contradictions between their own desire for individual advancement and a measure of accumulation, and their keen sense of connection and responsibility towards the as-of-yet unrealised economic aspirations of the many unemployed within their relational networks (Modisha, 2007: 129)⁹⁸.

⁹⁸ In this article, Modisha (2007: 129) cites an interview in which his respondent explains his strong and ineffable affiliation with poor family members as follows: “I cannot divorce them because I’m coming from them...”

In fact the economic resources of the black *employed* population are being increasingly sourced to support the needs of less well-off family members (Modisha 2007: 136). This has resulted for the unemployed (constituting many of the unemployed extended family members of this study's respondents) in a scenario wherein their most promising window to economic opportunity lies through accessing and channelling the resources and 'connections' of their more economically fortunate kith and kin. As Habib, Maharaj and Nyar suggest (2008: 22):

... for large sectors of South Africa's population, the extended family serves as the basic unit of the community. For these sectors of the population, giving is not directed to strangers and is not informed by volunteerism, but rather by patterns of obligation that extend beyond the nuclear family as a result of the cultural context within which they are located.

It is out of this social relations rubric that *networks of support* have emerged as critical pathways for material and social capital transfers (Hunter, 2007: 231). These factors have contributed to the development of webs of obligatory reciprocity whereby relational and kinship networks are inadvertently being used as mechanisms by which to socially re-embed financial, materials and knowledge capital, re-appropriating these assets for communal consumption. In this regard the impacts of waged and contract labour on reciprocities have produced mixed results within black communities, simultaneously heightening both the divide (gini⁹⁹ coefficient differentials to be discussed next) and social reproduction enjoyment (networks of support) between those who are formally employed, and those who are not.

5.2.6 HIV/AIDS Pandemic

The other domain that bespeaks the frequent presence of community and collective family mobilisations¹⁰⁰, relates to the HIV/AIDS arena. It is to this discussion that we turn next, due to the cogence of HIV/AIDS as a 'location' wherein reciprocities are currently being profoundly and collectively expended within family support networks.

HIV/AIDS has become the largest single cause of death in South Africa, accounting for 30% percent of all loss of life (Sookha 2005). AIDS has torn a turbulent and gapping swath through the national landscape, revealing and creating new reciprocities in the interests of sustaining life

⁹⁹ The '*gini coefficient*' measures levels of economic inequality.

¹⁰⁰ For example, the many informal home-based care initiatives that dot this care-giving landscape, as well as more formalised mobilizations such as the *Treatment Action Campaign*.

whilst simultaneously traversing economies of death and dying. More specific to the location being studied, it is estimated that 34% percent of Gauteng's 'youth' population band is HIV positive, making it (second only to Kwa-Zulu Natal) the worst hit area in the nation (Green 2005).

AIDS is erasing decades of progress in life expectancy rates, bringing it from 62 years down to a current rate of 47 years in the sub-Saharan region. Essentially, it is putting a sickle through the most economically productive age group in the population, prevalence rates peaking for women at age 25 and for men at age 40. Youth and children are also being dramatically affected by this disease, not only through hyper growth in the orphan population (16% percent of AIDS-affected children by the year 2010), but also through the demographic impact of the loss of several generations of potential caregivers as AIDS continues to roll out its death-dealing toll on future generations as well.

This spectre of this 'war on life' (Posel 2007) presents challenges on a variety of fronts, not the least of which are its impacts on women. The repercussions of this disease are felt on multiple gender-specific levels, including the physiological, economic and relational dimensions. Rates of HIV infection in Africa are higher for women (12.2 million) than for men (10.1). This is due in part to biology, as women are more vulnerable to the disease because anatomically the cervix is more susceptible to lesions. This has sent infection rates souring among young African women between the ages of 15-19 (higher than rates of comparable males of the same age), compounding their already socially subordinate and economically dependent status (Green 2005).

In addition to the significant biological gender differential impacts of HIV/AIDS, the other important aspect to give attention to here is the way that care-giving roles associated with HIV/AIDS fall most frequently on women and add exponentially to their already disproportionately heavy domestic burdens. In an article entitled *Crisis in Social Reproduction and Home-based Care*, Nina Hunter (2007) points to the correlation between high rates of surplus value extraction from black females in the Bantustan reserves in previous eras, and the current reality of similar surplus value extraction from women's unpaid care-giving services for

those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. She suggests (2007: 232) that on a national level the government is also implicated in this equation:

The South African government notes that even if hospital or other institutional care may be the best response to an individual's [HIV/AIDS] condition, it may not be available... [In light of that, the Health Department instead recommends] the provision of health services by formal and informal *caregivers in the home*...

Moreover, in both the historic and current set-ups the state was, and has been, inadvertently relieved of much social service expenditure as essential care-giving social reproduction functions have been carried by families. In today's context this is of particular concern with in mind that 'home-based care' is "the government's chief response to the care needs presented by the HIV/AIDS epidemic" (Hunter 2007: 235).

The role/stance of the state has also been problematic in terms of its refutation of the nature of the disease.¹⁰¹ Patrick Bond (2004: 5) suggests that the "denialist" policies of former President Mbeki and his Minister of Health, gave rise to senior health professionals and researchers labelling the government's approach to HIV/AIDS as "genocidal". The Treatment Action Campaign's (TAC) June 6, 2003 Newsletter resonates with these sentiments, stating that "For some... who remember what the struggle for liberation represented, our government's response to HIV/AIDS fills us with anger" (Mthathi 2003: 4). Even amidst a tripartite 'solidarity', Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi, blasted the national government's response to AIDS at a (25 September, 2005) Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) congress held in Cape Town. STAR Newspaper (27 September, 2005) quoted Vavi as saying that government health policy failures had caused the epidemic to skyrocket:

Ultimately, these failures start with a failure of leadership, beginning with the Presidency and the Ministry of Health. Any health ministry that presides over the spread of an epidemic like this has much to answer for. This lack of government leadership on HIV is a betrayal of our people and our struggle.

¹⁰¹ This was not only the case ideologically during Mbeki's reign, but also put on as a public performance in light of the publicity that hounded Jacob Zuma's post-sex shower antics.

5.2.7 Summary

Due to its lack of forthright engagement with the HIV/AIDS pandemic during the decade immediately following 1994¹⁰², the ANC government essentially widened the rift between itself and the multitude of critically important NGOs and civil society players who diligently laboured to fill the ‘gap’ for those infected and affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Hughes 2005). This cleavage is highlighted here insofar as it has implications for where black professional respondents primarily align¹⁰³ themselves: allying themselves with an ideology of confidence¹⁰⁴ in the nation-state, or rather (or simultaneously) seeking to make their impact felt within other circles of influence such as kinship and community (Herman 2006, Stoddard 2006).

Moreover as rates of HIV/AIDS deaths escalate, this has robbed the nation of increasing amassments of human, social and economic resources as these energies trickle away with ever mounting rates of mortality. This has heightened the need for interventions at all levels. However particularly with in mind the absence of critical government supports, this has necessitated the activation of support networks within families who have had to bear many of the social reproductions costs of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. More specifically, these costs have also been born disproportionately by women who most frequently shoulder the burdens of domestic care-giving as forms of un-waged labour. In this regard there exists a strongly gendered component to the reciprocity rubric, coupled also with the need to consider how social capital exchanges pattern themselves as part of this equation.¹⁰⁵

5.3 Segmentations in the Middle

The second section of our exploration of the research’s contemporary context revolves around ‘Segmentations in the Middle’. Here we will investigate the shift (or augmentation) of race-based disparities to class-based inequalities in the ‘new’ South Africa.

¹⁰² Here reference is particularly made to the ‘denialist’ policies of the Mbeki presidency.

¹⁰³ A more thorough discussion of respondents primary affiliations follows in Chapter 6 in section 6.1.

¹⁰⁴ For more on respondents levels of confidence in government see Chapter 6, and section 6.5.10.

¹⁰⁵ This research was structured with these factors in mind, particularly as it chose not only to investigate financial giving, but also time and in-kind contributions.

Substantiating the above is a considerable body of recent literature within South Africa [for instance the work of Patrick Bond (2004), Franco Barchiesi (2003), David Everatt (2005) and Parnell, Beall & Crankshaw (2002), to name but a few] which has emphasised that whilst race categorisations previously dominated social exclusions, now in the post-Apartheid era class cleavages are significantly emerging and unleashing their impact upon the South African social landscape.

Moreover class stratification processes are not created in a vacuum and have their origins in particular cultural, economic, political and social realities that evolve over time. Accompanying this assertion is the research of Mia Brandel-Syrier in *Reeftown Elite* (1971), which highlights how social stratification processes *within* racial groups and residential communities in township settings were formed during the decades preceding 1994.

The magnitude of Brandel-Syrier's work pivots on the larger question of how and/or why within-race class issues may have been sublimated to the larger Struggle historicities of that day. Only now are these tensions being given more space to feature within the national debate. Particularly the research of Crankshaw (1997) as well as that of Seekings and Nattrass (2005) substantiate the presence of increasing *differentiation* within class politics, and surface the paradoxes of these growing class-based inequalities that were birthed pre-1994. In this regard here it is helpful to briefly refer to this larger equation.

By the 1980's, Hart suggests that an upsurge and expansion within the black petite-bourgeoisie was becoming increasingly organised, whilst fractures within the allegiances of the black 'working class' were also being felt. Gillian Hart (2007: 50) echoes Wolpe's warning regarding this period of time:

...political struggles to overthrow or sustain white domination in South Africa could [no longer] be read off structures of either class or race. Instead, they would depend on the specific conjuncture and forms of struggle.

Increasingly class differentiations (and their ensuing divergent interests) were making themselves felt within race groupings and particularly *across* various echelons even within black 'working', 'intermediate' and 'professional' classes. Seekings and Nattrass describe this juncture as the "re-segmentation of the 'working class'" (Seekings & Nattrass 2002: 16).

Certainly a new distributional regime was beginning to evidence itself within post-Apartheid black communities. The distinctive features of this new distributional regime will be discussed next in terms of: (1) class composition, and (2) class interests.

5.3.1 Class Composition

Crankshaw's work (1977) showed that during Apartheid, "upward mobility among African people was largely limited to the semi-professional occupations of teaching and nursing and white-collar occupations entailing little authority. Managerial posts were largely limited to the Bantustan bureaucracies, and there were very few African businessmen" (Crankshaw 1977, as cited in Seekings & Nattrass 2002:12). While the black middle class during Apartheid included clerical and semi-professionals along with small-scale traders, it rarely comprised of black large-scale or formalised business entrepreneur functions.

However, during the 1990's, and with the lifting of Apartheid's sanctions, bans, and multiple racially-based economic restrictions, (not withstanding also the induction of affirmative action policies and Black Economic Empowerment [BEE]), a small (but growing) 'magic circle' of the African business class benefited exponentially. This minute group was catapulted within barely a decade span of time, into the elite business echelon, wielding much influence and power within national economic as well as political spheres.

An additional and second tier of the educated African middle class also benefited from post-1994 policies, but in another way. These up-and-coming educated workers benefited the most through marked upward occupational mobility. In their September 2007 report, entitled "*Post-Apartheid South Africa: Poverty and Distribution Trends in an Era of Globalization*" Van der Berg, Louw & Burger suggest that the upward mobility of educated black workers in post-Apartheid South Africa may in fact have exacerbated 'bi-polarisation forces' between classes. In light of this, increasing segmentations within the 'middle' made themselves felt as upward mobility simultaneously captured the few, but neglected the remainders.

Clearly, however, post-Apartheid policy formulations have initiated a push forward in regards to securing the interests of the black professional classes. Whilst the impacts of this alignment have

yet to be more fully realised¹⁰⁶, they have been criticised by some as a Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) tokenism of sorts.¹⁰⁷ Regardless, it can be said that shifts in the 1990's have changed black class composition by expanding it to include two new burgeoning tiers:

- Firstly a select (and previously non-existent) group of high-ranking black elite business entrepreneurs.
- Secondly, the occupational rise and mobility of black professionals.

5.3.2 Class Interests

Perceptions of South Africa's middle class have historically been imbued with the trappings of the narrative of the 'working class' struggle, its rationalities manifesting themselves in multiple forms of collective action. The local histories of this narrative pre-empt 1994, drawing from the discourses of black mobilizations of the early and mid century. The political platform of the ANC in 1994 re-enacted this strongly working class rootage, forged on the basis of its (tripartite) alliance with the SACP (South African Communist Party) and Cosatu (Congress of South African Trade Unions). An ANC discussion paper prepared for its 50th National Conference (Jordan 1997:20) highlights these interdependencies:

The ANC itself is a multi-class movement, yet it would be correct to say that historically ours is a movement that has received far greater support from certain classes than from others. Since the 1940's, it is specifically the *African working class* of town and country who have been the movement's main base of support.

Today that support base is dissembling into its multiple parts, creating more space for the surfacing of particularities within each of its constituent identities. This historical backdrop serves as the contextual midwife for the emergence of black middle-class sensibilities, simultaneously birthing them from a class lens (viewing the Struggle as a 'proletariat revolution'), while at the same time more recently re-entrenching them within the strictures of 'class Apartheid' (Bond, 2004).

¹⁰⁶ The presence of further class segmentation does not negate, however, the ongoing legacy of the racially discriminatory Apartheid workplace regime. Modisha (2007: 125), points to the 'glass ceiling' still currently experienced by many black managers and it's potential to continue the imposition of an ongoing 'upward floating colour bar'.

¹⁰⁷ In all fairness it must be noted that the current South African government is caught in a vice-grips: on the one hand it has inherited poverty rates that encompass roughly 50% percent of the population, and on the other hand dispensing broad-scale upliftments to this sector will be cash and resource intensive beyond the capacities of a government that is already cash-strapped.

In terms of shifting ‘class interests’, several salient factors emerge that are worth noting. Firstly, it is important to mention two symbiotic phenomena: (1) lifestyle and material expansions on the part of middle classes have been concurrent with a further marginalisation of the disenfranchised, and (2) the size of the black middle class in relation to the broader population, adversely affects the potential for structural changes that would benefit the poor.

Beginning with the first observation mentioned above, Seekings and Natrass (2002: 5-6) suggest the following:

... the structure of South African employment has become more skilled. This is the result of two trends: a general shift away from unskilled labour in all sectors and the especially sharp decline in the labour-intensive mining sector. ... even in the historically unskilled labour intensive mining sector, there has been a shift towards higher paid, better skilled workers – but at the cost of employment overall. ... labour productivity has risen as employment has declined. ... This suggests that the growth path has been relatively kind to employed (especially skilled) labour and capital, and unkind to unskilled labour and the unemployed.

A significant shift relating to class interests in the post-Apartheid context revolves around the ‘down-grading’ of the African ‘working class’. By the late 1990’s, inflation and low wages for the African working class were still not commensurate with adequate LSM [Living Standards Measures]. Bhorat and Kanbur (2006) report that the ‘10-years into democracy’ review process has revealed that poverty and unemployment are on the rise, and disproportionately effect these lower classes: with a poverty line of \$2 a day, the mean poor household earned 11 per cent below this line in 1995 and by 2000 this had increased to 13 per cent. The daily lot of the underclasses (comprised mostly of casual labourers, rural workers, and also urban industrial, factory and domestic workers) has declined and resulted in increasing marginalisation between the interests of these communities and those of the black bourgeoisie. It is precisely at this point of cleavage that the overlays between class composition and class interests make themselves most evident.

5.3.3 Summary

In terms of the formation, reproduction and custody of class interests, in this new scenario, the lower rungs of the ‘working’ classes (un-skilled labourers) join ranks with the larger amassment of the poor and unemployed, whilst the intermediate black (managerial and professional) class (accompanied by all the trappings of middle class aspirations and sensibilities) reaches upwards

towards the ranks of the more wealthy. What this means is that there are newly demarcated fissures within the black middle classes; whereas previously in many ways the Struggle conjoined black class interests, now these interests have been splintered into their component parts.

The second aspect of this equation that has undergone significant change relates to the realm of formal class interests versus informal practices. On the one hand the black professional class shares the 'Struggle values' vested in transformation, along with the majority population. On the other hand, Seekings & Natrass (2002: 4) suggest that their class and lifestyle interests mitigate against their cooperation with carrying the tax burden of subsidising the extensive needs of the poor.

[The black professional class] seeks to protect its semi-privileged position. It resists reforms to labour market and other policies that would steer the economy down a more labour-absorbing growth path, and resists any extension of the tax base that might transform them from net beneficiaries of fiscal redistribution (as they are at present) into net contributors.

Herewith lies the problem: due to the legacy of the structural violence of Apartheid, today's black middle classes are *disproportionately small* in number compared to the majority impoverished population (Seekings & Natrass 2002: 4). To expect the newly enfranchised black middle classes to primarily carry the tax burden for provision for the poor is therefore not only unfair, but economically unsustainable. Unfortunately, due to the government's current conservative fiscal policies and neoliberal growth trajectory, not much pressure is being served to the high-end corporate and elite sectors to significantly subsidise the tax base for the poor; this metes out to black professionals an ambiguous type of 'moral burden' for poor Struggle comrades, but accompanies this with an absence in the wherewithal (class interest) to make significant structural change.

5.4 Selectivities at the Top

Two factors help to frame this final section of the discussion on the contemporary research context. Highlighted here will be the marked distinction between two disparate categories under the overall umbrella concept of the black bourgeoisie:

- the black ‘middle classes’
- the ‘black elite’

Each of these groups has not only a fiscal and social demography of its own, but also a historical birthing context that is critically distinctive (Bozzoli, 2004: 44). In the framework of this study, respondents are seen as inhabiting the ‘middle class’ in terms of economic levels¹⁰⁸, (but not necessarily in terms of primary affiliations). The category ‘black elite’ on the other hand, pertains to the relatively nouveau-riche black political and business entrepreneur community many of which are speedily rising to be multi-millionaire tycoons. The lens through which this cleavage is interrogated is in terms of a rise in racial representivities within the middle class, while at the same time the simultaneous decline of class inclusivities within the black elite.

5.4.1 Growing Racial Representation

The growth of the nascent South African middle class(es) since 1994, shows positive signs of people empowering themselves to share in the spoils of a new economic order. In terms of racial representation, black people now fill the largest racial component of South Africa’s middle class, (comprising 49% percent) having nearly doubled their percentage within the last decade and now representing an annual spending power of R130 billion (Herman 2006). These gains have come at the expense of other racial groups, namely the white and Indian populations whose shares have decreased by 36% and 55% percent respectively, while coloured representation has risen by 36% percent (Stoddard 2006).

Certainly black representation within the mid-range income sectors has and will continue to grow within the next years, augmented by blue-collar consumers buying their way (debt notwithstanding) into the middle-class South African dream. Two recent research reports, one commissioned by *The Financial Mail* (and conducted by SAARF – The South African Advertising and Research Foundation), and the other undertaken by UNISA’s *Bureau for Market Research*, confirm these current trends. SAARF’s study used the measuring point of the average household income per month as their benchmark indicating ‘middle income’ status. They also factored in a Living Standards Measure (LMS) score gauged according to access to running

¹⁰⁸ The survey instrument of this study measured class location in terms of: (1) income levels (2) work rank (3) educational level, and a (4) LSM living standards measure) gauge. For more on this see chapter 7, section 7.2 *Objective Measures of Class*.

water, education and transport. Their findings corroborated (C-Cubed Communications 2006) that blacks within the mid range income categories comprised a fast growing (50% growth a year) percentage of South Africa's 44.8 million population.

5.4.2 Declining Inclusivities

Variously called the Bomiwe (“thirsty”), the fast-consolidating black economic *elite* is the second echelon that needs concerted attention here. The wealthiest 20 percent of the population (of which 22% percent are black) consumes literally 65% percent of the fruits of all earned income (Bond 2004: 4). Black representation has increased in this top elite echelon, where it has more than doubled in numbers during the past 10 years. As we will discover, the financial demographics of this elite group are very distinct from the previously-referred-to black middle classes.

The black elite comprises of an incredibly influential black echelon who move within as well as transverse South Africa's centres of senior political and economic power. They are a class of “Black capitalists; a stratum of very senior Black managers and business executives” (Jordan 1997: 18). Bond (2004) suggests that this group is rightly characterised as a tiny fraction of South Africa's black nationalist politicians and business cronies; a cadre who have created an elite transition that endowed a few Africans with enormous stature and wealth, but has impoverished the majority of ANC constituents. By others the black elite is perceived as the ‘success story’ verification of diligent B.E.E. (Black Economic Empowerment) capitalist aspirations.

Some level of intrigue enters the story when one looks at the relationship between South Africa's black elite and the current ANC government. On the one hand the black elite are the purveyors of belief in current national economic policies that assume that “black economic empowerment will continue to swell the ranks of the middle class, raise disposable incomes, reduce unemployment and increase domestic savings”, promoting a “market-led strategy aimed at making South Africa competitive” (Johnston 2005: 2).

On the other hand, capitalist commodification practices seem antithetical to historic left-wing ‘Struggle values’ of unilateral redistribution. These are the “struggles within the Struggle” that

Pallo Jordan refers to in his writing on '*The National Question in Post 1994 South Africa*'. Already back in 1997 Jordan raised the question of what the government's engagement should be with the emerging elite (at that time he obviously saw the two entities, government and top black echelons, as distinct from each other – many would now beg to differ with that assumption). Jordan concludes (1997: 20) by suggesting that "We will neither handle the tension this new situation can give rise to by denial nor by a blind insistence that there is no conflict potential..." Indeed his words were prophetic for much of the turmoil that the government has faced more recently as some of its primary players have slowly divorced themselves from primary allegiance from each other.

And understandably, however much the black elite may want to distance itself from the vestments of the tyranny of capitalism, they seem unable or unwilling to throw off the benefits that feed those shackles. And some would say rightly so, as they deserve the fruits of their capitalist endeavours. During an address to the Black Management Forum in 1999, President Mbeki is quoted (Masondo 2007: 73) as saying that the "struggle against racism in our country must include the objective of creating a black bourgeoisie ... I would like to urge, very strongly, that we abandon our embarrassment about the possibility of the emergence of successful and therefore prosperous black owners of productive property."

But regardless of how one chooses to reinterpret these complex dynamics, there still remains here an uncanny and familiar sense of déjà vu. Insofar as economic power-mongering is concerned, the question remains as to whether the current government and its BEE elite have gotten caught in the 'gilded cage' of a self-perpetuating (and some would suggest defective) capitalist cycle. As political commentator Milton Friedman suggests (Gillon 2000: 26), invariably accompanying Adam Smith's "invisible hand" is the "invisible foot" of tyrannical and often unexpected consequences; a force just as powerful and enslaving, if not more so, than the erstwhile "hand".

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has interrogated the current research context by exploring three key social phenomena: (1) Mobilisations from Below (2) Segmentations in the Middle, and (3) Selectivities

at the Top. Each of these factors in turn has shaped reciprocities in Gauteng, albeit each in different ways.

Due to ongoing structural containments, livelihoods have continued to be compromised in the post-1994 setting, with mounting inequalities, high levels of unemployment and the spectre of AIDS creating frequently insurmountable odds for the majority 'poors'. Two responses have emerged as an outgrowth of these constraints: on the one hand vocal mobilisations 'from below' have increasingly made themselves heard and refuse to be silenced. These manifest as the outward and public responses of social movements throughout South Africa who vow to complete (on many fronts) the as of yet 'unfinished' transformation agenda.¹⁰⁹

Second to the above, however, has been a corollary internal response which has impacted specifically on domestic social relations. To the extent that macro-level institutions default on broad-scale provisions and social safety net securities, so social reproduction functions have had to be increasingly internalised and bourn on the household level. Thus extended family networks of support within black communities have resurfaced as necessary life-lines of support. These 'external' and 'internal' responses are important to note as they frame and help define the circumstances which motivate reciprocities, as well as the activations which result in response to these conditions.

Additionally, in the post-1994 setting growing differentiations are splintering both the composition and interests of the black middle classes, and thus 'Segmentations in the Middle' are increasingly making themselves felt. These emerging segmentations have in turn necessitated the structuring of new behavioural repertoires to mediate inter-class relations within black communities. This is particularly noted here because it provides another important lens through which to view how reciprocities interpolate shifting class orders in the 'new' South Africa.

Lastly, and as pictorially illustrated in the original schematic of this chapter (Graphic 5.1), 'Selectivities at the Top' are biasing the solidification of a small but fast-consolidating 'top'

¹⁰⁹ For example Ballard, Habib & Valodia (2006) reference key mobilizations from across South Africa, including but not limited to: *The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC)*, the *Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee*, the *Landless Peoples Movement*, the *Anti-Privatisation Forum of Gauteng*, and the *Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign*.

black elite. Whilst racial representation has grown in this elite echelon in the post-1994 context, yet class ‘inclusivities’ have not. Moreover the inherent tensions created by a Struggle project whose explicit aim was to racially egalitarianise South Africa is now being compromised by the shift from ‘race’ to ‘class’ Apartheid (Bond 2004); with this dynamic indeed enlivening the ‘conflictual potential’ that Pallo Jordan referred to back in 1997¹¹⁰. Moreover, this dissonance also frames the contradictory internal impulses that accompany black professionals’ ‘giving back’ practices, motivating and yet constricting their behaviours in contradictory ways. As we turn next to chapter 6 and Affinity-based reciprocities, we engage more deeply with how black professional respondents chose to navigate this contested terrain.

¹¹⁰ Jordan refers to this dilemma in his (1997) “The National Question in Post 1994 South Africa” paper in preparation for the ANC’s 50th National Conference.

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Chapter 6: Affinity-based Reciprocities

6.1 Introduction

Reciprocities reside at the nexus of social reproduction processes, opening up the possibility for both equilibrium and conflict. This chapter's findings reveal that amongst Gauteng's black professional respondents, reciprocities specifically disclose the patterning of (1) primary allegiances, (2) they [re]surface cultural mores, and they subtly disclose the conflictual nature of this public's relationship to (3) institutional powers.

Three primary umbrella categories will be used to organise the contents of chapters 6 through 8, namely findings pertaining to *Affinity-based Reciprocities* (chapter 6), *Position-based Reciprocities* (chapter 7), and *Strategy-based Reciprocities* (chapter 8).

Interrogated in more depth in chapter 6 will be an investigation of the 'who' question of this study, engaging with the construct of Affinity-based reciprocities, previously defined as:

Reciprocities that operate on the basis of kinship or relational affinities where exchanges occur in what Karl Polanyi described in his later writings as the 'household' level of economic reproduction. In this domain, the division, organisation, and distribution of services and assets (land, labour and capital) are governed by cultural protocols and/or by principles of allegiance and affinity. Patterns of resource allocation are exercised through personal relationships or by means of association. Reciprocities categorised in this arena are motivated by perceptions of identity (kin/ clan/ race associations) or ideological affinities (religious/ political/ ethnic/ worldview solidarities) and function as a measure of 'social trust'.¹¹¹

This chapter explores Affinity-based reciprocities in relation to the notion of the "*Economy of Affection*"¹¹² and its presence, nature, and scope amongst black communities in Gauteng. Having coined the term, Goran Hyden (1983: 8-9) provides us with this definition of the *Economy of Affection*:

¹¹¹ Taken from the literature review, chapter 2, section 2.1.3.

¹¹² Goran Hyden coined the term 'Economy of Affection' during the time of his sub-Saharan scholarship emanating from his work in Tanzania, citing the term in his 1980 and 1983 writings.

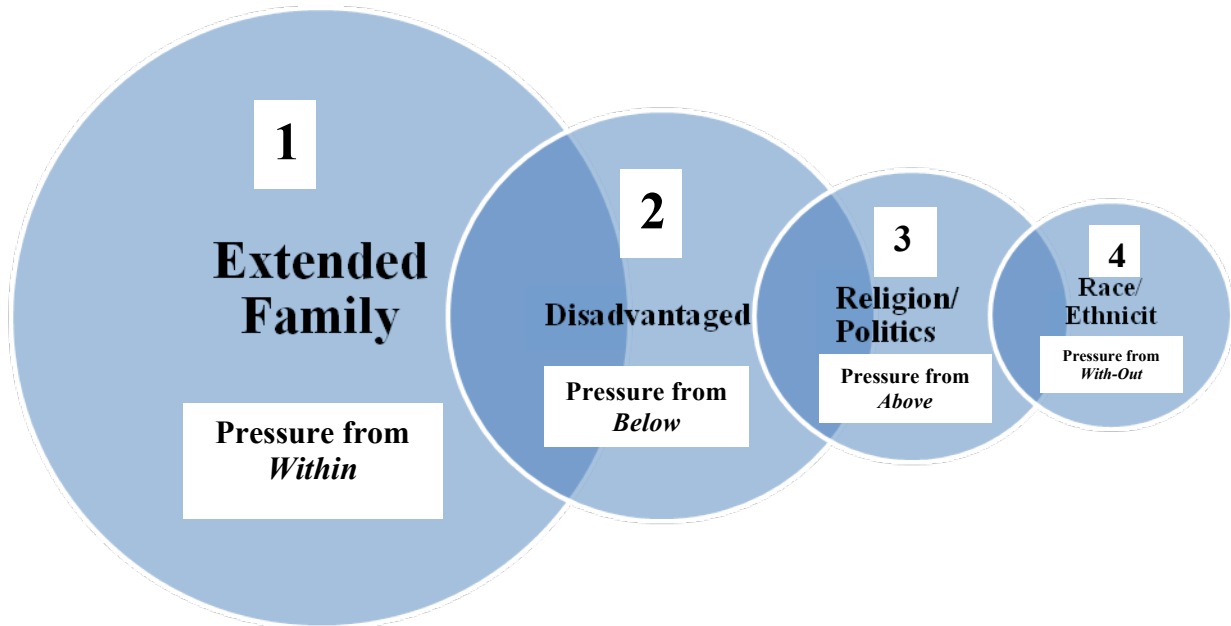
... a network of support, communication and interaction among structurally defined groups, connected by blood, kin, community or other affinities, for example, religion. It links together in a systematic fashion a variety of discrete economic and social units which in other regards may be autonomous ... These are '*invisible organisations*' which tend to be too readily forgotten ...

Moreover it is the premise of chapter 6 that indeed as Hyden suggests, more attention should be given to the under-represented study of the significant role that these informal *Economy of Affection* mores play in social reproduction in the South African context. Secondly it is important to note that not only is there value in examining the role of such reciprocity mores in the creation and maintenance of resilient social and economic networks, but also that the interaction between these informal structures and formal state structures merits more attention (Morris 2003: 2; Habib et al 2008: 21; Hyden 1983). It is precisely in order to further problematise the relationship between these various tiers that this study suggests that the interplay between formal institutions and these informal 'institutions' has created dynamic and mutually transformative feedback loops that have changed both in the process, but each in different ways.

6.1.1 Chapter Highlights

- Gauteng's black professional respondents were found to exhibit active *Economy of Affection* reciprocities that patterned themselves according to four circles of primary affiliation and solidarity. These 'Circles of Solidarity' are depicted on the following page in order of their strength as motivators that sparked and sustained respondents' giving habits. They also represent the four pivotal arenas that leveraged pressure on respondents to take on various kinds of provisional roles.

Graphic 6.1 – Circles of Solidarity Model



An overview related to each of these ‘Circles of Solidarity’ follows.

Pressures from ‘Within’:

The first and strongest giving priority cited by respondents related to obligations to share with extended family members. Respondents described their historic family-of-origin environments as comprising of composite family structures that were organized around arteries of mutual support and social currencies of exchange. These traditional extended family support networks functioned as forums for multi-generational resource flows and transfers.

In terms of contemporary support structures, respondents portrayed the impact of two dynamics that have resulted in networks of support becoming increasingly constricted and narrower in terms of both their strength and reach. These push-and-pull factors are comprised of two twinned and yet opposite dynamics:

- Insofar as extended family support networks have made use of reciprocities as lateral as well as vertical support pipelines, this has tended to strengthen their normative hold on shaping the giving behaviours of black professionals.

- On the other hand, the influences of the growing nuclearisation of black middle class families and the “miniaturisation of community” have served to disembed reciprocities from their extended family moorings, weakening their normative power.

Pressures from ‘Below’:

The second Circle of Solidarity which served as a primary identity marker, related to respondents’ affinities to shared experiences of marginalization. Whether these be related to conditions of poverty and unemployment or conditions of physical ill health, respondents’ sharing behaviours demonstrated that they were personally and actively engaged (on the one-on-one level) in the battle towards the amelioration of these conditions of disadvantage. Several factors significantly contributed to this equation:

- Particularly leveraging pressure on black professionals to ‘give back’ to their communities of origin were what respondents referred to as an added ‘care burden’ hoisted upon them by default; moreover by the state’s absence on critical issues and/or by ineffective systems of public support.
- Coupled with the above were frustrations expressed by black professionals that communicated their confusion and resentment regarding the hefty weight of the provisionary role that family and community members expected them to carry because of a non-provident state.
- Respondents also found negotiating the degree of their responsibility to comply with giving and care-giving roles in this equation to be a site of family and community strife and to be a subject fraught with conflictual tension; both in terms of inter-generational ties and inter-class relations.

Pressures from ‘Above’:

Pivotal to the discussion of *Economy of Affection* mores are the concepts of identity and allegiance. In line with this, the third giving priority cited by respondents related to their religious and political identities and allegiances and those giving pressures that emanated from ‘above’. In this regard this research surfaced the following patterns:

- Faith-based giving levels were high overall, but religious institutions specifically had a strong social gravitational pull because of their value as forums that mimicked social support networks.

- Political affiliation on the other hand was diminishing its hold as a primary identifier, particularly in light of contemporary black professionals' mistrust of historic governance institutions as well as their current disillusionment with abuses of state institutional powers.
- In light of the above, respondents' provisionary roles were currently being significantly impacted by what they expressed as low confidence levels in institutions per se and thus their sharing behaviours were primarily conducted through extra-institutional formats and forums.

Pressures from 'With-Out':

Lastly addressed in this chapter on *Affinity-based* reciprocities were giving behaviours motivated by racial preferences or cultural practices. What roles did race or culture play in shaping reciprocities? Firstly, while race was found to be a recipient identifier that was diminishing in its influence, culture was a factor whose influence was still significant and powerful because of its ability to reinvent itself into new configurations. The following dynamics explain these trends:

- The 'race' construct was found to shape reciprocities only insofar as it was twinned with the 'disadvantage' construct. Once the two were disengaged from each other, race no longer held as significant a role in influencing giving patterns.
- Cultural mores, on the other hand, still reign supreme in their ability to shape giving, both because of their origination in embedded customary rituals, and also because of their fluid ability to reshape themselves within the contemporary setting.
- Moreover, exemplifying the above power of culture has been the re-appropriation of the traditional motif of 'ubuntu', now used in political rhetoric and 'politico-speak'. The use of this customary motif to incite giving behaviours has been effective insofar as it appeals to deeply embedded traditional values and practices. Over and above that, however, such customary notions are also being used to function as a class and race unifying influence in the face of growing economic divides as well as increasing rifts in black solidarity politics.

6.1.2 Chapter Outline

The overarching aim of chapter 6 is to look at Affinity-based giving patterns in terms of their prevalence and significance as *Economy of Affection* mechanisms that are birthed out of perceptions of identity and allegiance. As an entry point to this discussion, we will start by investigating the broader contours of respondent giving habits more generally, beginning with a

brief baseline data overview. In Section 6.2 we look at the overall survey data that indicates levels of giving, benefactor profiles and types of recipients.

This bird's eye view then ushers us into Sections 6.3 and onwards which function as analysis and findings sections. These segments of the chapter work off of the giving priorities identified in Graphic 6.1, and develop a framework for understanding interview narratives and reflecting on the underlying meanings behind how and why respondents gave.

The primary conceptual tool used in Sections 6.2 and onwards pivots on the *Circles of Solidarity* model which describes affinities as orbiting around allegiance to conceptions of: (1) kinship, (2) affinity to experiences of disadvantage, (3) faith and political solidarities, and (4) fidelity to particular notions of race and culture. The findings related to these later sections of the chapter will evaluate how the partial or complete penetration of the state¹¹³ (and other such modernist institutions) have, or have not, eclipsed Economies of Affection' amongst respondents in the Gauteng setting.

6.2 Survey Data

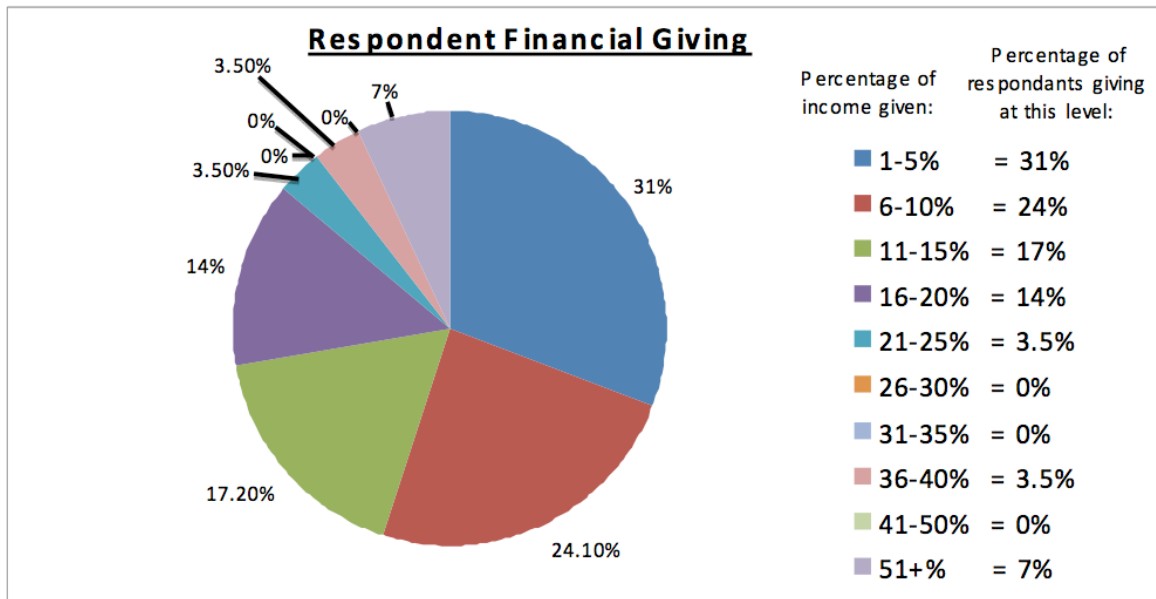
6.2.1 Levels of Giving

In the survey instrument several measures were used to indicate levels of respondents' giving behaviours in terms of the amount, type and frequency of support for [non-nuclear] others. These gauges were used to evaluate at what levels respondents regularly participated in activities wherein their resources (money, time and materials) were used in aid of benefitting others.¹¹⁴ Additionally, what this thesis research added to the equation was a measure of financial giving levels as a *percentage of income*. In terms of financial giving, on average, respondents spent 13.5% percent of their reported income on the support of non-nuclear others.

¹¹³ Hyden (2006) mentions both 'state' and 'market' influences in this article, particularly citing research from the contexts of Burkina Faso, DRC, Ethiopia, Senegal Tanzania and Uganda. More specific to our research here, whilst the penetration of the 'state' is the focus of chapter 6, we will turn to the impacts of 'market' penetration in chapter 7, and the penetration of globalisation in chapter 8.

¹¹⁴ In their 2006 nation-wide survey, Everatt & Solanki posit that South Africans are 'a nation of givers', reporting that 54% of respondents reported financial giving in the past month (Habib & Maharaj 2008: 48).

Graphic 6.2

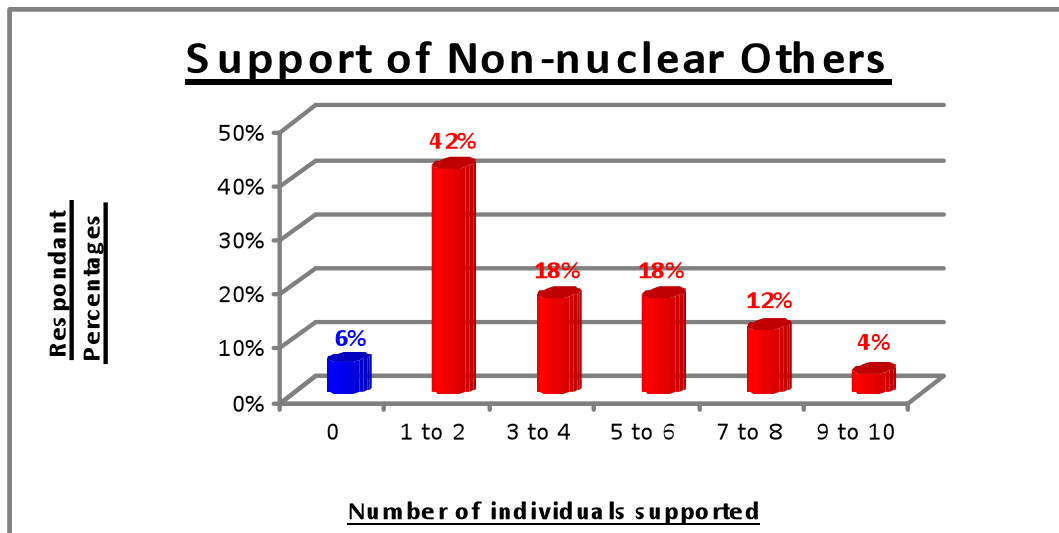


The giving levels cited above are exceptional findings in terms of their contrast with first-world countries around the globe. For instance, the Charities Aid Foundation found that in the U.K. in 2004/5 the average percentage of personal salary (income) given to non-nuclear others was .8% percent. Even in the U.S. where levels of charitable and philanthropic giving are said to be higher than those of their continental counterparts, rates of .7% to 3% percent are generally recorded (Walker & Pharoah 2002: 33). This is inclusive of religious charitable giving, whose augmentation to the total still only computes to the equivalent of .76 of GDP in the U.K. and 1.75% percent of GDP in the USA.

In relation to more substantive trends within the sub-Saharan region, however, the findings of this sample group are in keeping with literatures that suggest that high rates of giving frequently exhibit in this context within the parameters of support networks amongst local populations, particularly evidencing themselves within poor, migrant or disadvantaged communities (Patel & Perold, 2007; Habib & Maharaj 2008; Ross 2005). As South Africa in particular has taken the shift from pre-1994 to post-1994 economic prospects, one of the primary tasks of this research is to explore the impact of these macro-level changes on these micro-level social support structures.

In a second set of questions within the survey instrument respondents were asked to note the degree to which they did or did not regularly support other non-nuclear individuals on a monthly basis. A vast majority, 94% percent, stated that they were primary providers towards the livelihood of at least one (some for as many as ten) non-nuclear others.

Graphic 6.3



As Habib and Maharaj discovered in their nation-wide research (2008), rates of financial giving in South Africa (to non-nuclear others) were, across the board, high in comparison to international standards. In keeping with these trends, and as demonstrated above, respondents in this study also exhibited rates of giving that were especially elevated.

What Habib and Maharaj additionally found, however, was of particular interest: giving levels differed across races, favouring high levels particularly within black communities. For example, giving levels amongst black populations were found to be 20% percent higher than amongst white fellow-citizens (Everatt & Solanki 2005: 63). This begs the question of why this is the case? In line with this, one of the goals of this research is to explore how and where this study's sample group fits in to this broader picture, and how respondents are, or are not, reconfiguring their alliances and allegiances in light of post-1994 changes in their circumstances.

6.2.2 Benefactor Profiles

Gathering data on benefactor characteristics featured as the second component of the research endeavour. In that regard, and due to its purposive composition, the sample group aimed to capture adequate diversity from across black cultural groups¹¹⁵; amongst the sample, Sotho (northern and southern at 34% percent) and Tswana (at 20% percent) predominated, whilst all other remaining black ethnic groups were relatively evenly distributed. All nine black South African language groups were represented in the sample, including several respondents who indicated ‘other’¹¹⁶ mother-tongues. Gender representation was evident with 43% percent of respondents being women and 57% percent men. While most respondents designated themselves as from the ‘Christian’ faith, 11% percent categorized themselves as subscribing to indigenous beliefs systems, as adhering to the Muslim faith, or as having no faith-affiliation per se. Other significant demographic features characteristic of benefactors but not mentioned here, will be featured in ensuing parts of the thesis relevant to those topics.¹¹⁷ While the scope of the research was not broad enough to be representative¹¹⁸, yet as a ‘slice’ of Gauteng’s black population, members of the respondent sample group proved to be both diverse and yet uniquely similar in terms of their giving habits.

6.2.3 Types of Recipients

The third investigative probe of this thesis considered who primary giving beneficiaries were, and more specifically the criterion used by givers to decide who their recipients would be. One

¹¹⁵ ‘Cultural’ affiliation was identified according to primary language [mother tongue] designations. This is clearly not a comprehensive marker, however it is the one most frequently used in survey instruments of this kind.

¹¹⁶ The designation of ‘other’ mother-tongues most probably represented those original languages spoken by children of parents native to other African locations before South African repatriation.

¹¹⁷ For example, information on respondents’ educational levels [both for themselves and their parents], employment status and categories, type of residential accommodations, income differentials and such, will be discussed in chapter 7, which more closely addresses ‘class’ issues. Age demographics, additional information on political affiliations and data on memberships and levels of civic associational life will be mentioned in chapter 8, which focuses more specifically on cross-generational issues of social capital transmission.

¹¹⁸ In order for quantitative analysis to take place on research findings that claim to be representative, the respondent sample would have had to be both (1) random, and (2) significantly larger. (In terms of #2, the study would need to be increased in number to approximately 400 interviews; at those rates results could demonstrate a precision of 5 percent at a reliability of 95 percent). Being that interview numbers of that magnitude were not tenable for this study, a purposive sample was instead chosen, with a focus on qualitative as opposed to quantitative research methods.

of the first ‘screens’ used in this regard, related to whether givers chose individuals or organisations as the recipients of their philanthropic impulses. Interestingly enough, respondents answered that they gave to ‘individuals’ three times as often as they gave to ‘organisations’ (inclusive of organisations such as the Church or other religiously affiliated entities).¹¹⁹ On the whole, however, nearly half of respondents [47.2 % percent] supported both individuals and religious institutions (primarily Churches¹²⁰) in their giving. 88% percent of respondents indicated that they believed their giving resources would be used best by the individuals, families or faith communities associated with a given need, rather than by government, big business or donor networks.¹²¹ In terms of types of recipients, benefactors were usually individuals known to their patrons, and most frequently had a filial relationship to them. When asked what their first priority in giving was, the majority of respondents said that extended family members featured as their first and foremost beneficiaries.

6.2.4 Giving Priorities

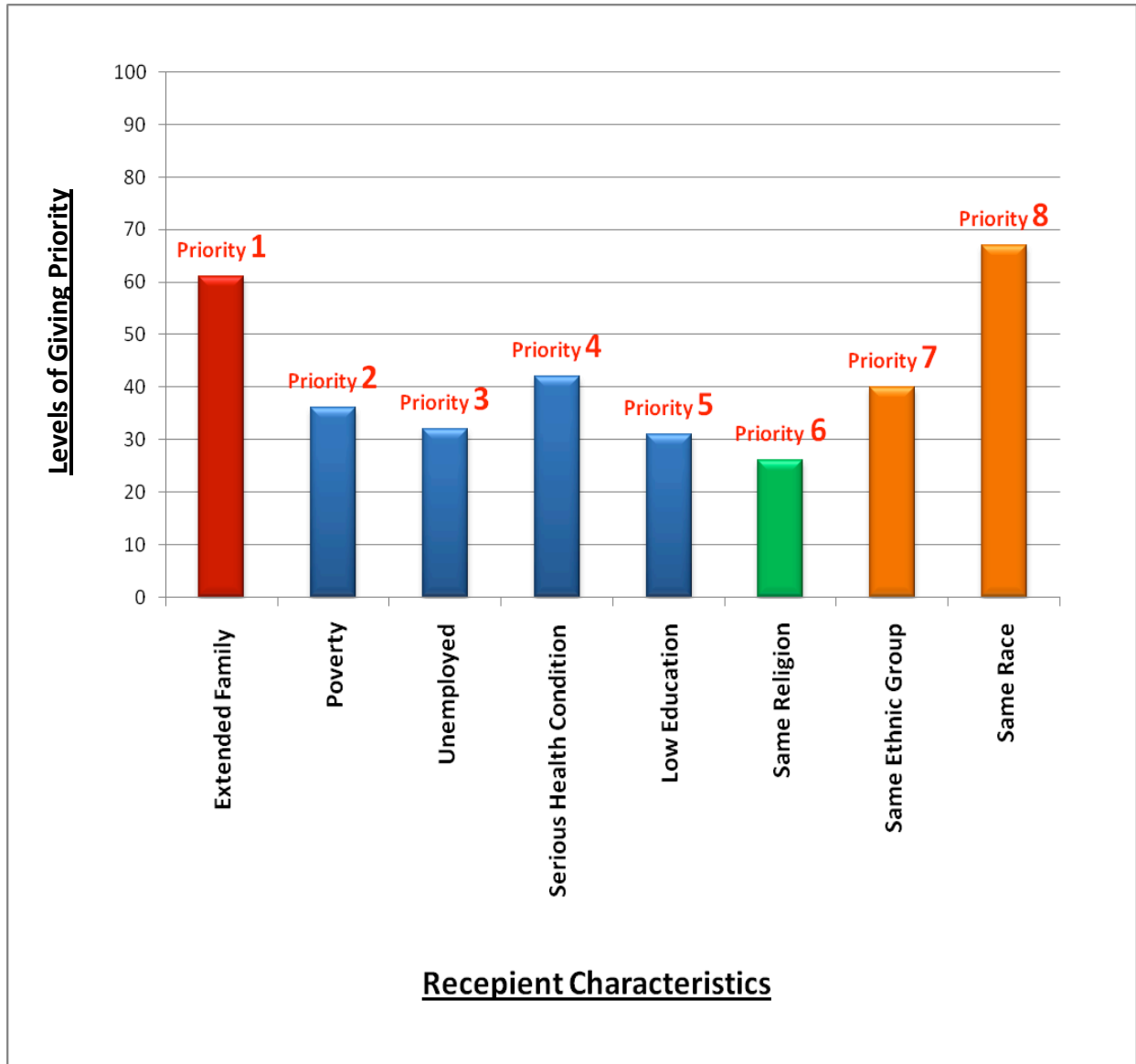
The following chart portrays in more detail the four circles of giving mentioned earlier (in Graphic 6.1), more specifically grouping the eight listed giving motivations into four overarching sharing priorities. Moreover it is important to note that ‘extended family’ was strongly endorsed as the first giving priority whilst ‘ethnicity’ and ‘race’ were found to be the last motivations for giving. Conditions of poverty, unemployment, ill-health and lack of education were grouped together as conditions of ‘disadvantage’.

¹¹⁹ This was corroborated in Question # 49 of the survey instrument.

¹²⁰ These figures correspond with the Census-2001 findings that indicated that 78.1% of the population considered themselves ‘Christian’. In this thesis research, 83% of Respondents regularly participated in Christian religious gatherings/events of some kind.

¹²¹ This information sourced from survey Question # 53.

Graphic 6.4 - Respondent Giving Priorities



What do these various findings tell us? Firstly, from the narratives attached to the previous charts (Graphics 6.2 and 6.3) we learned that rates of financial giving amongst the target group were high both by international standards and in comparison to other resident ‘non-black’ populations within South Africa. This may be due in part to the fact that respondents considered extended family members (as displayed in giving priorities above) as within their circle of

primary-family responsibility. This would explain high rates of giving amongst respondents as residing within the ambit of an active *Economy of Affection*.

The second finding amongst the respondent group was that the chief benefactors of these elevated rates of financial giving were recipients prioritised according to the following criterion: (1) first prioritised in giving were extended family members, (2) the second giving priority was towards those who displayed significant levels of disadvantage [physically or structurally¹²²], (3) the third levels of benefactors were those who shared similar religious affiliation, and lastly prioritised (4) were those who were of the same racial or ethnic group. These findings now take us a little deeper into an analysis of the particular aspects at play within the reciprocity conundrum, with each of the numbered elements above being investigated in more depth in the remaining four chapter sections that follow.

6.2.5 Circles of Solidarity

There is a saying in our languages that says ‘A life is a circular wind’. And for every man there will be a bottom or under side, and for every man there will be a top. And so, in all things that you do, and in all people that you see, you must know that this is - circular. If you give it out to the world, it will come back to you.¹²³

The first series of questions that the interview instrument engaged with, related to the kinship level of our *Circles of Solidarity* model. Here respondents’ notions of identity, responsibility and conceptions of community within the filial realm were explored. What were respondents’ primary allegiances based on (kinship? gender? faith? race?) and why did respondents prioritise giving within those particular *Circles of Solidarity*? Answering the question: ‘Who do respondents feel responsible for?’ revealed a whole set of primary identifiers in their lives and charted the contours of not only their personal identities but also patterns of collective interaction and social transmission.

¹²² Here refers disadvantage due to a physical disability or illness, and disadvantage due to ‘structural’ constraints such as racism, sexism, poverty, and inequality.

¹²³ Interview: LB1, Soweto, 31 August, 2007. *Emphasis mine*.

6.3 Pressures from Within

6.3.1 Circle of Solidarity 1: Extended Family Support Networks

In his description of ‘Economies of Affection’ Goran Hyden (1983: 8) suggests that networks of reciprocity frequently emerge out of kinship constellations or other filial bonds. Within the Gauteng setting, respondents suggested that their responsibility to provide for ‘family members’ predominantly spanned across multi-generational extended family networks. Historically this has been the case in many black communities within the southern African region where networks of material (and social) support have frequently been sourced particularly through extended family support structures (Nzimande 1997; Bozalek 1999; Ashforth 2004).

Reciprocities enacted in this format correspond to Claude Levi-Strauss’ point in *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* that inverts the classical view of ‘nuclear’ family units, focusing instead on the importance of the relationships betwixt and between nuclear units. In these contexts, filial support networks have been found to exert particular influence in contexts where traditional and customary social structures have not totally rescinded their hold.

In their writings, Marshall Sahlins (1972) as well as Marcel Mauss (1954), suggest that in fact in such contexts, it is reciprocities themselves that serve as sites for social reproduction: “societies in fact *reproduce* themselves through reciprocal gifts” (Pipilloud & Adloff 2007: 25). In his later writings Polanyi (1944) also picked up on these dynamics, when he talked of the ‘household’ level of economic reproduction. More recently, Goran Hyden (1983) began to include the influence of filial networks in the ambit of his writings, particularly in the African setting. Likewise, Lauren Morris (2003) and Sara Berry (1993) have specifically reflected on these dynamics in the sub-Saharan context.

6.3.2 Survey Data

In the context of this Gauteng study, the question arises as to what are the particular and nuanced reciprocity dynamics at play? What are the meanings attached to filial giving, and how do these practices reinvent themselves or foster new social structures in times of change? Of the recent work done on this topic, the most helpful notions emerges from Hyden’s writings which

suggested that in *Economies of Affection* there are particular structural patterns of instrumentation through which reciprocities flow. Hyden's typology proposes the following reciprocity patterns:

- horizontal 'pooling' systems
- vertical ['clientelist',¹²⁴] formats
- 'self-defence' modes
- 'charisma'-based schemes

The first two items within this typology (horizontal and vertical exchange formats) interest us the most here, specifically in terms of their relevance to how reciprocities are structured within extended family networks amongst respondent communities in Gauteng. More on these structural aspects follows in the remainder of this chapter.¹²⁵

In order to describe the types of support relationships that respondents engaged in, the interviewer made sure to first corroborate respondents' understandings of several key terms. The 'nuclear' family was defined in the survey instrument as comprising of the (conjugal) pair and their direct offspring, whilst a 'household' entailed whomever lived within a co-residential unit (this corresponding to *Statistics South Africa's Census, 2001*, 4-nights residence definition.¹²⁶

Moreover, it is important to note that the extended kinship structures described by most respondents could best be characterised as 'composite families'¹²⁷. These 'composite' families were inclusive of primary *lateral* reciprocities (i.e. sibling to older sibling dependencies) as well as multiple-generation *vertical* relationships (Grandparents as primary caregivers for their grandchildren or uncles/aunts for their nephews/nieces) as well as the possibility of *diagonal* relationships that spanned polygamous or other types of extended family arrangements. Only a very small minority, 13.5 % percent of respondents described growing up in 'nuclear' family set-ups where both parents provided primary care-giving oversight or financial responsibility for their children.

¹²⁴ Morris (2003) uses Hyden's typology in her excellent analysis and comparison of giving patterns within communities in the Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire settings.

¹²⁵ Additional comments on the applicability of these two aspects of Hyden's typology appear also in sections 6.3.3.6 and 6.3.4.

¹²⁶ For an interesting discussion of alternative ways of defining 'household' for research purposes see Hosegood and Timaeus' (2005) provocative study.

¹²⁷ The United Nations (1998) uses this terminology in its '*Principles and Recommendations for Populations and Housing Census*', Revision 1, paragraph 2.82.

One other type of co-residential household configuration should be noted here lest it be overlooked; namely households which also included within their ‘support’ equations gardeners/domestics/child-minders that lived on-site and for whom respondents provided assistance over and above regular pay (i.e. paying for the schooling of the domestic or gardener’s children etc.) Roughly one quarter (24.3% percent) of respondents cited this latter type of household composition as part of their current domestic arrangement.

For these ‘composite’ families, extended family networks were found to be more fluid than single-unit nuclear families, and in the long run these expansive extended family networks were more entrenched and stable due to their ability to withstand greater amounts of structural pressure because of their breadth, and reach. In this regard, some of the resilience of these structures can be explained, even in the face of the pressures and encroachments of the immense political and economic changes undergone in the past decade in South Africa.

6.3.3 Interview Narratives

Having laid out in section 1 of this chapter some of the respondent characteristics sourced from the survey instrument, we now turn to the heart and soul of this research: the qualitative process of content expansion (adding ‘thickness’) to the overlay between this data and the research interviews. With in mind the desire to capture and honour respondents’ sentiments in their own words, this component will be organised around a series of narrative clips/phrases extracted from respondents’ own interview verbiage.

Whilst we continue here with the theme of the filial level of affinity, we begin with a look at patterns of reciprocity in respondents’ families of origin. In a later section we will then compare this information (the historical backdrop) with current filial reciprocity patterns in order to identify changes and scrutinise the direction that these patterns are taking over time.

6.3.3.1 “*The house is always full*”

One of the salient observations made by respondents was that whilst there was variation in the personal specifics of family constellations (particularities of each household), yet the theme of reciprocities practiced between extended family members was common throughout in terms of references to *families of origin*. Frequent mention was made to family of origin structures that

pivoted on support networks which included primary care-givers who were not the parents in a given nuclear family. These included circumstances wherein children were brought up by grandparents (recounted in interviews with BT1, JL1, SS1, LB1), situations in which aunts or other community women did primary child-care (JM1,SL1, MN1), households wherein older siblings [especially the oldest child] carried primary nurturance roles in the absence of parents (SM1, GM1, JM1, SM3, MM4, VN1, TN1), and families in which uncles carried special patronage functions for nephews or nieces (MP1, KJ1, GC1, JL1, JM1, MM4, BT1, SS1, FM1).

Respondent MN1 explains to me the set up in his family of origin as follows:

There is a saying in our language which says – “*the house is always full*”. So, I mean we are a large family. We were probably about eight people, you know. My parents had eight kids. But there would always be four more people coming in from the extended family. ... As you know, the African set-up is such that, the extended family presents the challenge that there isn't the inclination to just be a nuclear family that is to take care of itself. So you have to look after brother, sisters, and so on. In that sense we live with members of the extended family whom we help.¹²⁸

Another respondent, TT1, also describes her family as going ‘beyond’ the nuclear definition.

You grow up knowing that your mom, your dad, your siblings, are not the only family that you have. Your cousins, your grandparents, your aunty, your uncles, going as far as the community, depending where you grew up and what kind of setting it was. ... So it's very huge and it's broad and that's how family is. So it goes *beyond* the immediate family.¹²⁹

Respondent TM2 suggests that even language reflects the networked nature of these extended family support structures.

Our families are so extended that every uncle has an unwritten law to take care of you, every aunt, every, ja, every older sibling, every older cousin. Also we don't really have the word ‘cousin’ in our vocab. I think it's not as strong enough as cousin, because my mother's sister's daughter is my sister. So that in itself makes you to spread more, to spread yourself.¹³⁰

VM1 intimates that accompanying the added ‘support’ that extended family members can expect to get, are also the reciprocity expectations to ‘give back’.

¹²⁸ Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July, 2007.

¹²⁹ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

¹³⁰ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

In the black community it's predominantly the extended family. The extended family expects you to carry [them]. It's expected; so it means they don't see it that you can do outside of them. It's like: "We are your first priority". But then I think we're stressing to go beyond that definition.¹³¹

Included below is an interview snippet which provides some insight into the historical circumstances that necessitated extended family care-giving support:

I lived about 30 kilometres from here, where my mom used to work for some white family. And my father used to work in the mines. They were going to leave in the morning before I woke up and come back [in the] evening just before we sleep. And so in some way there is a sense in which this is not the very typical [nuclear] set-up. It's got influences of what it means to live in an urban setting where Mom and Dad are not the primary care-givers ...whereby you can't guarantee their presence.¹³²

The circumstances¹³³ leading to surrogate care-giving roles taken on by extended family and community members were frequently cited in relation to historic migratory labour patterns (KJ1, GM1, JM1) or the more recent expropriation of labour from townships (TN1,SS1, SL1), both of which induced high levels of parent absenteeism because of the harsh economic realities faced by black families during Apartheid. Stepping into primary social reproduction functions were therefore those family and community members not formally employed within the capitalist equation. Moreover as TN1 suggests below, these 'support network' roles taken on by community and filial relations, extended in ways that transmitted very particular cultural logics¹³⁴ of communal responsibility for social reproduction:

When you grow up within the township, you don't belong to a mother and a father – you belong to everybody. ... When I grew up, any elderly woman, any elderly man, he's my father, and so they parent me. So if they discipline me, my mother would not complain, she will say, "Yes they were right".¹³⁵

¹³¹ Interview: VM1, Ruimsig, 25 May, 2007.

¹³² Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July, 2007.

¹³³ Interview: CG1, Marshalltown, 31 October, 2007.

Another respondent, CG1, described to me how households responded to these conditions: "My mother had to leave us with her sisters for her to go to school. The money that she gave to the family had to maintain all of us. So for me, it says: "A family unit has to be sharing, you know, on a survival of everyone".

¹³⁴ It is important to also note the influence of colonialism on perceptions of responsibility within the 'domestic' realm. Chatterjee (1993) suggests that in the Indian context and due to the colonial legacy, for the 'native' population the *public* domain of 'contestation' was closed to them, therefore leaving open only the *private* domestic domain of subordination.

¹³⁵ Interview: TN1, Eikenhof, 31 May, 2007.

Respondent EMI adds in the dimension of community members also providing care-taking roles one for another.

Which comes to the example that I wanted to give: my child is everyone's child in the community, or rather, any other older man or woman that I come across, is my parent. So if my mom would see my neighbour's child misbehaving, she could actually discipline that child there and then. ... But that's the traditional ..way, ja.¹³⁶

Respondent SS1 tells me that these care-giving functions were not only social in nature but that they could also include the expectation of some level of material support.

When we were growing up, for an example, that's why there's a situation where I would call my grandmother 'Mama', instead of my mother. But besides that also, in a family clan ...you would be brought up as a child of the family. Even if it's not your blood parents, they will make sure that you go to school, [and] everything else; you get that support.¹³⁷

6.3.3.2 "Working for home"

Highlighted within the equation of the necessity for extended support networks, were also roles taken on by older siblings when the financial ability of parents as sole providers was compromised. TS1 describes it to me this way:

I'm the first-born and therefore not having parents who would perhaps take care of all of us, the cultural expectation is that being the first-born you need to see everyone else through, taking care of all aspects.¹³⁸

In respondent narratives, older siblings were frequently described as being conscripted into provisionary roles.

What would happen [is] they would send the big one [oldest child] to school, or maybe the first two to school. Then those two are expected to send the others to school. So it just sort of trickles, it trickles down.¹³⁹

Now a senior Manager at a large NGO, MP1 tells me his story:

Once you have finished school and started working, there's that kind of a responsibility where you feel like I need to look after my sisters or my parents. I normally say every young person who starts working will actually work for five or six years, '*working for*

¹³⁶ Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007.

¹³⁷ Interview: SS1, Braampark, 19 November, 2007.

¹³⁸ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

¹³⁹ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

home, before they do anything for themselves. So I think that has been the practice for many years, that you finish school and then you go, before you do anything for yourself, you go back home, and then help your sisters and your [brothers]. Sometimes you would even help to build the house, you know, to renovate.

Remember my case, after finishing school, after training as a teacher, I had to take care of my own brother who was at the college also. So I had to ensure that I am paying for his fees and those things. My father was there but my father was not even earning enough money. So I sort of took the responsibility ...¹⁴⁰

Another respondent, SL1, adds to the equation the fact that not only can older sibling be looked to as providers for younger siblings, but also other extended family members exert pressure too.

The big thing is that the cultural norm raises people with the [expectation] that the older brother or the older sister will take care of the younger ones and therefore the younger ones will also have the expectation that my sister or my brother should take care of me on this particular thing. So it's almost like a 'right' to them. Some parents make it clear and they make the request that "can you help [pay for] your sisters or your brothers to [go to] school?" ... Maybe let me add that this aspect could be the whole family, it doesn't matter; you're expected to help the whole [extended] family.¹⁴¹

6.3.3.3 "Your uncle becomes someone you must rely on"

Uncles also played significant roles as providers, spokesmen, negotiators and patrons in respondents extended family structures. Respondent BT1 described in detail the role that his 'Rangwane' [Sotho for paternal uncle] played in sponsoring his university education as well as all of his post-matric living expenses until BT1 got his first job. Another respondent, JL1, spoke of the financial support that he as a maternal uncle ['Malome'] was expected to give his sister's children on an ongoing basis. Respondent FM1 recounted how his uncle had housed him over the duration of his engineering studies at Wits University, whilst NM1 spoke of having her husband's nephew reside with them for extended periods of time whilst he engaged in job searches. Uncles were also looked to as resource-solicitors and negotiators in family affairs on behalf of their nephews/nieces (VM1, MP1, GM1, LN1, GC1, JM1).

My uncle, that is my mother's brother, ja, he was caring. He would pay for our school fees, he could see that if we were getting school uniforms, that we would get food and so on ...¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

¹⁴¹ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

¹⁴² Interview, MM4, Hillbrow, 12 November, 2007.

In addition to provisionary functions, SS1 tells me that uncles frequently carried family leadership responsibilities too.

In our families, *your uncle becomes someone you must rely on*; but he's also the leader. He must provide leadership – when I marry, when I do this – I must always consult with him. ... Everyone just feels “No, we have our own person who is a figure within the family”. And you know, they feel that ‘support’.¹⁴³

6.3.3.4 “*The sharp side of the knife is the one the woman would hold*”

Additionally important to note were the non-recompensed care-giving functions that women in particular were tasked with, especially in the face of a coercive system of migrant labour that frequently separated women from their partners. Within the Interviews, respondents portrayed this system's impact on women in two ways: on the one hand as (1) tremendously exploitative of female resources, but also on the other hand as (2) an arena which showcased female resilience.

Respondent SS1's mother worked for long hours as a single parent and cleaner at local Hospitals. He tells me that his childhood years were characterised by his fears of the indeterminacy of her continually shifting work environment.

You see, the other part of this [is] ... she's a woman. And a woman's place in the society, you know, she was not given preference. ... She must go look for work so that she can take care of other people within. So she's denied the opportunities and she does not get the support. There are very, very painful stories that she can tell you about herself. ... Sometimes she'll just be told to leave ... and it's between six and seven in the night. She had to carry us, three of us, carry us and go look for another family member whom she can ask to keep us for a while ...¹⁴⁴

Currently a trauma counsellor and project manager, NM1, suggests to me that women were in fact the backbone that supported extended family reciprocity networks.

Look, I think partly it [reciprocities] just has to do with the role models that the woman now in our generation had at that time. Because our mothers, whether they stayed in the rural areas, had to learn this thing that they say in Tswana: “Mme utshwara tipa kabogaleng”. Basically it means “If you take the knife, *the sharp side of the knife is the one that the woman would hold*”. Basically it means that the woman would stand up for the family no matter what. So I think we grew up observing our mothers having to stand up; having to stand up for the family while the father is away. And I think most women,

¹⁴³ Interview, SS1, Braampark, 19 November, 2007.

¹⁴⁴ Interview: SS1, Braampark, 19 November, 2007.

interestingly black men even, would look up to their mothers. ... So mothers were very, very strong role models at that time. Part of that has been about their caring attitude and their ability to just hold the family together and be there. And I think what also made it easier for them was that they had a very strong support in terms of the extended family.¹⁴⁵

It is also important to note that whilst the suggestion is made here that effective extended family support networks predominated, in some instances (as recounted to me by SS1¹⁴⁶), there were also situations of severe and protracted relational break-downs within these structures that caused them to be dysfunctional. Moreover whilst a majority of respondents presented social structures within their families of origin in terms of somewhat idealised notions, yet the point being made here is that these extended family structures generally served as highly sophisticated and successful coping mechanisms which perpetuated an ethos and expectation of reciprocal exchange.

Insofar as Hyden suggests that *Economy of Affection* reciprocities can function laterally as well as horizontally, both formations were found active within respondents' descriptions of their families of origin. In this regard, two phrases used by respondents stand out as encapsulating these two modes:

- Vertical or 'clientelist'¹⁴⁷ formations as "forms of social currency"
- Horizontal or 'pooling' formations as "pipelines of mutual support"

6.3.3.5 "*Forms of social currency*"

The theme of reciprocity as a form of social currency featured repeatedly in interview narratives. Patronage 'trade-offs' exhibited themselves in terms that benefitted domestic realms, that bespoke economic interdependence, and that ensured physical security.

I'll give you a minor example: in the township there are things are called 'societies' (stokvels and mutual savings and investment schemes). Now [in] a 'society', if you are the kind of person who goes to people's funerals and you attend peoples' weddings, when something happens to you, everybody would go out of their way to be there for you because you have given to this [society]. And if you are the kind of person who has other

¹⁴⁵ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

¹⁴⁶ Interview: SS1, Braampark, 19 November, 2007.

¹⁴⁷ Please note that an additional and more in-depth discussion of vertical '*patronage*' exchanges will take place in chapter 7, which addresses inter-class reciprocities.

things going on, when it happens to you [bad circumstances befall you], people have other things going on. It's that clear in the township: if you give, people will give back. ... It's a *form of currency* that what you do for other people they will do back for you; everything that we do is a currency between people.¹⁴⁸

In his narrative, respondent SL1 depicts this type of exchange on the domestic front. He describes for me the interplay between his mother's sense of responsibility to house and pay for school fees for her sister (the 'aunt' in this household), whilst the aunt in return becomes the primary care-giver responsible for raising the household's children.

And interestingly enough, it was my mom who would get one of my aunts to stay with us. And it would be a trade-off where they will pay for my aunt's education and my aunt would look after us for [an] 'after school' kind of a situation, because both my parents were working. So... it was a trade-off.¹⁴⁹

Respondent SM2 suggested to me, however, that although social currency transfers were regularly activated, this did not always guarantee corresponding levels of social cohesion:

But there are those like my cousin. She asked me, she wanted to go to school and do this telephone consulting thing. And she came and she asked for it, and I paid the school fees for her. ... My brother paid for part of the transport for her to go there. And by that time we were still not talking to each other...¹⁵⁰

What several respondents did point out, however, were lowered levels of risk once the reciprocity of transactions was ensured. In this sense, reciprocities functioned as a type of 'social insurance' for the future.

For instance, I know that if something happened at home, I will have this support. Like if I were to die or something. For instance, my brother died, and the support that [he] got at home [was overwhelming]. People running around, not only family but also the community; cleaning and the church people also cleaning, and so that kind of support. What I find about the black communities is that happens a lot. Like if there is something [ill circumstance], people will really come and really support you.¹⁵¹

Another respondent, TT1, suggested that as risk levels were spread out amongst a broader group of people, not only were the potential impacts of hazards lessened, but also the potential pool to draw benefits from was increased.

¹⁴⁸ Interview: LB1, Soweto, 31 August, 2007.

¹⁴⁹ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

¹⁵⁰ Interview: SM1, Hartbeesfontein, 22 June, 2007.

¹⁵¹ Interview: MM2, Braamfontein, 28 August, 2007.

There's lots of positives, not negatives, just in terms of being able to help out. If I'm limited to just my immediate family – it's so sad. Whereas I know that when I need help, I'm going to everyone. I'm calling my cousins, I'm calling my grandparents... So I get more help; unlike if I know that I'm limited to just my mom or just my dad, which doesn't work in the end when you need lots of things.¹⁵²

Respondent JT1, a mother living in Soweto, adds that these reciprocities are the building blocks for her sense of 'belonging' and community.

The positive side of it is a sense of belonging, and you know that you are a part of ... a community. You are just sure that if anything happens to me, I've got people who'll rally around.¹⁵³

Lastly, respondents also spoke of reciprocities as mechanisms that helped to build relationships that deterred security breaches and crime, not only through added accountability but also through the community's diligent surveillance.

A *tsotsi*¹⁵⁴ for example, will say to another *tsotsi*: "Okay, I know we steal cars, but we ain't stealing *her* car. Because she did something [good] for our mother". Ja, because you did something for his mother. So, you're protected because of this.¹⁵⁵

Respondent TT1, a young woman staying in Parktown North, tells me that in the township she came from, the 'community' was the best criminal deterrence system ever; now in the suburbs where she stays she wonders who is her new 'community'.

I remember the one time there were these guys in our township, and they were starting to steal. We caught them within a month, because the whole community was involved. Whereas if I have so many high walls, if crime happens, who is going to help me?¹⁵⁶

6.3.3.6 "Pipelines of mutual support"

Reciprocities did not only function as resources to be leveraged for the benefits of patronage or in environments of risk, but they also served to consolidate and strengthen *horizontal* ties of community. Respondent MM4, now a professional working in downtown Johannesburg offices, describes to me her need for affiliation as follows: "But the most important thing ... is that you

¹⁵² Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

¹⁵³ Interview: JT1, Hartbeesfontein, 10 October, 2007.

¹⁵⁴ *Tsotsi* is a South African slang term meaning 'a member of a criminal gang'.

¹⁵⁵ Interview, LB1, Soweto, 31 August, 2007.

¹⁵⁶ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

become part of the community, and have a sense of belonging”.¹⁵⁷ Probing this issue in more depth, one of the interview questions that I asked, inquired as to how respondents would characterise their participation within a ‘community’. Respondent MN1 portrayed his sense of community as functioning along the lines of ‘pipelines of mutual support’.

Historically, you have strong relationships that built more community and less individualism. So that therefore provides the pipelines by which help can flow between those who have and those who don’t have, in a very natural way. And when it doesn’t happen, it then will ... break the ‘Africanness’ of the African value space, which is a very real threat. This transition, this multi-faceted [transition], part of its impact is to take relational people and make them individualistic. [This] therefore shuts down the *pipelines of mutual support*.¹⁵⁸

Moreover, whilst positive uses of these ‘pipelines of mutual support’ were frequently cited, one respondent also pointed to the use of these relational conduits as channels for negative types of reciprocity:

I think sometimes it’s negative. Sometimes it’s because: ‘We steal together; we mug people together’. ‘We beg together’ [or] we come from the same place. ... So it’s still very ‘family’ kind of based.¹⁵⁹

6.3.3.7 “It’s necessary change”

As South Africa itself has embarked on a process of transition that has been profoundly punctuated by the trends accompanying increasing urbanisation, so too have traditional mores of reciprocity been challenged and reconfigured in line with a new social landscape. Respondent NM1 surfaces the contours of these shifts in her narrative as follows:

Where my grandparents grew up, [there] the community was much more important. I mean literally it took a community to raise a child. If there was somebody who was suffering in the community, everybody had to help or to support. I know like my grandmothers, my father says, they would have 15 or 20 children at one time, and they would all eat together in one plate.

So [the] move now, with us, is where there’s this nuclear family, but you still have this connection with the extended family. You still support them, but with some very clear boundaries as to when you can do it and when you can’t. Whereas our kids are getting more individualistic, you know going to these private schools and being taught about you

¹⁵⁷ Interview: MM4, Hillbrow, 12 November, 2007.

¹⁵⁸ Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July, 2007.

¹⁵⁹ Interview: JB1, Parktown North, 14 August, 2007.

as an individual and whatever. I see our kids saying “Look, I have to look at my needs and I’ll help you as much as I can. I’ll support you, it’s my responsibility, but I also have to look at my needs and the needs of my children”.¹⁶⁰

It’s necessary change. It’s how our communities have been structured. Before with the community [focus], it used to work because if you struggling, the community will support you. But now, if you are struggling, you are on your own. So both the good and the bad, - you experience it on your own. Whereas during those times, both the bad and the good you experience it together. As much as you gave to the community, you also experience a lot. It wasn’t like they were opening up their hands and just taking. Even the poorest of people ha[d] something to offer to the community and to support. But here [now] you’re really having to fend for yourself. So we’re having to teach the children different ways of dealing with these issues and different ways of taking care of themselves.¹⁶¹

It is at this point that we take a closer look at how these processes of change are effecting the direction that respondent reciprocities are taking, altering as well as transmuting the social structures that house resource transfer mores. Essentially, the family of origin social structures previously described by respondents have been profoundly challenged by the forces of urbanisation, modernisation, and South Africa’s political transition as well as by the influences of increasing globalisation. Black communities in Gauteng reside at the fault lines of these changes, daily negotiating the choice of new allegiances to old formations or of old allegiances to new formations; these are the spaces which they inhabit and which compete for ascendancy within their *Circles of Solidarity*.

6.3.3.8 “You can’t take the whole village”

Having cited some of the structural configurations that respondents mentioned in regards to the support networks related to their families of origin, we now turn to the outworking of various forms of Affinity-based reciprocity as respondents experience them in their current households and community systems. The first thing to note is that changing residential arrangements and shifts in living conditions (inclusive of altered standards of living), have all heavily impacted on relational exchanges. By way of comparison, respondent ST1 describes the previous exchange mores in the township where he grew up, as follows:

¹⁶⁰ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

¹⁶¹ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

My experience growing up ... in the community, it's condensed living so everybody knows everybody. ... So you had this whole lot of community; your neighbour's right next to you, their parents, your friends, whatever the case might be. So you're always in each other's houses. Where you have a need – you know you can go and ask that person: “Don't you wanna borrow me a cup of sugar?” ... It's just there.¹⁶²

Now as a professional, respondent GM1 explores the new types of pressures and expectations that she feels are leveraged on her, particularly by extended family networks that still reside in rural or township contexts.

So it is for professionals – it is that contradiction; it's burdensome [and] it's confusing. You know why? Because [of] desperation and the new blood relatives. They are all so desperate. *But you can't take the whole village.* So the whole village is [still] looking on to you. ... But again, it's burdensome on the family because you know with a loose [in the 'Western-styled'] community, they don't expect [you to give]. But with the family [here in the townships] it's burdensome, because the relatives from both maternal and whatever, they are endless.¹⁶³

Another respondent, TT1, echoes the above sentiments:

You just feel the responsibility. ... It could be a burden if you don't want to do it. Because I know of people who might complain and say this is what my family expects of me. So I guess it all depends on how you were brought up and also wanting to help out, or not wanting to help out. But even if you don't want to help out, it's still expected of you to help your family back home. You have very few people who say “I can't” or “I won't”.

So you would sacrifice a whole lot that your peers have or that they need or what they have at the moment, to be able to help out at home. So it's not necessarily, I wouldn't call it a burden, but you're just torn sometimes to say “I need to take care of myself” ... So it can be a bit difficult sometimes when it's like that. ... So sometimes you're torn between taking care of yourself and actually giving to your family. And obviously, like I said, it's unspoken expectations and the family always wins.¹⁶⁴

6.3.3.9 “From ‘Village’, to ‘Town’, to ‘Township’, to ‘Suburb’”

As definitions of who is within and who is outside of these *Circles of Solidarity* have shifted geographically, so too have perceptions of responsibility.

¹⁶² Interview: ST1, Blackheath, 16 October, 2007.

¹⁶³ Interview: GM1, Soweto, 22 August, 2007.

¹⁶⁴ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

This whole Jo'burg [thing] of [suburban] walls. I can have a neighbour for three years and I still don't know who they are. Because they just come back from work – drive it into their home – and I never see them. In Zeerust [where I'm from] that never happens. ... When I'm at home, everybody knows I'm at home. So they notice that you not there, [or] they notice that you there. In Jo'burg, when I'm gone or if I'm sick, no one will know. ... That's how I'm raised; community based type of family setting. ... I think we don't do closed walls very easily.¹⁶⁵

Respondent NM1 comments that physical structures are now mimicking the internal dialogue that inhabits suburban residential structures.

But just the physical barriers have changed things because in the communities you sat together, you know, you didn't have these high walls and whatever, you were part of the community. The boundaries were [less]. So people just, you know, there were no fences or anything. Anybody came, it was very open. And I think what's happening to us internally - it's all actually .. you can see it physically in terms of the physical structures that we have. Like in the townships they still have the fences but not as high. So people still do come in now. In the suburbs they're like "Pshh! you don't come in here. You only come in if I give you permission to and according to my terms."¹⁶⁶

Describing for me what he sees as the impacts of the social dislocations that accompany spatial relocations, respondent SL1 reflects on changing patterns of 'community' over several generations.

That's when it gets exciting and interesting because we have to look at the context. If you look at the context of my grandparents' generation, it was a context where it was a *village*. A community for them was everyone who was in their village, so it was based on geography. Because they knew each other in the village, therefore you have a proverb that says "It takes a village to raise a child".¹⁶⁷

And then you come to the next generation ... who were the ones who *transitioned from village to town*. Growing up in the village and then started to *work in the towns*. The context with them was (we still have our parents in the villages) we need to help them and at the same time we have our own challenges here in town that we are faced with.

I think what makes it complex is that maybe you can even add 'township'. If you go to town ... it was very specific and you knew who your community was. *You come to 'township', [and] you're developing a new community* – this is happening in a matter of time and it's quicker than you expect it to be. When you get there you're trying to practice some of the values of the village but the environment is different.

¹⁶⁵ Interview, TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

¹⁶⁶ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

¹⁶⁷ This phrase "It takes a village to raise a child" was appropriated and popularised by U.S Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton.

And then *the fourth generation which is our generation now, we sort-of are almost detached ... [by moving to the suburbs]. We're sort-of linked to the village...and our parents and ...[but] we also have our new community. So then out of sharing you're faced with the challenge of "Who is my new community now?" So first you're using that 'sharing' to establish your new community. The people that I can trust, they are the ones that I can share with because by sharing I'm also expecting reciprocity on that.*

So [its] almost like we're developing a new community where we are now. So the way I would describe it is the community that we're forming now is based on the extended family and the friendships that you develop - that becomes your community and therefore it's no longer just geographically bound.¹⁶⁸

In my interview with her, MM4 recounted that these transactional exchanges were functioning like counter currents that were changing the very nature of 'traditional' locations.

The villages that I'm talking about, it's no longer a village that I used to know when I was still young. You can't say it's a village any more, you see, *people are taking town into the village.*¹⁶⁹

Here we observe that not only are the location of 'communities' shifting, but more importantly their functions are changing. Already a century ago Tonnies¹⁷⁰ made this observation with his distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* conceptions of community. He suggested that *Gemeinschaft* communities were those wherein the individual's needs were subsumed into the larger interests of the group, and where joint norms and values were then endorsed; *Gesellschaft* communities, on the other hand, were those in which the individual's interests remained paramount and therefore the loyalty of the individual to the group was conditional upon his/her needs being personally met within the context of the larger association. Moreover in the above narratives we observe a subtle change from socialities of *gemeinschaft* to relations of *gesellschaft*, these shifts also impacting on perceptions of how¹⁷¹ and where exchanges are meant to take place.

¹⁶⁸ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

¹⁶⁹ Interview: MM4, Hillbrow, 12 November, 2007.

¹⁷⁰ Harris, Jose (2001). *Ferdinand Tonnies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁷¹ Interview: TN1, Eikenhoff, 31 May, 2007.

Another Respondent, TN1, explained to me the complexities of trying to 'budget', even amidst the encroachments of extended family and community expectations. "The issue [is then] that it would affect my budget. And let me say, 'budget' in a Township context - it doesn't work. You budget and then the next thing somebody in the family says "come and see", and you see 'this is what has happened' [hardship or calamity]. Then you realise that you either harden your heart or you help, and then after you've helped it has messed up your budget."

6.3.3.10 “*The miniaturisation of community*”

Changes in the physicality of housing structures have also been accompanied by shifts in the internal architectures of relationship; these have been profoundly influenced by an increase in the nuclearisation of families as well as a rise in the ‘miniaturisation of community’. Respondent TN1 explained these simultaneous processes as follows:

The sad thing is that being urbanised, not only individuals but the ‘whole’ community, let’s say the whole Soweto, is urbanised. Then with the culture of consumerism, whatever form it takes – you find [that] there is a ‘*miniaturisation of community*’. ‘Ubuntu’, it slowly dwindles because of these things that are happening, [like] consumerism. It is there – it’s called ‘ubuntu’ but, you think it’s big [until] you compare it with the last 40 years and then you realise that we actually uh... we have.. it’s no longer there, we only use it for political rhetoric but it’s not there, it’s not there.¹⁷²

Respondent NM1 explains how this process of the ‘miniaturisation of community’ impacts the conflicting impulses that envelope black professionals, causing them on the one hand to feel the need for connection with their non-suburban extended family members whilst simultaneously requiring them to develop boundary-setting practices.

But for us, it’s from our families who expect that we have to give them something. When I mean families, I don’t mean in like your nuclear family - it’s your extended family, your cousins ... Everybody they kind of expect to do that. So my husband and I, we had to make a very conscious decision in terms of working with it as a couple. It’s almost like you have to plan it and have to make priorities and decide that - these are the people we can help, these are the people that we can’t help.

And you have to know how to create boundaries. Because I’ve seen a lot of people, even here in our organisations who are struggling financially; others are ‘black-listed’. [They are the black] middle class, [but] they just feel this pressure and they keep on giving, paying for people, some of them are using their money from their bonds to pay for people’s education. So it also creates a lot of conflict in families, in couples and in marriages because - your family pressurises you – [and in turn] you pressurise that [your financial bottom line]. I mean so we had to make a decision to say: “Look, if your family ask for the money, you talk to them and you tell them about the boundaries”... I must say we are not very popular (laughs) with our families, but they know that when the need is really there - we do give.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Interview: TN1, Eikenhoff, 31 May, 2007.

¹⁷³ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

6.3.4 Summary

- Gauteng's black professional respondents reside in the fissure lines between two twinned and yet conflicting impulses. On the one hand, customary *Economies of Affection* lie at the heart of reciprocal transactions that bolster normative scripts of obligation and solidarity amongst extended family networks of support. On the other hand, critical fractures influenced by urbanisation and the enhanced economic mobility for some black sectors, are contesting these influences and are rending apart the fabric of traditional social formations.
- Historically (within families of origin), respondents indicated that reciprocities have in a large part hinged on the strength and enmeshing power of resource flows within composite family structures that have been influenced by strong cultural mores as well as by collective and structural conditions of migrancy and economic contingency.
- More recently, these extended family support structures have been challenged by the influences of changing residential arrangements, increasing economic prospects (albeit only for some segments of the black population) and by the increasing nuclearisation of family units amongst the black middle classes.
- Running concurrently to the influences mentioned directly above, have been powerful forces which have served to re-entrench *Economy of Affection* ties. The fact that reciprocities have been experienced as both horizontal and vertical support pipelines means that they have become significant social currencies which have been used for both maintenance (pooling) and upliftment (clientelist) purposes. It is precisely because the meanings associated with giving have served these dual purposes that they have been able to maintain their prescriptive power as templates for the interaction between individual lives and collective trajectories.

6.4 Pressures from Below

6.4.1 Circle of Solidarity 2: Shared Experiences of Marginalisation

Having described respondents' reflections on the first filial level of our *Circles of Solidarity* model, we now turn to the next circle of primary solidarity, namely reciprocities that engage people or situations that exhibited some form of structural or physical disadvantage. Here attention is given to the importance and formative power of shared experiences of marginalisation.

This second *Circle of Solidarity* relates to giving which targeted situations/people who experienced some form of disadvantage¹⁷⁴ whether those be based on conditions of economic

¹⁷⁴ Reference is made here to an aggregate of 4 of the categories mentioned in survey Question # 50.

vulnerability (due to poverty, unemployment or lack of education), or physical disability (ascribed to a serious illness/health condition). Due to the historic legacy of Apartheid in this country, now coupled with the current HIV/AIDS pandemic, large swathes of the black population have found themselves (or members of their extended families) closely touched by one or several of the above-mentioned conditions of disadvantage.

6.4.2 Survey Data

Whilst respondents were found to inhabit the description of the ‘black educated’ with 77% percent of respondents having completed tertiary or higher (Honours, Masters and Doctoral) levels of education, yet most respondents did not come from families of origin that boasted these demographics; on average 41% percent of respondents had one or both parents who were either formally ‘non-skilled’ or ‘unemployed’.

What the above points to is that most respondents came from family-of-origin households that experienced profound economic marginalisations due to their parents being under-employed. Suffice it to say that the point here is that most respondents were in an age band that had first-hand experiences of pre-1994 structural disadvantage. In this regard, due to their own recent personal experiences of disenfranchisement, respondents demonstrated high levels of resonance and empathy for those segments of the population that yet existed on the economic fringe.

6.4.3 Interview Narratives

In addition to the survey data mentioned above, we now turn to the qualitative aspects of ‘shared experiences of marginalisation’ and through the lens of the interview narratives we explore how these dynamics impacted giving patterns.

6.4.3.1 *“I’m from there”*

As a senior health professional tasked with the oversight of a large government hospital department, respondent GM1 explained to me how her own experiences of marginalisation have influenced her current giving habits.

Every Wednesday the people that are living in Freedom Park, Wednesdays is mostly I think [the day] for refuse collection. So they come and dig in the dustbins. I know [this reality] ... when I grew up with my mother in Soweto we used to go and dig [too]. There used to be a big place, I remember, before the Municipality....where they used to dump

everything. And we used to go; we stayed there the whole day at the dump. I dug myself in the dump; your dustbin is cleaner because of this. ... Its old people, men, fresh, and old woman. So it is also satisfying that you know that, [now] once they dig, I'm bringing them bread, I'm bringing them meat, I'm looking at the mince-meat that has stayed over, you know whatever; I give them clothes. So every day, every Wednesday, I give.¹⁷⁵

So that kind of an experience, it made me who I am. Because if someone is going through [a] struggle in his life or her life, this person is really going through something terrible. Or [if] she goes without even eating, this person is poor. I know better how that person feels like, *because I'm from there*.¹⁷⁶

Respondent TM1 adds these comments:

Once you've been exposed to poverty, whether you [now] can be rich or whatever ... you [still] associate with people who are poor. You cannot talk about it, but you can feel it.¹⁷⁷

Not only were personal experiences of poverty influential in shaping respondents' giving behaviours, but also respondent giving behaviours served a 'memorialisation' function in terms of a recognition of where they had come from.¹⁷⁸ In these instances respondents frequently did not speak about poverty or HIV/AIDS directly but rather through metaphors and idioms; through these they indirectly solicited resonance with the sights, sounds and experiences associated with disenfranchisement.

Our language is rich sometimes, because of the way we say someone is poor. Necessarily you wouldn't say: "Someone is poor". [Instead] you would say: "The cat is on the stove". You know what it means? It means the stove is there, [but] it is never used for cooking [because there is no food to cook]. So the cat can just stay there on the stove because the stove is not functional.¹⁷⁹

For many respondents, due to conditions of poverty in their family of origin homes, 'cats' took on full-time 'residence' on their household stoves. However, this was certainly not the case for all respondent households. Some respondents described themselves as coming from

¹⁷⁵ Interview: GM1, Soweto, 22 August, 2007.

¹⁷⁶ Interview: SS1, Braampark, 19 November, 2007.

¹⁷⁷ Interview: TM1, Arcadia, Pretoria, 19 May, 2007.

¹⁷⁸ Frequently in South Africa yet today we see this same theme used persuasively in political rhetoric, almost as a 'badge of courage' in recognition of where people have come from and the marginalisations they have had to overcome. For an apropos example of this, see *The Star* article entitled 'Toe Line, Malema Warns Mabandla' of Thursday February 26, 2009. In it, Malema is quoted as saying: "We don't like Ministers who are 'up there'. We need people like Zuma who are down here on the ground, and who interact with us on a daily basis' Malema said as the crowd roared with approval."

¹⁷⁹ Interview: SS1, Braampark, 19 November, 2007.

backgrounds that were relatively stable¹⁸⁰ and as comparatively better off¹⁸¹ (SM1, EM1, VN1, NM1, LB1). Moreover while within the narratives of these comparatively ‘bourgeois’ families there still resided the strong theme of the ‘preferential choice for the poor’¹⁸² and disadvantaged, yet these respondents also freely vocalised their complaints about the direct impact that such reciprocities had on their pockets, discretionary income choices, and the added layer of interpersonal family stress associated with how and by whom these decisions were made.

6.4.3.2 “*Poverty smells*”

Three sentiments emerged as reoccurring themes within respondent narratives pertaining to their current preferential choice for the disadvantaged; firstly a strong ambivalence was voiced by respondents about the provisionary posture that black professionals were expected to take in this equation, secondly respondents felt that the process of setting ‘boundaries’ to expectations hoisted upon them - was a tremendously cumbersome and hazardous relational minefield, and lastly, some respondents felt that the ‘power meanings’ attached to money privileged givers with particular types of acquired statuses that were problematic.

As a professional in the medical field, respondent GM1 explained to me her ambivalence about being continually associated with, and irreducibly tied into, the poverty equation.

I mean at my cousin’s ... she stays at Melrose, she got married to this Doctor who’s in Limpopo. So we go and just want to become spoilt. You [attend these ‘elite’ events and you] just want to cut off the [poor] community; of seeing this community everyday, and of even going to Soweto. I’m tired of this [constant association with the poor]. I said “You know what, in our language they say ‘poverty smells’ – it means that! But it is not just the smell – it’s sticky. Ja, it sticks to you, [and] you want to get it off...”¹⁸³

Another respondent, NM1, describes to me how she and her husband work at attempting to set ‘boundaries’ within their giving networks, and the interpersonal stresses that accompany these types of negotiations.

¹⁸⁰ Households with two resident parents or two resident care-givers.

¹⁸¹ Households where both parents were educated and maintained fulltime ‘skilled’ or professional employment.

¹⁸² The term ‘preferential choice/option for the poor’ is a concept borrowed from Catholic Social Thought literatures. For more on this see the historic writings of St Augustine or the contemporary work of liberation theologian Juan Gutierrez from the South American context.

¹⁸³ Interview: GM1: Soweto, 22 August. 2007.

But then you have to learn to negotiate it and be able to set those clear boundaries. But if you haven't learnt within yourself to create boundaries ... I mean it was very difficult for us initially but our family members now know. ... But most of the middle class black people haven't learnt how to do that, you know, and so they move to the extremes where they completely withdraw from families and they feel guilty, or [they go] to the other extreme where they just give completely without concerning their [own] needs. Then there's a lot of fights in the family where the other one is saying "You are very unfair - you are giving to your family - I'm not giving to mine".¹⁸⁴

I was just talking to a colleague of mine who's having financial problems and he was saying that he has to visit his family every month [because] his mother expects him [to provide for her]. And he was saying, "I can't". He doesn't know how to communicate this to his mother, because the mother doesn't get it that, "I'm having financial problems and I can't come". So, he's moving [to] the extreme of saying "I just feel like not visiting them anymore". So I mean I think this is a really important topic...¹⁸⁵

Attached to practices of financial giving were also 'meanings' associated with recognition and power; reciprocities in this regard had the potential to function for givers as symbols of preferential status-enhancement.

You've got the middle class black people who grew up in sort of well-to-do families who are quite stable so, money was really never an issue for them. But there's others who grew up and [were] really struggling and under a lot of poverty, and money was a huge issue. I've been working with clients and [have] underestimated the emotional impact of living in a place where there's a lot of poverty. There is that void that people have, that -- you find that when they were poor as children they didn't have shoes to wear ... other kids laughed at them ... But what I've seen with some of those [previously poor] people is that money means something completely different to them - it's a definition of status, it's a definition of their value as human beings. And [so] sometimes I think people give just to prove their worth to people.

6.4.4 Summary

- Ongoing and entrenched conditions of poverty have added significantly to the care-giving load borne by black South African respondent households, particularly in the absence of a sufficiently provident state. In as much as since 1994 the state has attempted to deliver on mass opportunities for broad-scale social supports, (dispensing social grants to one quarter [12 million] of its citizens), still poverty rates of 53% percent (Poverty and Inequality Report 2004) necessitate that government rely heavily on extended family support networks within black communities to augment support functions.
- Moreover this reality has exacerbated the demands put on filial networks, causing added strain to already over-burdened family systems. In this regard, whilst the state has

¹⁸⁴ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2009.

¹⁸⁵ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2009.

renege on some of its vertical support functions, it has instead relied heavily on horizontal supports within families and communities.

- In response to these pressures, black professional respondents are reacting in a number of ways. More specifically, this study found that secondary to filial responsibilities, respondents' next giving priority actively engaged the needs of the physically or economically disadvantaged.¹⁸⁶ In this regard, respondents narrated scripts that spoke of their enmeshment in patterns of giving behaviour that were motivated out of either shared personal experiences of marginalisation, or alternately out of a collective resonance with the vulnerabilities inherent in historic conditions of structural disempowerment.
- Partnered with respondents narratives of giving, however, were increasing levels of vocalisation that highlighted their dissatisfaction with the provisional roles that they were expected to play within these equations. Many respondents expressed ambivalence with these obligatory provisioning postures and described the tension between their own personal advancement, and contributions towards others, as contradictory and sometimes competing interests. They also explained that reducing or setting 'boundaries' to provisioning mores induced substantial levels of interpersonal and community stress.
- Insofar as family networks have been enlisted to 'carry' and compensate for areas of slow or non-delivery by the state, respondents communicated that these dynamics have served to reinforce the expectation that reciprocities will continue to function as support lattices. The macro and state-level dynamics feeding these expectations only add to their effectiveness in becoming dominant narratives that prescribe and maintain particular types of social formations. In this regard the study's black professional respondents experienced pressure to activate reciprocities leveraged on them simultaneously both from *below* and *above*.

6.5 Pressures from Above

6.5.1 Circle of Solidarity 3: Faith and Political Affinities

The third *Circle of Solidarity* priority that ordered respondent giving patterns related to the 'Faith & Beliefs' aspects of *Economies of Affection*. This circle of affinities pivoted around respondent world-view proclivities, and captured a sense of their spiritual ideations and political associations. Grouped within this level of affinities were giving practices motivated by religious convictions, or by associations related to political¹⁸⁷ solidarities. In this regard, this segment of chapter 6 will focus on whether or not respondents' giving behaviours were primarily institutionally or non-institutionally aligned. Additionally investigated is how the interface

¹⁸⁶ This does not disregard the possibility that there can be an overlap between these two categories, i.e. relatives who are disadvantaged.

¹⁸⁷ Please note that chapter 6 primarily addresses political affiliation in terms of voting patterns and confidence or mistrust of *state institutional* powers. Chapter 8 will more thoroughly interrogate the role and history of 'Struggle' solidarities specific to the South African context, looking at how different generations have appropriated Struggle reciprocity motifs in a variety of ways.

between institutional pressures from ‘above’ (religion and state¹⁸⁸) and the non-institutional pressures from below (non-formal *Economies of Affection*) have shaped respondent reciprocities in particular ways.

6.5.2 Faith

We begin by first addressing the faith component, following which the political affinities part of this equation will be investigated in more depth in the section following this segment.

6.5.3 Survey Data

To start with, 81% percent of respondents stated that their religion ‘required’ of them that they give; some in the form of a tithe [Christian faith], some through Zakat almsgiving [Muslim faith] whilst others by means of sacrificial tributes [African traditional religions]. Giving levels were high in this regard particularly because these sharing practices were coupled with generally strong levels of confidence expressed in religious institutions themselves. 55% percent of respondents stated that if asked: ‘Who would you first approach to start a community upliftment programme?’ their first choice would be to approach a religious institution.¹⁸⁹ Additionally, 80% percent of respondents stated that they felt that civic groups (inclusive of religious institutions as well as NGOs) were ‘effective’ partners in helping to alleviate poverty. Moreover, in comparison to other potential partners in the national ‘upliftment’ agenda (such as government, business, or foreign donors), religious institutions and faith ideations featured as primary influencers on a number of significant levels.

6.5.4 Interview Narratives

Firstly, respondents narrated their experiences of voluntary giving within religious establishments, and Churches in particular, in ways that deconstructed them from their institutional frameworks. They did this by means of suggesting that Churches were an aggregate of ‘sharing people’, as opposed to viewing them as ‘institutions’ as such. In this regard a majority of respondents re-affirmed their belief in the priority of religious and collective sharing but simultaneously communicated their distrust of formalised institutions per se.

¹⁸⁸ Albeit it may be important to add here ‘political party’ as another point of pressure.

¹⁸⁹ This information emanates from survey Question #32 which also provided respondents with 12 other options of community, government or business entities to approach when initiating an upliftment project. Particularly striking were how low levels of confidence were in government as a partner in this regard.

Secondly conveyed (across the span of diverse religious beliefs) was the importance of providing a base-level of subsistence for all; this was communicated through the assertion that *all* of humanity was made in ‘God’s image’ and thus the expectation was that religious institutions in particular should be a conduit through which this fundamental level of ‘sharing’ should flow. This dynamic highlighted the finding that respondents tended to have high levels of confidence in religious structures because they viewed them as yet another type of social support network. Running counter to this, was the finding that respondents’ association with and relationship to, government institutions were much more distrustful and ambivalent.

6.5.4.1 “*Collective Giving*”

An HIV/AIDS NGO manager and part-time student, VM1, tells me that his confidence lies not in the structures of religious institutions themselves, but rather in the connectivities of members, suggesting that therein rests the locus of power.

Let me put it this way, [I have confidence] not in a formal sense of the church. ... I have confidence more in terms of it as a helping community, more individual than as an organised structure in terms of church. But then I would say that it’s more [about the power in] community church members outside the formal structure of the church. ... So it’s not really a religious structure that you align yourself with... but it’s the individuals and those strong relationships who you happen to have connected with. So it’s not the structure that you have allegiance to, it’s actually the people.¹⁹⁰

As a lay parish minister in her diocese in Pretoria, respondent TM1 describes to me the ‘collective’ nature of her engagement with giving through her Church. She portrays these giving practices as effective not because they represent formalised institutional clout, but rather because they hold the aggregate power of an ethos that values the collective, even in the *way* that it goes about sharing.

Interviewer: If you belong to a particular ‘faith’ or ‘religion’, does this influence your giving, and if so how?

TM1 – I guess in a way it does because *we’re doing it now as a ‘collective’*. There’s that ‘collective’ giving that we’re doing and you don’t feel like you’re doing it alone. So there’s a number of people who are doing it together with you, and that’s a relief.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Interview: VM1, Ruimsig, 25 May, 2007.

¹⁹¹ Interview: TM1, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 19 May, 2007.

In these instances and others (SM1, TT1, LB1, TM1, SL1, VM1JT1, MM3, MP1) respondent narratives signalled their investment in reciprocities as forms of joint action, but they repeatedly resisted having this aggregate power associated solely with the confines of formal institutional frameworks. This dynamic is noted here because it has significant impact on how respondents viewed institutional (macro-level) giving as opposed to individual one-on-one (micro-level) reciprocity interactions.

6.5.4.2 “*We impact by giving*”

As a young up-and-coming sales consultant at a competitive telecommunications company, respondent SM1 tells me that he feels that in fact “giving is the essence of my religion” in the sense that sharing is fundamental to his perceptions of faith. He communicates that he feels that this *sharing script* also shapes the reach and impact of his religion.

I think the first thing that we Christians are known for, [or] should be known for, is ‘giving’. And because we are the people, we are driven by love and love in itself it has to be shown. You cannot love until you are able to share and give, whether pleasure, time, money, resources and everything. So my faith and my principles, they have largely made me to understand that *unless you are able to give, your faith is basically worthless*.

We don’t have particular influence and impact on people, [unless] *we impact by ‘giving’*. So basically that’s what I’ve learned; this is all about giving [to] people and making them aware that the way for them to see God is when I give. And then for them to be able to say “I’ve seen” because of what you’ve done. So my belief system has [then] impacted.¹⁹²

Again here in the religious realm we see the use of ‘giving’ as a social currency; moreover a script which follows a ‘Scriptural’ text, but one which nonetheless is construed to have power and worth because it is seen to actively conjoin exchanges across a whole network of people.

6.5.4.3 “*Disassociating ourselves from other creations of God, it’s ungodly*”

Within the arena of faith, not only was sharing twinned with the power and influence of networks of exchange, but it was also purported to bridge economic divides, a subject to which we will turn more extensively in chapter 7. Meanwhile, suffice it to say that respondents suggested that giving as a religious ritual functioned as a mechanism that successfully lessened

¹⁹² Interview: SM1, Fairland, 23 May, 2007.

the impacts of economic fissures in useful ways. JR1, an older Muslim respondent who lives in Soweto, explained it to me this way:

Now when you look at what they're [Muslims are] wearing [full burqa/thobe garb] it's difficult to say, "Hey, but this one comes from [a] rich family and this one comes from [poverty]". And that goes with the belief that before God we are all equal, there is no lawyer, doctor, rich, poor and all that. We are all created in the image of God, we are the same - and that was a very striking message for me, yes, indeed. And a guy I was standing next to during the [daily 'Salah'] Prayers was an Advocate but I could not see [it]; I could [just] see in him a human being.¹⁹³

The power of religious giving to unleash the solidarities of a common 'humanity' or 'ubuntu', were also exhibited in the narrative of MM3 who stays in Pretoria where he works as a senior official in the Government Pensions programme. He suggested to me that as economic inequalities increase, religious scripts function as a type of moral conscience in the face of rising disparities.

More and more of those people who did not 'have', who now 'have', are moving away from the environment in which [was that poverty], that environment which is associated with deprivation. So, [all] the more, [this] now speeds up this accumulation. You'll be now not only living in the formerly 'white' suburb, but you are going to go now in an estate and so on. You're closing yourself off from the rest of those [poor]... And, some see nothing wrong with that, you know. I have acquired this through my own devices. And they don't even think that now, there is someone up there who is actually looking over us, who is actually guiding us in some of these things. We tend also to forget about that thing, you know, to forget about the fact that now, we are all the creatures of God, and that *dissociating ourselves from other creations of God, -- it's ungodly*.¹⁹⁴

Look, the challenge we have is this success; this money – it pulls you. We've got push and pull; it's like people want more and more. And then you do tend to forget where you come from and [about] giving back. But I think [true] Christianity pulls you back and reminds you.¹⁹⁵

6.5.5 Political Associations

In the second part of the 'Faith and Beliefs' *Circle of Solidarity*, attention is given to types and levels of political affiliation and the role that notions of 'nation' play in conscripting people's giving habits. Do indeed conceptions of 'national identity' hold as much sway now as they did in

¹⁹³ Interview: JR1, Soweto, 28 November, 2007.

¹⁹⁴ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

¹⁹⁵ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

1994 South Africa, and why or how may changes in these perceptions be influencing the contours of shifting giving patterns amongst respondents?

Not only do the particularities of the South African context weigh in on these issues, but also global trends hold sway in influencing the broader panoramic view. Homi Bhabha (1990) characterises the contemporary era as one of cultural hybridity and fragmentation, notions which undercut the cultural homogeneity upon which ‘nation-states’ were once formed. But Bhabha’s polemic is problematic insofar as it does not account for the contemporary resurgence, even persistence in the South African setting particularly, of “nationhood as a form of belonging” (Croucher 2004: 99).

Moreover, this discussion is nested in a dialectic that suggests that whilst many literatures purport the diminishing impact of the geo-political boundaries of lone nation-states (Aretxaga 2004; Croucher 2004; Delanty & O’Mahony 2002; Castells 2001), yet it is important to note as Burawoy (2000: 348) reminds us, that the current global condition wrestles with the *pre-existing* state as opposed to a *non-existent* state. In this regard, Burawoy (2000: 348) suggests that “we speak of supranational forces, transnational connections, and post-national imaginations to underline the repositioning rather than the demise of the nation state.” The findings of this thesis in the Gauteng context, suggest that the crux of the matter lies somewhere in between these two stances, more especially in grappling with the failures of the nation-state, and in so doing drawing attention to both its demise and its repositioning instincts, both of which influence giving patterns.

6.5.6 Survey Data

One of the key functions of the survey instrument was to gather information that could inform both our understanding of respondents’ *micro-level* behaviours, and their beliefs and primary associations on the *macro-level*; this included an investigation of how respondents’ political associations impacted their sharing habits and giving priorities.

In terms of voting patterns, the survey revealed that respondent confidence levels in the political process as a whole, as well as the African National Congress in particular, fell between 1994 and 2004. Whilst 61% percent of respondents said they voted for the ANC in 1994, only 55%

percent said that they would again vote for the ANC. Of the remaining number of respondents who did vote, their votes were spread out quite evenly (approximately 3% percent each) between the SACP (South African Communist Party), AZAPO (Azanian People's Organisation), the ACDP (African Christian Democrat Party), the DA (democratic Alliance), the ID (Independent Democrats), and the PAC (Pan African Congress at 6% percent).

When projecting towards the future, 29% percent of respondents said they did not know who they would vote for in the next elections, confirming a possible shift in the wind in regards to these black professionals' political allegiances, as well as signalling their growing level of dissatisfaction with the current state of political affairs. Additionally, when asked what level of confidence they had in the current government's ability to successfully address the nation's most pressing issues¹⁹⁶ (indicated through a 'high', 'medium' or 'low' ranking), 82% percent of respondents communicated 'low' levels of confidence, 18% percent stated they had 'medium' levels of confidence and no respondents whatsoever indicated 'high' levels of confidence.

Adding nuanced dimensions to the above, were two additional findings. Firstly, 80% percent of respondents indicated that they believed that in terms of priorities, the current government was "most concerned with the interests of the rich". Coupled with this, however, was another, seemingly contradictory finding: when asked whether they felt "It is government's responsibility to help the poor, not mine", a striking 100% percent of respondents responded in the negative. An analysis of these two questions, when put in tandem one with the other, reveals that whilst respondents found government to be somewhat unresponsive to the needs of the poor, simultaneously respondents indicating that they felt that they themselves had an active responsibility and role to play in poverty alleviation in their own circles of kinship, influence, and allegiance.

6.5.7 Interview Narratives

Whilst the survey data in this study did not intend to imply a causative or significant relationship between government's non-delivery and respondents' sense of obligation to give, yet the interview narratives most assuredly marked a definitive relationship between these two

¹⁹⁶ As a point of interest, respondents indicated that they felt the following issues (listed by order of importance) should be the national priorities: (1) Unemployment, (2) Disease Pandemics and Crime/Safety (equally represented), (3) Poverty, (4) Spiritual/Psychological Health, and (5) Housing.

dynamics. Moreover, material emerging from respondent interviews shed light on the survey results, and demonstrated symbiotic patterns of interconnection between respondent perceptions of government's performance levels (or lack thereof) and respondent sharing behaviours.

6.5.7.1 *"The institution that we thought would help, is the institution that is now blocking us"*

As a once active 'comrade' in Kagiso on the West Rand, TM1 explains to me how she now feels betrayed by the very government she voted into power.

I guess I'm disillusioned, mostly within government. [There are a] number of people who are in government [that] I used to work with in the past. And I've seen how they've changed, how their value system and everything have just changed, drastically. And I think maybe [I'm] disillusioned and angry at them for not necessarily making it easy for people to get access to resources that are available within government. And I guess those ... things makes me very angry and I wouldn't give to government because I know "What is the use of giving to an institution that is also wasteful?"

Maybe as well, because I've worked in an NGO-world, in the past before the 1994, there was funding coming directly from outside donors to NGOs and so on. During that time NGOs were prospering, there were a lot of community-development projects and programmes in the communities and it was very helpful and people were actually noticing and feeling the support of the donor money and so on. And since the donors decided to link with government, everything just went down¹⁹⁷ - Psheew ! And for me that was an unfortunate situation that *the institution that we thought would help [us], is [now] the institution that is blocking [us]*. So I can't; I don't see why. If [I have] my small pennies, I wouldn't take a penny to government.¹⁹⁸

Another respondent, TS1 also expresses his disillusionment with the trajectory of the current government, purporting that the state's 'double-speak' creates standards of non-parity between its various constituencies.

I think in the whole new system, new South Africa, even from a national point of view, it's been more of the government going to the rich people, and speaking of black empowerment, affirmative action, accelerated growth and then going to the poor, and telling them "Vuka uzenzele", meaning, you know "Stand up and do it yourself". So it's almost as if the system in itself creates some kind of division where, to the Tokyo Sexwales, it's easy for them. But to someone in Sweet Water squatter camp the story is "Surely you can do something on your own" - That's just the way.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Moreover the direct and effective link between grass-roots NGO's and foreign donors was mentioned by a number of respondents, particularly as juxtaposed to what were perceived to be the inefficiencies of government's links to external donors.

¹⁹⁸ Interview: TM1, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 19 May, 2007.

¹⁹⁹ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

When I met with TT1 at the offices where she works, she talked to me about her current ‘party’ loyalty as a thing birthed out of a fear of change, and an uncertainty regarding what other viable options she had.

I know that most black people would not vote for any other party except what’s in the government right now, for the fear of going back to the Apartheid era. So even if you can see that certain things are not quite working like they are supposed to - [because of] your fear, you don’t want to get out of the present ruling government ... So it’s loyalty and commitment based on the fact that “I don’t know what the future holds, and I would rather have what I know”. Even though they are not doing what I would rather have them do, [its better] than risk going back to the Apartheid system.²⁰⁰

As an engineer working in Parktown North, respondent SL1 delineates how he feels that government’s abuse of power has motivated him to give his philanthropic time and resources to individual ‘micro-level’ causes.

I feel it’s also linked to the abuse of power. If you give, you’re giving to a very powerful structure which can end up just abusing like the previous government have abused the powers they had. So rather help people [on] an individual local level rather than a structure that is not meeting their needs.²⁰¹

Another respondent, a high ranking ecumenical figure, further explores with me the roots of this mistrust of state institutional structures.

Here’s my gut feel about that - I think that the institutions of government, the whole way in which democracy works, is still very alien to people. So it is not part of their chosen responses ... they have to develop the trust levels. There isn’t a history ... I suspect that with time, people might very well feel that that’s the way it go[es]. So institutions, the institutional way of solving problems I think is by and large still a foreign thing.²⁰²

6.5.7.2 “With ‘macro’ level giving, the money gets absorbed by other things”

Many respondents delineated other reasons as well for their mistrust of state and institutional structures, citing inefficiencies, lack of consultation with constituencies, and corruption, as problematic aspects of the current government.

²⁰⁰ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

²⁰¹ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

²⁰² Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July 2007.

Respondent LB1, a doctor at Baragwanath Hospital, expressed her disappointment to me about how ‘macro-level’ funds get dissipated along the way before reaching their intended beneficiaries.

Look, *with ‘macro’ giving, money gets absorbed by other things*; the point gets lost – the people – the issues, are completely lost. There’s people that get paid along the way. ... You can’t earn charity, you gotta earn a living. ... So the money dwindles. By the time it gets to the people it’s suppose to help, there’s what? A package of fifty rand per family per month.

So, [that is] different to me coming and saying I don’t have a lot of money but I can afford to buy a sack of mealie-meal and this and that, and spend a thousand rand for a family that will sustain them for the whole month. Because, I understand the issues in that family, you know.²⁰³

Another reason cited for lack of confidence in government was inefficiencies related to multiple layers of government that did not effectively coordinate their services.

I do have problems with the structure. If one could do proper research one would look at “Is there a need for ‘provincial’ government? Could things maybe be accelerated if you had [just] ‘national’ and ‘local’ government?” ... Because of bureaucracy corruption is thriving because of government structures not being effective. So, is there a way of things being more localised, community-based, involving more communities in terms of making decisions on service delivery? That’s what I’m pushing for basically.²⁰⁴

Respondent SM1 echoes the above sentiments by pointing to what he sees as the positive track-record of grass-roots NGOs, this performance record featuring much more saliently in his mind (than government) as a viable conduit for community upliftment. His comments reflect participants’ responses in a broader sense insofar as 80% percent of respondents answered in the affirmative when asked whether most religious/civic/NGO groups effectively help the poor.

SM1 explains these dynamics this way:

Mostly I’d say I would have confidence in placing my, let’s say money if I need to give it, to NGOs ... maybe they’re doing like some HIV/AIDS-work or dealing with poverty relief, [or] hunger, whatever it may be, maybe assisting the educational matters and everything. ... Because the government in most cases, I really don’t think they’re really, according to my observing, has not been that good.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Interview, LB1, Soweto, 31 August, 2007.

²⁰⁴ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

²⁰⁵ Interview: SM1, Fairland, 23 May, 2007.

6.5.7.3 *“I don’t think the government will reach me where I am. I think you have to do something where you are.”*

Respondent JT1 lives in Soweto, holds a job in the suburbs, and commutes daily between the two. She tells me that in her giving she strongly believes in entrepreneurial activation at the grass-roots level.

We can’t just sit and expect somebody somewhere to come help us. We have to do something wherever we are. ... I think the government is doing something [but] there are a lot of people out there. But I also think that we as individuals have to do something, ja. ... *I don’t even think the government will reach me where I am. I think that you have to do something where you are.*²⁰⁶

Another respondent, who has adopted two children into his own household, suggests that he sees it as his civic and religious duty to ‘support others’, regardless of what provisions government is, or isn’t, supplying.

Government is doing, [but] they can do more. Government has always capacity to can do more, we need to support it *and* always challenge it. But then as an individual, it doesn’t mean to say that [just because] I pay tax I can’t do it [still give within the community]. We are not designed and born, as a faith person it’s my own individual responsibility to carry another person; to support over and above what government does. So I believe that as an individual it’s my responsibility to help, without necessarily looking at what government is doing.²⁰⁷

6.5.7.4 *“Well at a macro level, it’s not happening quick enough”*

Lastly, some respondents pointed out the need for both micro and macro redistribution interventions that would result in community upliftment on multiple levels. This did not however seem to diminish respondents’ own sense of responsibility towards being an integral part of the provisionary equation themselves.

As an aspiring young black female accountant, TT1 tells me that she supports both macro and micro level redistribution efforts, but she explains that she feels her individual-level giving is still critical because it purports a strong ‘relational accountability’ that is lacking at the institutional level.

I would say both [macro and micro level interventions are necessary] and I’m gonna explain why. I think micro, the small one for the day-to-day living. But I think once in a while we do need the government or a big corporation to give into your community. And

²⁰⁶ Interview: JT1, Hartebeesfontein, 10 October, 2007.

²⁰⁷ Interview: VM1, Ruimsig, 25 May, 2007.

the reason I personally prefer the one-to-one [individual level giving] is I can control that - I can be accountable to that better, I can follow up better. Whereas if it's a big company giving money, they're not following up. You don't know at the end of the day what's happening to that money. So you find either money is misused or it wasn't done the way it was supposed to be done.²⁰⁸

MM3, a struggle hero and survivor of over a decade on Robben Island, suggests that delays in macro level changes mean that his micro level giving (in the form of mentoring) is all the more necessary in the interim.

*Well at a macro level it's not happening quick enough. But ... some of these things they need macro intervention. Ja, I would rather say both, because I think it is at the individual level that I can perhaps influence certain things that need to be done. So individual level - micro, and [from there] we would impact on the macro. ...*²⁰⁹

Lastly MP1, the 'Democracy Unit' leader at a well-known NGO, brings the conversation full circle by explaining that he feels a civic as well as religious responsibility to 'give back'; in his words, he thus becomes a "co-creator" in the national trajectory.

If I was going to be part of the solution immediately, I can actually see the results today. Not after thirty years or so. But also part of my story has been governed by the Bible where it teaches me to be a co-creator. Co-creator means that working together with God and government. So the government should do their part you know. [And] I am *also* having to be doing my part of the story.²¹⁰

6.5.8 Summary

- In this section of chapter 6 we specifically looked at faith and political affiliations, noting that whilst extended family and the disadvantaged came first and second respectively as giving predilections, the third giving priority identified by respondents related to the larger arena of religious and political association. In this regard the first of these findings related to respondents' faith-based contributions: significant levels of religious giving were found prevalent²¹¹, as were also overall high²¹² ratings of confidence in religious institutions as effective conduits for poverty alleviation.

²⁰⁸ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

²⁰⁹ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

²¹⁰ Interview, MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

²¹¹ For example, this thesis survey found respondents giving away 3.18% percent of their income to religious causes. This amounts to nearly 3 times the average amongst middle class Americans in the United States, who give only 1.2% percent of their income away (Christian Giving Trends n.d.).

²¹² In answer to survey Question # 53, the five entities rated as the 'most effective' in using charitable contributions were the following by order of efficacy: #1 – Religious organisations, #2 – The individual poor person themselves, #3 – The community or family affected by the problem, #4 – Big business, #5 – Charitable community leaders. The other three categories of government, international donors, and local businesses received no endorsements in this regard.

- Twinned with the above, were respondent narratives that tended to extricate religious organisations out of their institutional frameworks and instead speak of their value as another type of social support network. Churches in particular were identified as sites for social and material resource exchanges, processes that resided within the ambit of highly interactive membership systems. In this regard, whilst respondents' faith-based giving could in some senses be construed as institutionally-aligned, yet respondents themselves did not view it as such. Rather they suggested that the meaning and significance of their religious giving lies in its locus of power as a collective, but non-formal, network of support.
- The second aspect explored in this section related to political affiliations. In terms of voting patterns, the survey revealed that amongst the sample group confidence levels in both the political process as a whole, and the African National Congress in particular, fell between 1994 and 2004. When projecting towards the future, 29% percent of respondents said they did not know who they would vote for in the next elections, confirming a possible shift in the wind in regards to black professionals' political allegiances, as well as signalling respondents growing level of dissatisfaction with the current state of political affairs in the nation.
- This research additionally found that confidence levels in the effectiveness of current governance systems were at overall low levels²¹³ amongst respondents, and that these were twinned with narratives that communicated a general mistrust of state institutional powers more generally. Ambivalence towards the current government in power was cited in relation to slow or failing delivery systems, corruption, and lack of effective consultation with constituencies. In light of this, respondents communicated that they felt the responsibility to personally activate reciprocities and work towards poverty alleviation within their own circles of relationship and influence.
- In conclusion, reciprocity pressures from 'above' were identified in this *Circle of Solidarity* as emanating from both faith and state quarters. These were seen as effective points of leverage because of three concurrent processes of 'decoupling' that were found to profoundly impact on respondents:
 - (1) The decoupling of faith-based giving practices from institutional forms: religious giving was primarily viewed as a conduit for informal networked mutual support.
 - (2) The decoupling of state and nation²¹⁴: simultaneous to a lack of confidence in and mistrust of state governance institutions, was communicated the strong need for a sense of 'belonging' and nationhood.
 - (3) The decoupling of citizenship and nationality: while social citizenship rights and responsibilities featured saliently in both religious and civic narratives, few respondents spoke of these as conjoined with their sense of national identity but rather spoke of these as separate repositories found in religious or cultural identity.

²¹³ As regarding the top 10 national 'issues' facing the nation (survey Question #34), 82% percent of respondents said that they had did not feel the government was successfully addressing these issues.

²¹⁴ For more on this, see Delanty and O'Mahoney's text *Nationalism and Social Theory* (2002: 169).

6.6 Pressures from ‘With-Out’

6.6.1 Circle of Solidarity 4: Race and Cultural Affinities

The fourth and last *Circle of Solidarity* which reflected respondent sharing practices related to race and cultural affinities. To what extent did or did not respondents use the criteria of race and/or culture as selective traits that determined who their recipients would be? More importantly, how relevant did respondents feel that these categories still were as primary identifiers in their and others’ lives? These questions feature substantially in this section insofar as they surface the ‘primary allegiance’ component of the *Economy of Affection* rubric used in this chapter, delineating more thoroughly how respondents decided who was ‘within’ or ‘with-out’ of their giving priorities.

Within the following segment of this chapter we will first investigate the dynamics behind any impacts that *race* had on respondent giving behaviours, following that with a brief discussion on respondent perceptions regarding the influence of *culture* on their sharing practices.

Moreover, this research found that while the influence of race as a primary giving identifier was notably receding over time, the power of culture to shape reciprocity behaviours was still very much alive and powerful precisely because of its versatile ability to morph and recreate itself into new formats.

6.6.2 Race

Race has been a contested subject in the history of South Africa on a number of levels; not only as regards the ‘making’ of a construct of binaries (Posel 1991), but also in terms of the absurdities that inhabited Apartheid’s racial classification system (Posel 2001: 585). In this regard ‘race’ was tagged as a primary identifier both from within (demonstrated by communities themselves) and from without (by a state and legal system that had the power to enforce the jurisprudence of these bifurcations).

Whilst ‘race’ issues have continued to play out in various forms of exhibitionist ‘theatre’ on the nation’s public stage (Bozzoli, 2004), these identities have been used as political instrumentalities as opposed to just personal descriptors. Supporting this observation was the survey research done between 1997 and 2000 by the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). In their study, the HSRC found a substantial drop in the use of ‘race’ as a

primary sub-national identity; whereas in 1997 47% percent of respondents described themselves in terms of racial categories, by 2000 the figure had decreased to a mere 12% percent (Alexander 2005: 11). According to the HSRC authors, race was thus decreasing as a personal identifier whilst a whole range of other individual personal descriptors were gaining ascendancy in a growing process of personalisation (Klandermans, Roefs & Olivier 2001).

If, as mentioned above, ‘race’ is decreasing its hold on personal identities, can we likewise also confirm its relinquishing grip as a motivator for respondent giving? The findings of this research would answer this question in the affirmative, citing both survey results that demonstrated that ‘race’ was the last giving priority mentioned, and interview narratives that explained why.

6.6.3 Survey Data

Two sets of survey responses²¹⁵ investigated the issue of race-based giving in this study. The outcome of survey questions #50, (as previously showcased in Graphic 6.1) found that of the eight giving priorities identified, ‘race’ was found to be the very last motivation given by respondents as to why they would decide to give to others. It was also found to be the priority with the strongest level of support for it being placed where it was in the priority continuum – at the end.

Pushing the race issue out further, and adding in the dynamic of sharing with persons not known to the respondent (i.e. ‘beggars’), an additional question²¹⁶ posed this statement: “I only give to beggars who are of the same race as me”. 86% percent of respondents answered in the negative, intimating that race was also not a primary consideration when giving to beggars. Moreover, whether the beneficiary was either known or unknown to the respondent, in both instances a vast majority of participants indicated that ‘race’ in and of itself was not a primary reason for why or who they gave to.

6.6.4 Interview Narratives

In order to shed light on the meanings attached to these findings, interview questions were also used to more thoroughly interrogate race matters. Information gleaned from respondent narratives surfaced several interesting patterns.

²¹⁵ This refers to Question # 39(s) of the survey instrument as well as Question # 50.

²¹⁶ Question # 39(s) refers here.

- Firstly, respondents frequently twinned the ‘race’ construct with the ‘disadvantage’ construct, suggesting that *this linkage* was the factor that gave ‘race’ its power to shape reciprocities; when racial identity was deconstructed without the presence of disadvantage, it no longer served as a giving motivation.
- Secondly, when resistance to sharing across racial divides was mentioned (i.e. black people sharing with impoverished whites), poverty was construed as an outgrowth of instances where communities did not “work together collectively” to care for their own members. Moreover within race groups, reciprocities were still seen as a natural and expected mechanism for ameliorating poverty and need.
- Thirdly, respondents said that increasingly they were being challenged to see “beyond race” divides and to grapple with multiple other identities/communities that were vulnerable to marginalisations; this indicated movement in the direction of other fissures (possibly ‘class’ and ‘ethnicity’ as opposed to ‘race’) becoming potential flash points of conflict in the national discourse.

6.6.4.1 “*The meaning of being ‘black’, is that you have some poor people in your household*”

Meeting with me in the lower levels of an office building facing one of downtown Johannesburg’s landmark hotels, respondent MN1 talks to me about the historic ‘experience’ of race in this country. He suggests that accompanying the economic advancements that black professionals have experienced since 1994, has come a type of cognitive and social dissonance; what are the current scripts for how successful black entrepreneurs are expected to engage with extended family members still enmeshed in the grips of poverty?

I often say to people that one of the reasons I don’t understand black people who drive very expensive cars is – I don’t know how they do it. *The meaning of being black is that you have some poor people in your household.* That is, it’s the history. It’s a historical legacy of what it means to be black. So in the extended family, for everyone who becomes rich so to speak, you can bet your last dollar, there are the cousins and aunts who have got nothing to eat, who are [still] in such and such a situation. So, when such a person decides that we’ll buy a car that is about half a million or more - I don’t know what they do with their cousins? What [do] they do?! So, the only way you can do that is to shut yourself [off] in the nuclear arrangement; [and] that then becomes [un]‘African’. ... So, but for me, I’m locked within the context then of relationships where ... I always have this sense that there is just so much to clear [up] around my doorstep here.²¹⁷

Another respondent, a lawyer by profession, explains to me how he sees racial identity as still conjoined with economic identity in the law department of one of Gauteng’s leading universities.

It’s race and what people have benefited from. ... [but] in the long shot, it might be a class issue. In this country you cannot separate the two. I mean the, you have the, like

²¹⁷ Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July, 2007.

junior personnel in my department, both black and white, all whites are driving [vehicles], all blacks are not. Something you cannot run away from. I also don't think my kids would be at rest, because my kids' cousins would still be staying in poor neighbourhoods. And they would ask: "But why's it that my cousins don't have a swimming pool at their areas? But Michael's cousin [who] is my class mate, all of them have a swimming pool - Is it because they are white?" That's where it comes in.²¹⁸

6.6.4.2 "I'm challenged to think beyond just the black people"

Respondent TS1 tells me about his reticence to share with white people; his reflections on this issue uncover his own assumption that "working together collectively" (reciprocities in action) is the best mechanism to rescind the grips of poverty. Inasmuch it also surfaces another assumption: that reciprocities should be used to bridge economic divides but that in his experience this happens generally 'within' race groups.

And then in terms of race, I don't think that there is anything that has really changed from my own side. I think I am still struggling. I still struggle to give to a white person, not necessarily struggle but there's more of [the feeling that]: "Surely all this white people that have so much resources can at least drive at a corner and see their white brothers begging and surely they can do something without feeling it." So, I don't know, it's just maybe anger directed at that to say –"What is happening? Can't they get to a point where they just realise that: there's kind of a perception that surely if they worked together collectively maintaining the system they can surely do that [provide for their white compatriots] as well."²¹⁹

Lastly, respondent SL1 talks to me about the changes he sees emerging in his own mindset regarding historic racial categorisations and the way that these constructs are diminishing as singular giving qualifiers.

I've also been challenged to think beyond just 'black people' and acknowledging that within the black sector [there is poverty *as well* as affluence] in the way that people classify themselves. The need [poverty] is there within the coloured people, within the Indians, and also the need within the white people. So *I'm challenged to think beyond just the black people*.

Within the hot-pot of positional jockeying that is currently occurring in South Africa, several things are becoming increasingly clear. Whilst the racial categorisation of 'black' was historically a primary economic as well as political identifier, it no longer carries the strength that it previously did as a solely economic exclusionary motif of disadvantage (in fact the reverse

²¹⁸ Interview: TM1, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

²¹⁹ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

may in many instances be the case). More importantly, particularly within the arena of the struggle against economic marginalisation, new class identities are being formed as old racial identities are being incrementally dissembled. Additionally, particular ethnic identities are now also surfacing as significant factors that are increasingly taking precedence over racial affinities. The findings of this research evidence, however, that one of the singular (albeit tenuous) strands that is still tying racial and ethnic identities together, are traditional cultural mores of reciprocity – the subject to which we will turn next.

6.6.5 Culture

Goran Hyden’s definition of an ‘*Economy of Affection*’ purports two principal aspects. Firstly he asserts that through support networks, *Economies of Affection* “link together in a systematic fashion a variety of discrete economic and social units”, and secondly he suggests that these linkages often function as “invisible organisations” (Hyden 1983: 8-9). Cultural mores fulfill both of the above functions by creating protocols that link together various sectors and groups in structured ways, and additionally by accomplishing this task through ‘hidden transcripts’ which though often implicit, still robustly govern social norms. Culture is inextricably at the heart of *Economy of Affection* norms and regulatory traditions, and as such cannot be excluded from our discussion.

6.6.6 Survey Data

Question # 40 of the survey instrument specifically asked respondents to write down in the spaces provided “sayings, slogans or proverbs” from their cultural background that they felt epitomised the reciprocity ethic. This was in order to capture the cultural overtones of reciprocities specific to respondents’ backgrounds and ethnic heritages. Most of the material gleaned from that question was then fed into the larger matrix of the narratives included below, as well as used to augment the descriptions of rituals that accompanied traditional notions of ‘ubuntu’.

6.6.7 Interview Narratives

As previously referred to in chapter 4²²⁰, conceptions of ‘ubuntu’ featured repeatedly in respondent narratives regarding customary practices of giving and sharing. Moreover the

²²⁰ See chapter 4 section 4.4 – ‘Cultural Notions of Ubuntu’.

cultural trappings of this notion surfaced particularly in traditional reciprocity rituals surrounding weddings, funerals, hospitality practices and collective investments in risk amelioration (i.e. entrepreneurial ventures or emergency/risk management). More especially, though these mores were viewed as an indispensable part of the historic cultural record, they were also seen as currently under increasing threat due to the encroachments of capitalism, newly fracturing ethnic divides, and more especially the growing influence of Western individualist mindsets.

6.6.7.1 “*We’re guided by that principle, to rally around a ‘call’*”

With an open packet of cigarettes adorning his desktop and a long pair of legs stretched out underneath it, respondent MM3, a senior black government official, talks to me about his experiences of the cultural practices that imbibe the ‘ubuntu’ ethic.

It’s not a modern concept, it’s an age-old tradition. You know, that we rally around a cause. And this you will find in a number of African communities, ethnic groups. I haven’t come across the one that does not have something like that. You would find ‘Letsema’ in Setswana, you will find ‘Ilima’ in Zulu. ...

The typical explanation of Letsema, it is when I’m in need, the people around me are going to come and contribute with whatever they have. ... *We’re guided by that principle, to rally around a call*. In fact it is to empower, or to help the other person. ... This compassionate approach towards issues, I think for me, as I see it, is historical. I was taught to do that, but I knew that within the family, this is what has got to happen.²²¹

Respondent JM1, a retired bank manager, paints a similar picture:

I think its part of being African. I think all ethnic groups have it. ... Like in the Zulu system, I think like all people and there wives²²², there will always be people who are richer than others, and there’ll always be poor people. ... But my understanding is that in the Zulu set up, and I think for other groups as well, we’ve got a term that we call, ‘Inkomo zesisa’. And what it is, is - You’d have a family, and a man with a homestead and a kraal of cattle, a lot, a lot of cattle - and I think that would be the wealthy of that time. Then you’ll have another family - that had nothing. And this man’s kraal is full, it’s over-flowing. And there’s this other family that has got nothing, but they have got space.

So then what you would do is ... like renting space. But then what it means - by renting space, it means they can actually milk those cows and have that milk for themselves. And they look after [these other cattle]... so it’s like their own stock. So they look after it as if it’s their own. ... And because they’re looking after his stock, whatever cows are born

²²¹ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

²²² The reader please to excuse the innate sexism implied here.

from that stock belong to them, so they can start their own kraal. [It's a] typical example of helping those that don't have - it's not a new thing.

But also, there's what they call uhm, [the] same concept like the stokvel²²³. [It's] where you come and help if a man is ploughing his field. [If] he's starting a field, other people from the area would come and help him. Then the women of the place would cook and make beer and so that these men can eat. There's even an idiom in Zulu that say .. , "[When] someone is building a house, you come and help that." "Abuzula": what it means - is that if someone is building a house, you don't walk past - you go and help. Because next time it will be your turn, they will also come and help you. So I think it's always been part of us.²²⁴

Not only was the 'ubuntu' reciprocity ethic enlisted for the purposes of capital investment, but it was also utilised in times of emergency or calamity. Moreover, these reciprocities structured a set of customary practices in ways that garnered human or material resources in aid of labour or capital intensive projects or events; weddings and funerals in particular exemplified these mores in action.

6.6.7.2 "*Ubuntu; it's the way we conduct our funerals, the way we conduct our weddings*"

Respondent TM2 ushers me into a room used by the law faculty and advances forward in nicely heeled black shiny square-tipped shoes. Once seated, he leans forward responsively and shares with me about how he experienced the 'ubuntu' principle during his growing-up years, more specifically in terms of specific *traditional rituals* through which it was enacted.

My background is confusing. I'm half Tswana and half Tsonga. I can't speak either. I stayed in a British home and a Pedi home. ... It's a long story altogether. But *ubuntu, it's the whole way we conduct our funerals, the way we conduct our weddings*. You know, when someone has passed away that you know, women in the community will start baking individually, without really consulting each other. You know cakes and scones, and they will start pouring them in every day up until the person dies, you know. And they will pay a cost for that. And they will not even ask for it to be reclaimed. That of course, socialises you to a particular [way of] thinking.

And the way we do our weddings, it's unheard of [to send out 'invitations']. It's a new culture that you invite someone to a wedding. A white flag was a sign enough that someone is getting married. Ja, it's a white flag was sign enough. And the men would start pouring in and ask "When are you slaughtering, can we come slaughter?" The women would come and, you know, prepare the place up. And that's [where] there's inherently some values of ubuntu that one get exposed to. There was a stage where we'll

²²³ Traditional collective savings scheme.

²²⁴ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

attend so many funerals that you wouldn't know who actually died. (Laughs) So those are particular cultures.²²⁵

Respondent KJ1, an entrepreneur and designer, stays on a farm plot south of Johannesburg. She welcomes me into her home where many of her hand-crafted creations are exhibited. She highlights for me the Xhosa word for reciprocity practices related to burials. She tells me: "I know that happened in the black communities, they call it 'masingwabane'; it's Xhosa - it means: 'Let's help bury each other'."²²⁶

Another respondent, TN1, a cleric from Soweto, explains funerals in his community as prime examples of reciprocity.

I just want to use [an example] about a wedding and a funeral. When it's a wedding, women, and to a less certain extent men, they would go and offer help. [When it's a funeral, they would go] to cut vegetables, and then during the week the women would come and comfort the [bereaved]. [They would go] in groups and come and collect themselves, and then men will come on the day of the funeral to come and help to slaughter the cow. It's like expectation – you don't need to be invited. It's an insult to wait that "I didn't go .. I wasn't [there] .. cos you didn't invite me". You must just come, even if you are a ... even if there is enmity, it has nothing to do with you, it's a community thing, you need to transcend it. And people do it but you can still sense the tension.

And the other thing of course is money. What happens if somebody dies in the community? [This tradition] only happens for the death. What they do is that, there is a structure or there is a leader in the community where you'll be informed... [He] is the person that must be told that somebody died and then - he's a community leader. He's not necessarily a political leader but he'll be like a community (leader). And most of the times he's an elderly man and then he's the one who would go around in the community and tell people that so and so has passed away so we need to give money. So we'll collect a certain amount, like a family would give maybe R 5, ja. So that's what will happen.

And those who have cars, that one, it will be the cars especially the trucks and the vans. I mean that is why when you see [a] funeral in the township [you think], "This truck has got lot o' men". The other thing that I've forgotten to mention is that, at the graveyard – we have these men, and most of the time these are just ordinary men who are not respect(ed), they are drunkards, we call them names, but even at the funeral, at the grave, they are the one[s] who ... they close the grave (shovel soil over the coffin). And I think it is 'giving' because I've been to one or two funeral, one of the funeral, it just happened here at this community that I'm living, ... where we went there and then when we were at the gravesite, suddenly we realised we don't have these men to close this thing – and then

²²⁵ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

²²⁶ Interview: KJ1, Eikenhof, 3 October, 2007.

you realise how important [this ritualised function is]. And then it took us so long [to shovel in the dirt at the graveside], some women were trying to help but it just went on and on and on ...²²⁷

Regardless of the fact that they came from a wide and diverse range of cultural and language backgrounds, (Tsonga, Xhosa, Siswati, Setswana, Zulu, Pedi, Sotho, isiNdebele, Venda and siSwati) all respondents spoke of traditional ‘ubuntu’ practices that perpetuated reciprocity exchanges, particularly as it relates to customary rituals and communal events. These practices were purported to have a long historic legacy amongst a broad spectrum of black ethnic groups; in respondent AK1’s words, “I would say it has always been part of the culture[s].”²²⁸ In this regard, even though there were some culturally-specific variations, yet a more expansive narrative drew these practices together under the larger umbrella of racial (‘black’) customary practice. This is highlighted here because of its relevance to why ‘ubuntu’ political rhetoric is now being resurrected under the guise of a ‘united’ (ANC) national project.²²⁹

To wrap up, we will look at two final forums which respondents particularly cited as exhibiting the ubuntu ethic: rituals of welcome and traditions of departure. Then in conclusion we will take a brief glance at what direction cultural reciprocities are taking; are they gaining greater influence, losing their hold as cultural mores, or merely reinventing themselves into new locations and formations.

6.6.7.3 *“It’s very impolite that somebody would come ... and go without you giving anything”*

Another social ‘location’ wherein cultural reciprocities were practised related to mores of hospitality in which both hosts and visitors were expected (by varying degrees) to exchange resources. Having worked in the financial sector, respondent JM1 explains her perceptions of the recent history of some of these traditional hospitality mores.

People came from their places, to come and work in the mines or work in factories or in people’s homes. And those people had to find a place to live somewhere. So those who were already here would take in someone, you know, give them a start. Or they would actually be called from home to say “There’s an opening, come and take this opening”.

Because Apartheid didn’t create a way of receiving people except for the hostel system, there was no other way of accommodating people. So if you had a place, we’re ‘expected’ .. or if someone came to Jo’burg to look for work, you had to take that person

²²⁷ Interview: TN1, Eikenhof, 31 May, 2007.

²²⁸ Interview: AK1, Forest Town, 21 September, 2007.

²²⁹ For further development of this idea, see the *Summary* at the end of this section.

in and feed that person, give him money to go and look for a job or to get transport to go and look for a job. So I think, ja, it was expected and Apartheid in a sense gave people this [responsibility]... I think [that] you had to be creative. I mean, if you live in a system that says, “No, you can’t do this, you can’t do this,” I think you become very creative.²³⁰

Respondent JT1 goes on to explain that in the Zulu tradition, hospitality was expressed also to visitors who were passing through by means of the sharing of food and drink.

When I grew up, the families will cook Mageu; do you know Mageu? It’s the sour porridge that you can drink. ... They will make that Mageu that, if people pass by here, you can just come in and get Mageu, and drink, and maybe rest a bit and carry on. ... With Africans, *it’s very impolite that somebody would come in your house and go without you giving anything.*²³¹

6.6.7.4 “You don’t come empty-handed when you come to visit”

In the same manner that hosts were expected to be hospitable, visitors were also expected to come with ‘something in hand’. Respondent VM1 tells me of his experiences in this regard.

I think it’s part of tradition ... When you go to visit other extended members of the family, you’ll always come with something. [We] give something whether it is fees for school or extra clothes. *So you don’t come empty-handed when you come to visit.*²³²

That is why I say, when we go visit, we fill up the car. We never tell them that we’re coming. Because if we tell them that we’re coming, knowing our people, they want to make you comfortable. They want to make sure that there’s food. They’ll just go to so much trouble, I think, to the extent of going to make a loan to make you comfortable. So we never tell that we’re coming...we just rock up.

And then what we’ll do, if we don’t buy from home, when we get to the nearest town with a decent shop like Checkers, we’ll fill up the car [with groceries]. And when we get there, a lot of them, for the electricity, use the card system, then I’ll say, “Go and fill up your electricity”. So like I say, a lot of it is what we see. We go and assess the situation. But also, it is in our .. it’s in our make-up. And I think it comes, for me it comes from what I see my father doing. I never visit old people without giving them anything. I never visit an old person and not leave something. It can be R50.00, it can be whatever. ... But you just have this thing that - it will come back, you know, in some other form.²³³

Also noteworthy in these cycles of reciprocity were not just material exchanges, but reciprocities that manifested in ‘social exchanges’. Respondent LB1 went to great pains to explain to me the

²³⁰ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

²³¹ Interview, JT1, Hartebeesfontein, 10 October, 2007.

²³² Interview: VM1, Ruimsig, 25 May, 2007.

²³³ Interview, JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

cultural importance placed on ‘greeting’ people. She recounted that in the rural areas “people greet for twenty minutes.”²³⁴ Respondent GM1, reiterated this practice, speaking of it from within her own cultural tradition.

It’s a protocol ... in Shangaan we have got different greetings. When they are working there’s “bashumi”; [when] you are busy, when you are coming from the funeral it’s a different greeting. When you are coming and are just getting to the yard, [it’s] “hiFikile”; that’s the way of [saying] “I am here”. And thereafter you sit down and then everybody sit[s] down and they greet you. They ask, how did you travel? They ask you, “How are they where you are coming from...?”²³⁵

Investigated last is the direction that cultural practices of reciprocity are taking: are they gaining influence, losing their power to shape behaviours, or simply reinventing themselves?

6.6.7.5 “*It’s not constant; things are changing*”

As one of a handful of the city’s few black architects, respondent AK1 works for a successful firm in Parktown. When I arrive to interview him, he invites me into the ‘inside’ space of his firm’s building; a skylight cubicle where green plants grow voraciously and sunlight pours through in abundance. As we sit together in this dappled environment, AK1 tells me that things are shifting and changing rather momentarily with regards to cultural reciprocity mores.

Those values that are instilled in you, from your culture and your community ... that has changed, *it’s not constant. Things are changing*. People are becoming more materialistic and the emphasis is more on money and stuff like that. So, some of the values are still there. Some people still hold onto them, but when push comes to shove, it’s every man for himself.²³⁶

Respondent MM4 tells me that she feels the ‘old ways’ are losing their hold in the current context. “Some of the things are fading away; the culture is fading away. There is more [of] ‘They adopt this new culture’; which I don’t know whether it is Western or African, it’s just in-between, I don’t know.”²³⁷ “So it (ubuntu) has been there, but it is dying away.”²³⁸

²³⁴ Interview, LB1, Soweto, 31 August, 2007.

²³⁵ Interview: GM1, Soweto, 22 August.

²³⁶ Interview: AK1, Forest Town, 21 September, 2007.

²³⁷ Interview: MM4, Hillbrow, 15 November, 2007.

²³⁸ Interview: JR1, Soweto, 28 November, 2007.

Respondent MM3, goes into more depth in describing the repositioning of cultural practices of reciprocity, particularly suggesting that these have been fundamentally influenced by the correlation between changing economic and physical environments.

So it applies now in the townships, I think in a different version; in that, when you have been befallen by a nasty or bad situation, people are in a sense obligated to rally around you. Now in the case of a death ... in the modern township ... I can't bring a cow. I would [instead] bring a certain amount of money that I would give; whether it is R 10, R 20, R 100, and so on.²³⁹

More specifically, SM3, a young sales representative with a company in Midrand, recounts for me a cultural conflict that he experienced in-house between various 'old' and 'new' township mindsets.

There's this term: 'old Pimville – new Pimville'²⁴⁰. She (respondent's mother) grew up in the old Pimville, which was then. Houses were then built [and] then it became the new Pimville. ... So you could see that she comes from that [old] school of thought. ... I then was like "I don't care" [laughs]. I was always like that. I don't care whether I go to the mountain (for traditional circumcision rituals) or not; in fact I don't wanna go to the mountain! What am I gonna do there?! I learned what they do, and I thought, you know what: I'm sorry, I am Xhosa but my father died when I was two years old. And therefore unfortunately the Xhosa tribe thing for me does not work! ... [So] where do you go, what do you do? So that impacts on you.²⁴¹

Respondent MN1, a wizened older gentlemen and intellectual in his own right, portrays for me what he sees as the panoramic view of the larger issues at stake in the loss of traditional reciprocity mores and the impact that this trend could have on future generations.

The role of the African intellectual would be to re-affirm those values and say: "You are losing your best selves to this global village; and no one will know who you are, and you won't even know yourselves!"

If you ... somehow believe that the Western way of doing things is superior, is better – you will voluntarily abandon what you do, and embrace the other one. It's the question of the power relations between the two. ...

Take the question of language; one of the things we battle with is the kids. Parents who know that their children can learn [and] do Tswana in the school, they prefer them to do English. They would prefer their children to speak English like the English; [like] the

²³⁹ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

²⁴⁰ Pimville is a neighbourhood in the central part of Soweto, just southwest of Old Potch road.

²⁴¹ Interview: SM3, Midrand, 5 October, 2007.

white people. You know, your Model C and all that. ... They would say that guarantees my child a nice job and so on, and I'd rather he doesn't study Tswana. [And] anyway, who wants to know Setswana? So, the power relationship [has] almost ravished the whole thing.²⁴²

6.8 Summary

- This research found that while the influence of race as a primary giving identifier was slowly receding over time for respondents, it was doing so in tandem with the incremental and tenuous move towards the unbundling of the linkage between racial and economic disparities. Amongst respondents, insofar as conditions presided in which racial identity was disengaged from the presence of disadvantage, race alone was no longer as strong a motivator for their giving.
- Moving in the opposite direction, the power of cultural mores to shape reciprocity behaviours was found to still be very influential precisely because of the versatile ability of these practices to morph and reinvent themselves within new economic and social environments. Moreover one of the ways that customary reciprocities of ubuntu in particular have been revisited, has been through the reappropriation of this motif as a unifying banner within current political rhetoric. In this regard, while this smelting process has served to tie together racial identities and cultural practices in useful ways, it has not been free of contestation because of the current rise of 'class' and 'ethnicity' as re-emerging sites of primary affiliation.
- Lastly, the reasons for the successful revisitation of the ubuntu reciprocity ethic have rested on its ability to temporarily suture together the growing rifts between 3 significant cleavages facing the nation as a whole, but more especially black respondent communities in particular:
 - (A) Growing Economic Divides: reciprocities function as traditional subsistence and redistributive mechanisms that deal with new class fissures in customary ways.
 - (B) Fracturing of Black Solidarity Politics: the notion of ubuntu is co-opted in contemporary political rhetoric as a means by which to rekindle a unified (black) racial identity in the face of the splintering influence of multiple ethnic identities.
 - (C) Juxtaposition of Customary and Modernist Governance Systems: reciprocities are used as instruments that alternately conceal or reveal the contested areas between old (customary) and new (modernist) patrimonial networks.

²⁴² Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July, 2007.

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Chapter 7: Position-based Reciprocities

7.1 Introduction

In *The Grundrisse* ([1857] 1973: 264-265), Karl Marx comments that “Society does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand.” In keeping with this premise, the second primary theme that organises this research rubric relates to class inter-relations and the ways that individuals experience the conditions and identify with the interests of particular economic collectives, and function within the matrix of what Erik Olin Wright (1997: 26) calls “class locations”. These materially constituted collectives, or ‘classes’ as they have been summarily called, essentially organise social relations by an ordered system based (according to Marx) on their access to and ownership over land and labour, these resources being the primary ‘means of production’ (instruments for and subjects of *Produktionsmittel*²⁴³) in the capitalist equation. These are the fundamental modes of exchange which provide the conceptual framework for what this chapter calls ‘*Position-based*’ reciprocities.

Having explored *Affinity-based* exchange patterns (kinship and identity) within chapter 6, we now turn in chapter 7 to *Position-based* reciprocities that function within the ambit of class stratification processes. These two categories (Affinity and Position-based reciprocities) refer back to the venn model depicted in chapter 2 of this research project; that model having defined *Position-based* reciprocities as follows:

Here the emphasis is on reciprocities that pivot on one’s position within a schema of ‘*class*’ segmentations. These reciprocities fulfil the function of mediating inter-class or cross-strata relations and operate as a measure/indicator of ‘social distance’. In this instance, reciprocities are viewed as the instrumentalities of ‘class consciousness’ and function as mechanisms that govern the interplay between economic or social strata. Class or rank allegiances are seen to be birthed out of shared material conditions, and reciprocities feature as *inter* and *intra* class regulatory devices. Since different classes have divergent interests, reciprocities function as sources of either social disruption or social cohesion depending on their ability to mediate both within and between echelons.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ *Produktionsmittel* is a German term used in Marxist and economic theory to describe the labour and capital (‘means of production’) necessary for the production of goods and services.

²⁴⁴ As quoted from the literature review (chapter 2), section 2.1.3.

Where this research project conceptually borrows from the classical Marxist position is in its emphasis on what Hegel (preemptively) suggested was the distinction between what are considered *objective* measures (material conditions of class) and *subjective* aspects (factors associated with ‘class consciousness’) (Hegel 1969, [1830]). Marx’s work in articulating a materialist and utilitarian slant on social analysis stands as the overshadowing theoretical background for this segment of the thesis. It is important to note, however, that whilst Marx delimited his analysis strictly on the basis of ‘class’, Weber added to this rubric the element of ‘status’ formation.

Max Weber built further on the objective/subjective class dialectic, (as did Georg Lukacs and successive Marxist theorists) by suggesting that within class stratification processes there exist not only common material factors but also subjective elements (Weber, Gerth & Mills [1948], 1998). Weber formulated a multi-pronged approach which asserted that three components surfaced as part of the stratification process: (1) social class (a subset of access to the means of production), (2) status class (vested by customary ascriptions of honour, prestige or rank), and (3) party class (as determined by political persuasion) (Weber 2001 [1904]). My analysis of what comprises ‘*Position-based*’ reciprocities encompasses what Weber categorises as ‘social class’ as well as ‘status class’ inter-relations. Moreover, the conceptual framework that is used in this chapter employs both Marx’s conceptions of ‘class’ and Weber’s conceptions of ‘status’ as points of reference in understanding *Position-based* reciprocities.

More recently, other salient voices have also helped shape how reciprocities are understood to function within the class equation. Subsequent trends in Marxist thinking have highlighted the presence of the subjective elements of class, a salient example of which is E. P Thompson’s 1963 text *The Making of the English Working Class*. Thompson’s analysis provides an in-depth view of how the English working class solidified its collective identity due to their commonly shared material conditions, and how that this developed into a significant class consciousness powerful enough to leverage and elicit certain standards of conduct in their relations with the bourgeoisie. These class inter-relations came to be known as engagements that hinged on conceptions of the *Moral Economy*.

'*Moral Economy*' notions are relevant here insofar as they specifically inform reciprocities that exist betwixt and between economic classes. Marxist historian E. P. Thompson developed this notion in his pioneering article *Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century* (1971: 76-136). In this piece Thompson demonstrated how complex notions of the 'common good or weal' amongst the 18th century British peasantry, defined their responses to what they perceived as infringements on these standards by the landed gentry of their day. Essentially, Thompson's observation (1963) was that violations of highly developed norms of reciprocity between classes were powerful tools that shaped the complex dynamics of class inter-relations.

The above-mentioned theoretical background is mentioned here because of its relevance to how chapter 7 is organised; namely in addressing patterns of inter-class relations through the lenses of (1) the objective aspects of class (section one), and (2) the subjective aspects of class (section two). Both objective and subjective elements were found to have structured the reciprocities of black professionals in Gauteng, but in divergent ways. Moreover, one of the primary findings of this chapter's research suggests that the *objective material conditions* and the *subjective class consciousness* of Gauteng's black professionals were found to be fundamentally incongruous from each other, creating conditions characteristic of contradictory class locations.

7.1.1 Chapter Overview

To provide a bird's-eye view of this chapter's findings, we begin with a pictorial spread (Graphic 7.1) which depicts the interaction between respondents' objective and subjective class locations. Under the subsequent sections dedicated to subjective and objective aspects respectively, background information is provided (definitions and measures) as to how class indicators were formulated for these categories, but we start with the panoramic view.

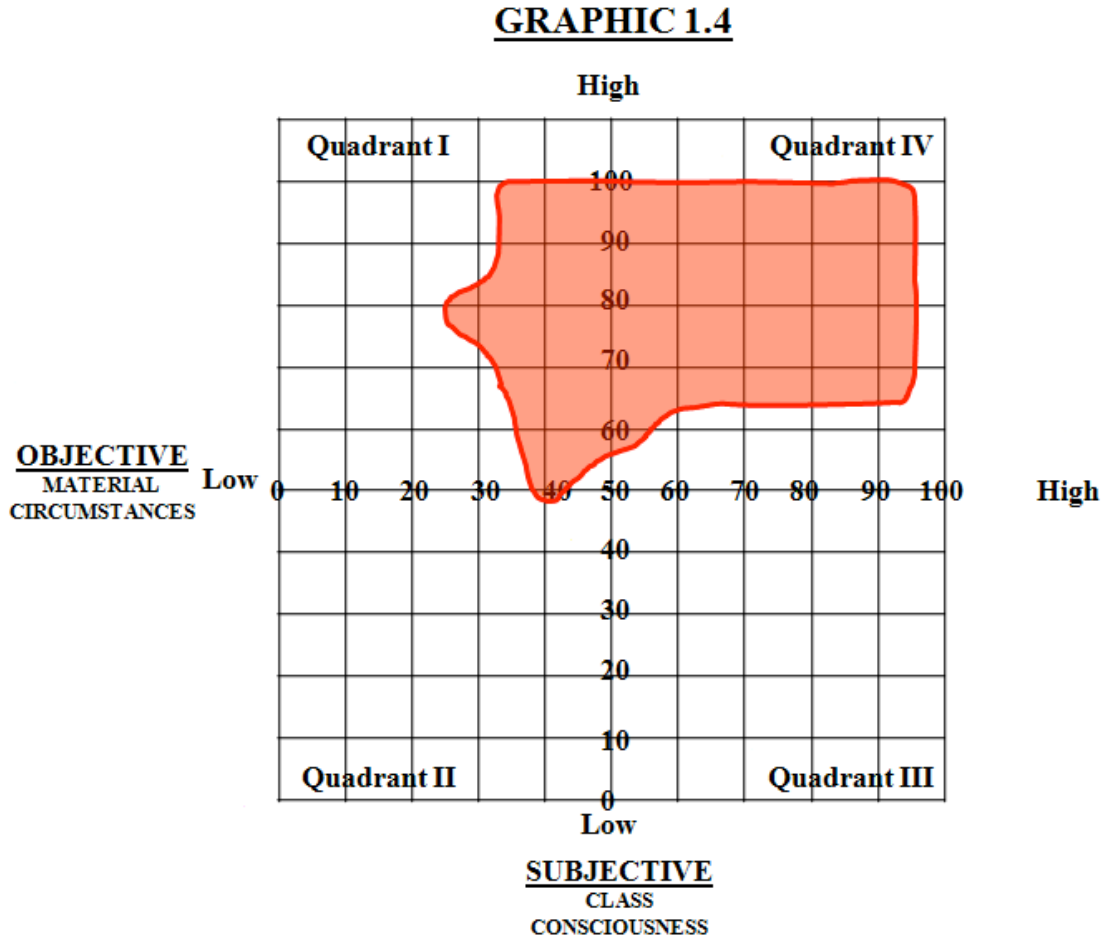
Featured in this conceptual backdrop is Erik Olin Wright's work which offers the reader the argument that class consciousness is strongest amongst lower and working class members, and that it diminishes with rises in standards of living and the progression towards upper class proclivities (Wright 1985: 278). In this regard, subjective class consciousness is defined here in the classical sense of a feature present in the proletariat that is used as an instrument of

insurrection in forays of class struggle.²⁴⁵ Objective class location on the other hand, is designated in this study according to the four indicators of: (1) education levels, (2) an occupational measure, (3) an income index, and (4) an LSM (Living Standards Measure) gauge.

What is of particular interest in respects of this research is the interaction between objective and subjective respondent attributes; Graphic 7.1 (on the following page) depicts the marked clustering of black professional respondents in Quadrant IV, which demonstrates that respondents are high in both material class location and perceived class consciousness. This finding is an aberration to Wright's assertion that class consciousness features primarily amongst the proletariat, and it further begs the question as to why black professional respondents have a strong sense of class consciousness even in the face of their own material accomplishments and mid to upper class locations. It also sheds light on *Moral Economy* behavioural repertoires and the assertion made in this research that these repertoires are utilised by lower class members/coalitions to leverage black professional respondents to exhibit certain giving and sharing behaviours.

²⁴⁵ Class consciousness can also be defined more broadly in terms of a sense of class solidarity. In the Marxist tradition, however, it more specifically signaled the move from a 'class in itself' to a 'class for itself' amongst the proletariat.

Graphic 7.1 – Objective and Subjective Factors of Class



7.2 Objective Measures of Class

What follows is a discussion of the unfolding story(s) of the progressive *objective* acquisitions that black professional respondents have attained in the decade since 1994, followed by an analysis of their *subjective* narrative perceptions of how these changes have impacted their reciprocity motives and practices.

7.2.1 Survey Data

Whilst definitions of ‘class’ have become increasingly complex and contested in recent years, this research utilises four primary indicators as measures of class location. These measures are considered ‘objective’ insofar as they chart concrete and quantifiable material conditions experienced by respondents. The first three indicators used to delineate the class locations of respondents pivoted on their educational level, an occupational measure, and their income resources (Wright 1985²⁴⁶; Erikson-Goldthorpe 1992²⁴⁷; Mann 1973²⁴⁸). Educational levels were gauged by the highest certification completed of six levels²⁴⁹ of education, from high school matriculation through to doctoral level qualifications.²⁵⁰ Secondly, occupational echelons were categorised according to a typology that cross-referenced work income with three levels of occupational posts²⁵¹ within the African ‘core middle-class’ (Schlemmer 2005:2). The third indicator, relating to respondent income brackets, was derived from five categories which sequentially identified individual²⁵² work income but which excluded other resource streams²⁵³.

²⁴⁶ Wright’s original 1980 U.S. Survey of measures of class and occupation, stands as one of the paramount exemplars of class position analysis; it is quite rigorously and unabashedly derived from Marxist theory and makes use of 12 categories, including terms such as ‘capitalist’ and ‘non-skilled worker’ (Wright 1985).

²⁴⁷ The frequently used Erikson-Goldthorpe (1992) class schema is included here as a reference point precisely because it ideologically stands as a more ‘right’ counter-point to Wright’s leftist views. Both, however, are helpful in delineating class segmentations and make use of the 3 common factors mentioned above.

²⁴⁸ The reason that I note Michael Mann’s (1973) work here is because of its measure of class consciousness, which serves as a distinct reference point for what objective class measures are not.

²⁴⁹ The six levels designated in the Survey instrument asked Respondents to specify their highest level of education completed from: (1) matriculation (2) tertiary (3) technical (4) honours (5) masters (6) doctoral level certification.

²⁵⁰ Miech and Hauser (1998) make the interesting observation that educational levels may have different status meanings *over time*. For instance, they point out that “a college degree was much rarer and consequently, signified relatively higher status 50 years ago than it does today”. I mention this here particularly with in mind the importance of considering the tremendous shift from the historical context of Bantu education to broad-based educational opportunities (albeit still very inequitable) in South Africa today, and the consideration that status ascriptions to education amongst black populations may be significantly changing over time.

²⁵¹ The three occupational levels mentioned above refer to (1) Entry-level administrative posts (2) Middle level management, and (3) Senior occupational posts. These correlate to Wright’s typology which he expounds on in *Classes* (pgs. 85-6, 152-3, and 313-315) wherein he uses the following 3-fold classification system: (1) Experts – higher level professionals, specialized technicians and senior managers with University and post-graduate degrees, (2) Skilled Employees – such as teachers, crafts workers, technicians and sales workers with college degrees, and (3) Semi-skilled Workers – administrative, clerical, sales and other service occupations.

²⁵² In this study personal income was differentiated from ‘household’ income, as respondents were surveyed individually.

²⁵³ Other resource streams from capital assets, property investments or market speculations were not included in the survey instrument, which instead focused singularly on work income as this was deemed a more appropriate index for use with the target population.

The fourth class indicator used in this study, focused on the importance of including at least one Living Standard Measure (LSM)²⁵⁴ factor in the research. Here the choice was to use a consumable that all respondents would make use of, namely housing. Therefore, the fourth and last ‘objective’ class indicator focused on categories of housing, with a breakdown of 5 types of residential²⁵⁵ locations identified. Housing and the above-discussed three other class indicators (income, educational level and professional status) thus served as the benchmarks used for the Horizontal Axis in the previously featured scatter-gram (Graphic 7.1).²⁵⁶

7.2.2 Interview Narratives

In Part 1 of his seminal text *The Great Transformation*, Karl Polanyi provided a critique of market society by suggesting that “Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system” (Polany [1944], 2001: xxiv). Respondent narratives surfaced the interaction between the macro-level economic system that they found themselves emerging from (the racial capitalism of Apartheid) and the social repertoires that developed in response to this (skewed) system of accumulation.²⁵⁷ In fact respondents suggested that the history of Apartheid in South Africa served not only to disembed economic interactions from the womb of social relations but also to distort class relations in particular ways that subverted their natural trajectories. Further to this, respondents described particular reciprocity practices that emerged as responses to the restrictions of racial capitalism.

²⁵⁴ Within the research context, the *South African Advertising Research Foundation* (SAARF) data base serves as one of the largest (25,000 strong survey group) that has studied LSM indicators. Their *All Media Products Survey* (AMPS) research included LSM measures such as ownership of a car, acquisition of major appliances, and degree of urbanisation.

²⁵⁵ Respondents were given the choice of designating which of the following five categories of housing they resided in: (1) Informal settlement (2) Farm or agricultural holding (3) Township (4) Downtown residency (5) Suburban housing.

²⁵⁶ The reader is to note that a discussion of the factors involved in Graphic 7.1’s Vertical Axis will follow in this chapter’s second section on *subjective* elements of class.

²⁵⁷ For an interesting discussion on the bifurcation between black urban and rural experiences of ‘class’ see Phil Eidelberg’s article (1999) *Guerrilla Warfare and the Decline of Urban Apartheid: The Shaping of a New African Middle Class and the Transformation of the African National Congress (1975-1985)*. Eidelberg notes Roger Southall’s work on this theme and comments that; “For this [Apartheid] policy to succeed, of course, the growth of the African middle class in the townships had to be discouraged as well. This involved numerous trading restrictions and in particular, denial of meaningful access to credit. On the other hand, small scale African business in the homelands was encouraged” (Eidelberg 1999: 54).

7.2.3 *Trans*Formations: The Structuring of Exchange

Chosen as an organising symbol for this chapter is the prefix ‘Trans’ which introduces each new section of respondent narratives and ties them together into an overall pattern. This pattern is based on the original definition of ‘Trans’ – that being its Latin meaning which is associated with the actions of “going beyond”, “moving across”, “crossing over” or “moving from one place to another”.²⁵⁸ This was deemed as an appropriate metaphor in light of two salient themes that recurred in respondent narratives. The first involved respondents’ own journeys of marked social mobility within the past decade, and the second focused on lower-class family and community members attempts to socially and economically re-embed black professional respondents (and their resources) back into communities of origin through the use of customary and obligatory mores of reciprocity.

The next section looks specifically at particular trans-‘formations’; those social reciprocity repertoires that became consolidated as norms within community interactions. In order to chart sequential as well as concurrent changes, we begin with the behavioural repertoires that respondents noted were practised in pre-1994 settings and then compare these with newer modes and formulations of reciprocity. In this way the author engages the structuring of exchange in line with respondents’ ‘transformations’ over time.

7.2.3.1 “[We] had no access to credit...the *stokvel* system [became] a banking system actually for black people”

Respondent JM1 sits back against the sleek contours of an elegant pink sheathed couch in her dignified home in Greenside. Having worked her way up in the financial industry, from being a mere bank clerk two decades ago, she now is newly ‘retired’ and is enjoying the benefits of the retail banking financial portfolio she carried at several major banking institutions. She describes for me the monetary history of where she has come from.

²⁵⁸ Sourced from the Houghton Mifflin Company’s (1981, [1969]) *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

Black people had no access to credit ... Now that is why if you go back to stokvels²⁵⁹, *the stokvel system was a banking system actually for black people*. Even if now, I mean, you even see it with people from home (rural areas); people who are trying to have a pool, *to pool their resources*.

A lot of the stokvels started with being funeral schemes. ... My mother and them in her community, they've got what they call an 'Aunties Club'²⁶⁰. And it's some funeral scheme of some sort. ... Because you had to transport the corpse back home, so you're going to need money for the funeral. ... Then it became a savings scheme as well. That's why now even banks are into it now; they have stokvel accounts because it was a way of ... putting resources together.

When they started, it was not like you were taking money to go and save in a bank. It was the ten of you, and each giving let's say, I don't know how much for those days, but we're starting off with R 20 maybe. So ten of us putting, we put our R20 together, and you take that money. So next month it's mine; it's my turn. And I think *that was a way of having a lump sum of money for big purchases*.

I remember in the early years, when people were starting, when people were buying cars. A lot of professional people, especially nurses, even had stokvels to buy cars. When they would pool their resources, [to] say "It's your turn this month", [then] you get your money [and] you buy your car. ...

When people started building, you had your four-roomed house, and when people were given 99 year leases, then they could do something to those properties. And a lot of them would put a garage and two rooms. And that's a lot of money! You [couldn't] get credit from a bank, so these stokvels, you take that lump sum, you buy your material, you get a builder. And next time it's somebody's turn to get that money.

Then ... other people [would] have a stokvel for groceries, for Christmas time. ... Christmas, it's a very expensive time; but then again, Christmas time you're not catering for your own family only, it's for the extended family. And if you're going to go home to the rural areas, you must come with all the 'goodies', you know. They expect you to come with all these nice things. So if you're in a stokvel, when you go home you've got money to buy a sheep to slaughter for Christmas; you're coming with sweets, you're coming with clothes, not only for your own children, but for everybody. *So it was a way of saving money.*²⁶¹

In the above narrative, respondent JM1 describes stokvels as social formations that served various purposes; not only did they "pool resources" in times of contingency (funerals as well as

²⁵⁹ 'Stokvels' are informal and rotating savings and credit associations practiced primarily with membership from within black communities. For the most comprehensive research done to date on this phenomenon, see Lukhele's work, 1990.

²⁶⁰ Verhoef (2001: 259-296) asserts that the development of stokvels can also be seen as a subsidiary gender-empowerment activity undertaken by women in order to enhance their access to independent earning. This, Verhoef suggests, was due to traditional kinship relations [which] denied African women access to property and cash income.

²⁶¹ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

festive times such as Christmas), but they also amassed “lump sum” resources for capital-intensive purchases (nurses buying vehicles, house improvements made by 99-year lessees, etc.)

These benefits, however, only reflect on the practical side of the equation. Moreover, stokvel practices originated as a resourceful economic ‘counter activity’ to the profound structural marginalisations that black communities experienced at the hands of the formal fiscal and banking institutions from which they were primarily excluded. Even more importantly, they emerged as organic responses that in turn spun-off²⁶² social mores of intra-community (within group) giving, sharing and resource transfers. It is important to highlight this here insofar as it sets the stage for how and why current reciprocity practices emerge from deeply embedded cultural repertoires that structured exchanges in ways that internalised them within black communities (as opposed to externalising them as modern market mechanisms frequently do).

Secondly, respondent JM1 portrays stokvel exchanges as informal²⁶³ as well as relationally²⁶⁴ embedded: “It was the ten of you” or an “Aunties Club” which was comprised of people well known one to another. It was ‘informal’ insofar as it was distinct from the formal monetary system of the day, but this fact by no means excluded stokvels from the parameters of having their own highly ritualised internal governance systems. In fact many of the rituals which characterised stokvels, twinned together relational with ritualised elements through social cohesion-building practices such as the dispensing of food, drink and /or beer at regular gatherings, the wearing of uniforms and/or the singing of group songs along with prescribed ceremonies and group performances. All of these conventions reinforced the ways that the community effectively re-enfolded resource exchanges into the ambit of its own customary practices. The informal and relational aspects of stokvels are specifically noted here in order to highlight them as social norms which inform the patterning of resource exchange practices also within the current context.

²⁶² I qualify the term ‘spun-off’ in the above sentence insofar as it is important to recognise that stokvels did not *originate* economic reciprocities per se, but rather they *accentuated* and formalised an already present series of exchange mores.

²⁶³ This is not to say that there were not ritualised protocols that were followed in stokvel governance, but rather to point to the fact that these were distinct from the formal monetary system.

²⁶⁴ Crawford’s article (2006) highlights the ‘trustworthiness’ born out of the relational ties both assumed and developed within stokvels.

Whilst the highly relational nature of stokvels did not necessarily guarantee compliance²⁶⁵ to all stokvel practices, yet it did ensure some form of personal and communal accountability. This is also a significant factor to note in terms of the ‘giving back’ behaviours of Gauteng’s black professional respondents inasmuch as current reciprocity practices still keep these professionals in many ways answerable to their communities of origin. And herein lies the paradox: insofar as stokvels were often used to empower family constellations in terms of their collective abilities to garner bulk resources, the irony is that stokvels were also frequently used by their members²⁶⁶ as a means by which to stock-pile money *away* from the appropriating clutches of family and kinship circles (Ashforth 2005: 34). In so doing, the very mechanisms that were useful in reinforcing within-group exchanges were also co-opted by members as mechanisms to bypass (or temporarily placate) communal demands; in both instances the deeply entrenched symbiosis between individual members, and the community, clearly evidences itself.

Moreover as significant vehicles for resource exchanges, stokvels can be seen as social formations which showcased non-formal (or ‘parallel’) avenues of exchange that existed outside of the purview of formalised market processes. So too, current ‘remittances’ that black professional respondents provide to communities of origin, fly under the radar of formal fiscal exchange mechanisms. In Polanyi terms, both could be viewed as mechanisms that ‘re-embed’ resources into the folds of customary community systems. Further to this, they could also be interpreted as mechanisms that effectively lessen the differentials of class disparities,²⁶⁷ a subject to which we turn next.

Respondent MM2 is a programme manager for a well known NGO in the transitional justice arena. She wears a sporty bandana on her head and is casually dressed when I meet her on the fourth floor of an access-restricted building where she works in Braamfontein. MM2 greets me with a gracious but unassuming smile and a warm countenance; she describes her home circumstances at various points throughout the interview and I quickly pick up that life as a single mother and sole household provider has not been easy for her.

²⁶⁵ Lemire, Pearson and Campbell (2002: 98) suggest that non-compliance within the stokvel system is generally met with a stringent set of responses (inclusive of social sanctions) which they outline in their text. In that regard, stokvel compliance has a lower default rate than for instance formal bank loans would.

²⁶⁶ I highlight here the use of the stokvel mechanism as a means for *women in particular* to safe-guard their assets.

²⁶⁷ Stokvels presented the opportunity to lessen class disparities *externally*; by providing black communities with purchasing power that they otherwise would not have been afforded in comparison to other racial strata.

MM2 recounts her experience of 'stokvel' savings clubs and she echoes JM1's above-mentioned sentiments but she augments the scenario with the additional observation of how stokvels also provided structured ways in which (in some instances) the more economically empowered were expected to carry the less fortunate members of the community.

You have what they call the 'Social Clubs' that are going around in the communities. People form their own social clubs where they would help one another. They call them 'Burial Societies' where each month they come together and they contribute money. Now you will find that there are families who cannot even afford that; they cannot even afford to be part of the social clubs. So what happens is that when they die or they have bereavement at home, and if they cannot really bury somebody, *as a community it becomes automatic* [that you bury for them] because you just think "Do you leave this person to get a pauper's funeral? I mean what does that say about you as a community?!"²⁶⁸

Embedded within the narrative above are a series of assumptions that are worth exploring. Firstly, MM2 describes the purpose of savings clubs as "helping one another"; moreover she does not portray them as money-spinning or income generating mechanisms²⁶⁹, but rather she focuses on their ability to work between people for their joint betterment. Secondly, in this narrative MM2 articulates a second assumption: she perceives that it is the responsibility of those who are better off to support those who are economically unable to ensure their own wellbeing; moreover she also attaches the ascription of shame to instances when the community does not adhere to this more.

Both a posture of taking responsibility for provisioning for lower class members²⁷⁰, and a strong sense of cognitive dissonance when this stance was not adhered to, were attitudes characteristic of the black professional respondents interviewed for this study. Whilst degrees of non-compliance to these norms emerged, they were accompanied by what respondents frequently described as feelings of guilt and/or social ostracism.

It is this topic (the community's response to reciprocity non-compliance) that will engage our attention in the next section of this chapter. Moreover, as social formations that developed in the

²⁶⁸ Interview: MM2, Braamfontein, 28 August, 2007.

²⁶⁹ This is not to deny the possibility that language and culture may be heavily influencing the respondent's way of communicating, but rather to suggest that the content of the remainder of her narrative justifies this interpretation.

²⁷⁰ This was found to be the case even when community members did not share blood ties; the key was that they were bonded into the definition of membership in the 'community'.

shadow of racial capitalism, stokvels evolved as socially constructed capital savings and pooling mechanisms. Accompanying these practices, however, there also devolved certain regulatory mores associated with the treatment of community members who did not choose to participate in basic reciprocity interchanges. Investigated next are respondent narratives which cite incidences in which various kinds of behavioural *social sanctions* were enacted against community members who did not chose to reciprocate repertoires of exchange.

7.2.4 *TransGressions*: Breaching Sacred Bonds

During the post-1994 decade, (and whether to their liking or to their chagrin), black professional respondents narrated that they found themselves entangled in scripts of co-dependent enmeshment with lower-class family and community members. Many respondents suggested that these ties were valued and honour-tested configurations, whilst others found these obligations to be constrictive or punitive. Regardless, one of the reasons²⁷¹ why these scripts featured so largely in respondents' minds related to the community²⁷² norms that respondents grew up with; norms regarding social sanctions practised against community members who breached or severed the bonds that ensured community cohesion (principle to which were reciprocity practices). These breaches, or '*TransGressions*' so to speak, have especially been contentious in the last number of years due to black professionals' enhanced social mobility, a factor which has increasingly surfaced the potential threat of their extraction from the womb of the holding power of communities of origin. In light of this, 'obligations' related to community events (such as weddings, funerals, rites of passage etc.) have taken on special significance as symbolic overtures and/or tenuous customary ties that still attempt to regulate interactions between increasingly disparate classes.

²⁷¹ Another of the reasons relates to allegiance to the 'Struggle ethos', a topic which will be addressed in more depth in chapter 8.

²⁷² It is interesting to note that respondent narratives frequently referred to 'the community' as encompassing a sort of amorphous collective identity that exerted moral authority. In this regard respondents suggested that the consolidation of this collective was an outcome of both 'Struggle solidarities' as well as cultural practices of 'Ubuntu'. For further narratives that explore these connections (as well as express some disillusionment with their current invocation) see sections 4.4, 4.5, 6.6.7.2, and 6.5.7.1.

7.2.4.1 “*Because they disassociate themselves from the community, the community also withdraws from them*”

Respondent TS1, wearing khaki trousers and a white cotton shirt, is a young and bright NGO Manager. He recounts for me an instance on the *West Rand* in which a resident was systematically socially ostracised at the time of his death, because he had previously refused to engage in community affairs.

In Soweto, two streets from where we [were], there was another man who just died there. He was, I’m told, rich and very arrogant and didn’t really relate well with his neighbours. And he died. A sign that the community had rejected him, was the few people that were there at the funeral. They [family of the deceased] had bought lots and lots of food [but] people were like “Oh they will eat their food by themselves, and ja, that will be a consequence!”²⁷³

Another respondent TN1, a Soweto Priest, narrates a similar instance on the East Rand.

I want to tell you an example ... in Katlehong where my mother lives, there’s this family; they’re not involved with the community. They are rich; they don’t attend the funerals, they didn’t do this, and what happened was interesting. The father of that family died. So this family they expected that people will come [help and attend to the funeral]. So they bought lots [of food for the funeral]. Like as you know, in the township when someone dies, what happened is that you have to spend a lot of money... So this family also then they bought a cow ...[and] they were surprised then, on the funeral very few people came. And my mother was telling me [about this], so they had to throw the food because it was wasted. And for me it made me proud because to realise that if you are rich [and] you have that money and still [you] disassociate yourself from the community, [this] is what will happen [to you].²⁷⁴

Respondent JT1 is a robust mother of five who resides in Soweto but commutes daily to her work in Houghton. She tells me of her experiences of affluent community members who have disassociated themselves from their communities of origin, adding in the commentary that community expectations (across these divides) can sometimes be very burdensome.

Say you are in Soweto, and then you find that there’s somebody here who has got a big house and he’s got a car ... usually he would [not] attend things around here. One day this person happens to have a wedding or a funeral, people would ... just not go! He has got this class [thing]... *Because they disassociate themselves from the community, the community also withdraws from them.*

You see it all the time, and that is why, even if you feel like you don’t want to go – let’s say this is a wedding or a funeral – usually you would go because people, *we watch one*

²⁷³ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

²⁷⁴ Interview: TN1, Eikenhof, 31 May, 2007.

another. You are [therefore] bound to go to all these events. It's like: "You are supposed to be there". Ja, like there are days when I feel like "Whoo!" I'm now tired of living in Soweto because you are expected to be everywhere, and you feel like you are tired... That's the type of life that we live in the location.²⁷⁵

Common to all three of the above narratives are the ways that communities of origin attempt to leverage power over the resources of their members, particularly those with more assets; (referred to here as "he was rich and very arrogant", "they were [a] rich family", and "he has got a big house/car... and this 'class thing'"). In all of these instances, the community finds ways to communicate its displeasure or rejection when these members refuse to comply with community norms of reciprocity; these breaches resulting in "a sign that the community had rejected [them]". Moreover, the safeguarding of adherence to reciprocity mores is enacted through the mechanism of grass-roots surveillance: "we watch one another", to the ends that: "even if you are rich, if you disassociate yourself from the community, this is what the community will do to you".

'Disassociation' from the community is defined in all three narratives in terms of a renunciation of reciprocal ties of support and engagement. As community ties come increasing under fire with both physical changes (residential shifts to the suburbs) and the symbolic movement (class location mobility) of black professionals, inter-class relations are being momentarily impacted in ways that spot-light the tenuous ties of traditional customary strictures. Black professional respondents' new social 'locations' therefore become either critical social positions to be co-opted on behalf of the betterment of communities of origin, or conversely to be rejected if they imply withdrawal from symbolic community functions.

Respondent GC1, who works for a famous Struggle-affiliated institutional body, is Tswana and originally from the Mpumalanga area. Both of his parents were teachers and so the emphasis on education and learning runs strongly within his family. He comments on the physical nuance of location, suggesting that once people move out of the 'locations'²⁷⁶, "it creates a gap".

When people move out of the community, the level of discussion and debates no longer [are] the same. Ja, it creates a gap. Well, things are not done per se to them, but I think

²⁷⁵ Interview: JT1, Hartebeesfontein, 22 June, 2007.

²⁷⁶ The term 'location' in the South African historic context was used as a reference to designate township areas.

the change is going to be how you relate; you know, how you relate to them. [Now] you would treat them as supposedly somebody who is now better off than you.²⁷⁷

Respondent RS1 who is a young female educational researcher, adds to the discussion by suggesting that it is not just geographic location that counts, but also shifts in class locations that make a difference. She describes community attitudes towards her sister-in-law who stays in the rural areas but who has worked professionally while there:

Most women were not working, so they were sort of home-makers. And so these women were more involved in that collection and things like that. And so my brother's wife was a professional and she had to go to work everyday, Monday to Friday. And she didn't have time for such things. And so when there was a funeral at her house, people just were not supportive, because they remembered that this one she goes to work - we never see her - she doesn't come to funerals - if she does, she just comes for an hour and then she goes.

So then they could not understand [that] she is a professional, she has marking to do at home and things like that. And because they don't go to work and they don't realise that when you go back home after a day's work you just want to rest - you don't want to go to a community meeting - you don't want to, you know. Because you might want to give of your time, but you just don't have the time because of your career or other commitments. [So] then [those] other women would be saying "She's got a problem - she never supports anybody!"²⁷⁸

In her remarks above, RS1 comments that the community views it as "a problem" when professionals give their time and energy resources elsewhere and don't "support anyone" in the community. As black professional respondents communicated that they have to increasingly split their allegiances between 'outside' professional work and 'inside' community involvements, those professionals still residing in the 'locations' (as cited in both narratives above) feel first-hand the community's displeasure with their rupturing of what are perceived to be practices that build social solidarity.

These contraventions not only effect communities of origin, but they also impact heavily upon respondents themselves in their own internal dialogues, serving to breach what Habermas (1987) called the 'lifeworlds' (*Lebenswelt*) of respondents in ways that are perceived as transgressive violations of sorts. Habermas goes on to suggest that 'lifeworlds' are in fact "a culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretive patterns" (Habermas 1987: 124).

²⁷⁷ Interview: GC1, Marshalltown, 31 October, 2007.

²⁷⁸ Interview: RS1, Emmarentia, 12 October, 2007.

These patterns are reproduced regularly through linguistic articulations (for instance, “she never supports anybody!”) that reinforce social and cultural meanings. Indeed the narrations that have been interrogated to date fortify the argument that: as respondents continue to pursue economic empowerments that take them outside of the homogenising powers of communities of origin, these same communities respond with verbal and social sanctions meant to “discipline and punish”²⁷⁹ and thereby reinforce normative reciprocity standards.

Reciprocity norms and behaviours, however, are not just meant as self-perpetuating systems for their own sakes; they in fact serve to propel other implicit “deep structures”²⁸⁰ that organise social systems. Insofar as this chapter’s focus is on *Position-based* reciprocities, our goal is to understand more about class as one of these ‘deep structures’, and about how reciprocities in particular, may be used to mediate inter-class relations in very specific ways in this context. In light of this, whilst a look has been taken at various forms of customary exchange (stokvels for instance) and enforcement mechanisms (social sanctions such as exclusion), now investigation will be made of what it is that they are meant to safeguard, e.g. what patterns of class inter-relations are being protected, why and how?

Having noted the (1) stokvel system as a traditional resource exchange practice, as well as (2) various social sanction mechanisms used in aid of buttressing reciprocity behaviours, we now turn to respondent narratives that signal (3) class designations. How did respondents define ‘class’ and what characteristics did they associate with particular class statuses? Once these base-lines are established from within respondents’ own verbiage, this will then inform our subsequent analysis of how respondents perceive reciprocities to mediate class inter-relations.

²⁷⁹ In the same way that Foucault (1975) unveils the fact that modern *institutions* (penal, educational, juridical) have insinuated very real disciplinary and punishment functions into their mandates, so too do communities - as amalgamations of groups practicing punitive rituals. My point in referencing this here is to draw attention to the most virile aspect of disciplinary power, and that is what Foucault refers to as its “panoptic” qualities – its ability to take hold of the internalised worlds of its subjects. (Note Foucault’s work on this in Section III, pages 195 – 228 in the above cited text.) From the interviews that I conducted for this research, it seems that indeed the ‘panoptic’ functions of communities of origin were fully active in orchestrating and dictating respondents’ internal worlds.

²⁸⁰ Summarily referred to as the ‘Chomsky revolution in linguistics’ the study of the “deep structures” of language was undertaken with in mind the intention to excavate the undergirding presuppositional theoretical constructs that organise language. The idea of uncovering the *black box* of social structures has subsequently been extrapolated from Chomsky and Halle’s work (1966) into the Sociological field in an attempt to surface the implicit meanings behind social processes. See for instance the work of Ferdinand de Saussure which also engaged the overlap between linguistic patterns and sociological structuralism.

7.2.5 *TransLocations*: Class Definitions and Signifiers

Several definitions of ‘class’ and associated ‘class signifiers’ surfaced within respondent narratives, these being specifically related to particular historical eras. For instance, respondents noted education and capital-intensive assets (as exemplified by those families that afforded ‘kune motor’ [were ‘rich’ because they owned a vehicle]) as signifiers of higher class status within their families of origin. Since 1994, however, respondents noted that class signifiers were more commonly based on particular consumption habits that reflected catching up with ‘white counterparts’.

7.2.5.1 “*That was a sign; a way of telling whether you’re doing well or not*”

Respondent JM1, the retired retail banking manager from Greenside, describes higher class status in her growing-up years as evidenced by those families that had a refrigerator or ownership of a car.

We had a fridge, so we’d have these aunties [come to us] on a Saturday with their dishes [of] Jelly. Or meat – most families used to buy meat on a Friday, for [the] weekend. They would come and put it in the fridge. ... And I think that’s why my father had to invest in the fridge, because I mean, *I think that was a sign; that was a way of telling whether you’re doing well or not.*

You know, that is why there were very few families with cars, because you would need a lump sum. I don’t know what a car cost those days – let’s say R 5,000. So for a family to have R 5,000?? So that is why people who had families who had cars, were like “Aiy, uh le bah rich, oh kune motor!”²⁸¹

Like my whole family, like I said to you, I think we had a comfortable life but my father didn’t have a car. My father only had a car when I left home. ... I remember [we] would walk as a family to church or to the bus stop, to visit granny or whatever, or an auntie. But we all grew up with the number of families that had a car - I don’t think there were more than three. ... If someone gets sick in the middle of the night ... someone with a car would [then] be the community’s taxi actually.²⁸²

In the above narrative JM1 mentions several capital-intensive assets, a vehicle and a refrigerator, that were symbolic indications (“a sign”) of higher class status.²⁸³ Both required an amassment

²⁸¹ The Respondent interpreted this phrase as Zulu for ‘If you’ve got a car, you are rich!’

²⁸² Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

²⁸³ Claire Ceruti (2007) in an article entitled “*Divisions and Dependencies among Working and Workless*” explores this more fully. In her research on class stratifications in Soweto, Ceruti points to how participants indicated that class was frequently defined by food consumption habits.

of capital which would have been difficult to garner under the circumstances of Apartheid's racial capitalism that the respondent describes. More importantly, once these assets were acquired, in the instances of both the car and the refrigerator the assumption was that the 'community' should benefit from their use: "Aunties would come to us [for use of the fridge]" and "someone with a car would [then] be the community's taxi".

The value of these items within black communities meant that once these resources were procured, there was the expectation that they would be appropriated for collective consumption; this did not exclude individual household use, but it just augmented it with the understanding that it would *also* be designated for use by the community. As South Africa has entered a decade post-1994 when jobs have been scarce and incomes put under pressure (particularly for the lowest classes), the economic resources that black professional respondents represent could also be viewed as appealing commodities to be potentially re-appropriated for community consumption; whether or not they will be, depends on the dynamic push-and-pull between respondents and their communities of origin. Moreover not only are material assets being leveraged in this back and forth tug-of-war, but also knowledge resources are seen as key.

7.2.5.2 " 'Middle class' for us were people who had gone to school"

Another of the salient class signifiers that respondents noted in reference to their families of origin, was education. Retail banking retiree, respondent JM1, put to me her sentiments on this subject in a very straight forward manner:

*Middle class for us were people who had gone to school. I mean, teachers, people who worked for the municipality – those were people that were seen as middle class.*²⁸⁴

Respondent TM2, who has been an executive member of the University of South Africa's (UNISA) Student Representative Council (SRC), explained to me that when he goes back to visit his 'home' in the rural areas, perceptions of friends and family members there are modelled around the following pattern.

[They] are perceived to say "They that went to University have money; they must come and share a bit of that with us." ... So for instance, when you go home, there's word that you finished your degree [and] everyone expects you to part with something. It starts from your former school mate who decided not to do anything about their lives. ... It

²⁸⁴ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

depends on what level of education people have. So the expectation really is ... the pressure of “How can you not give me R 200, [when] you got a degree?!”²⁸⁵

Respondent TT1, a young female accountant with dread-locks and a youthful countenance, sits opposite me in a side office adjacent to her work space in Parktown North. She describes to me the provisional responsibility that she felt after having attended university (dues owed her community) as follows:

What happens is – I’ll come from a township, go to university, and then I’m going to give back to my community – in the township. ... So [in] townships, you find there are people who are able to go to university. And [then] I come back and I give back to my community, and I give back to my family...²⁸⁶

All of these narratives intimate that respondents are conducting a delicate dance between viewing education as a personal achievement that they can use at their own discretion for social and economic mobility, or viewing it as a tool for collective community upliftment whereby “I come back and I give back to my community”. In the latter case, reciprocities were seen as a revolving cycle of exchanges where the focus was more on resource mobility than on social mobility. In both cases, formalised education was seen as the key to these flows.

In like manner, when it came to supporting others in the post-1994 context, respondents communicated that often education was a top priority for them in terms of the designated use of the funds they gave to others. In this regard, respondent NM1, a seasoned trauma counsellor said the following:

I think for the people where it (giving) happens on a regular basis, [it] is when they have to pay for the schooling (of others). And I think I’ve heard it also with a lot of my friends, where we all feel that this is an area where you don’t have an option; where you can’t refuse, cos *when it comes to education, you have to help or assist.*²⁸⁷

Even on the macro level, education was seen as a pivotal key to the prospects of collective black empowerment. Respondent TM2 intimates as much in the following narrative:

²⁸⁵ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

²⁸⁶ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

²⁸⁷ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

And they are now rolling out a literacy scheme that is costing them six billion for the next five years. And you can see that there is an attitude that says we [can] develop more and we will make people empowered so that they will have *other alternatives*.²⁸⁸

The various narratives in this section highlight the way that education was perceived by respondents as both a signifier of class status, and a route to enhance social mobility.

Respondents recounted that those community members that were educated were expected to help with acquiring that possibility for others, or alternately they were tasked with helping communities of origin in other ways that benefitted them.

In most instances, however, education was not necessarily seen as an end in itself, but rather as a *means* to what TM2, (the above respondent) suggests is the goal of ensuring that people will have “other alternatives”. This is significant insofar as it speaks to a “deep structure” need that communities sought to fill through the intermediation of the educated members in their midst. It correlates to what Max Weber called the “life chances” ([1914], 1978: 927) that he believed each person possessed; these ‘chances’ comprising of the opportunities that they had (or did not have) to improve their quality of life. Weber asserted that these opportunities depended upon one’s social situation as well as on access to societal resources, both material and affiliative. In the Gauteng context, respondents suggested that their communities of origin laid claim to them on the affiliative as well as material levels, these communities leveraging black professional respondents as access points to improve their “life chances”.

7.2.5.3 “Those type of people [were] expected to be in a position to help”

Respondent TT1, the dread-locked black female accountant that I met in Parktown, explained to me that frequently those that were educated were positioned by community members as critical points of external leverage utilised for both reference and contact with other class (and racial) constituencies. She explained to me that “It takes somebody from the outside”²⁸⁹, someone who has had contact with multiple contexts, to be able to negotiate between these various ‘worlds’. Today’s black professionals are ideally placed both materially and symbolically at the nexus of these multiple contexts.

²⁸⁸ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

²⁸⁹ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

Respondent TS1 meets me at a home in Johannesburg's northern suburbs, where we sit looking out over a garden and sparkling pool. He has worked in the HIV/AIDs field for the past half decade, and he defines for me more concretely those characteristics he believes are associated with black people who are seen to have 'made it' in the 'outside world'.

[Those characteristics are] a stable job; also those who have been absorbed into the mainstream economics. And the evidence of that would probably be having a car, a house; basically [being] affluent. So there is a lot of expectation for that category of people, of black people, to in one way or another to help them (disadvantaged) out. [To] help those that have basically not made it. I think they arrive at a conclusion that you are better off and you are able to help out. And then in cases where you say "I don't have", it's kind of a let-down to say that; *you can't say that you don't have.*²⁹⁰

Respondent NM1 is a senior trauma counsellor who is married and has two children in private schools. She describes black 'middle class' status as inseparably accompanied by expectations from the 'community'. She puts it this way:

The 'Black Diamonds' – I think it's those kind of people who have loved the townships and [yet] go to stay in the suburbs. I mean these people (Black Diamonds) it's not like you're getting a lot of money, but their thing is usually from ten thousand [and up]. ... People whose children are in private schools, who've got cars – there is that expectation that you should give. And then if you are working and you have a job, there is that expectation that you have to take care of your [extended] family – it's your obligation in which to do that.²⁹¹

Respondent GM1 is a vivacious and outspoken woman with irrepressible flair. She dresses in bright traditional African garb and speaks with dramatic and spirited energy. I meet her at the health facility where she oversees a large department in a provincial hospital. She echoes the theme of black professionals being used as entry points to larger pools of access, by lower class community members.

So time and again [it] is that kind of thing in the black community that, especially now with this poverty – poverty being felt so much. I mean even me as a professional, do you think I've got money?! So it's that kind of thing that I think as black professionals we always say "Sho!" when we meet together and debrief...

[Because] when people look at us, they look upon us as the elite of the community. Not, I'm not talking about the people now that are far away in northern suburbs where they

²⁹⁰ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

²⁹¹ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

don't see them. *We are the people that are being seen.* And people, the community, perceive us as the 'have's' of their community, you know.²⁹²

Another respondent, SM1, who works in the telecommunications industry, corroborates this rendition of the pattern of the frequent collective cooption of black professionals as resources and as well as points of strategic leverage, (as did other respondents too: JL1, MP1, MN1, GM1).

When you are someone who works, and maybe who drives, and people always see you wearing a certain type of clothes and then obviously they associate you with money, with status and everything. So they think that you should be able to assist them and help them in whatever form they may require from you. The term that has been used recently is, especially referring to the black people, is the so-called 'Black Middle Class'. Obviously, you'll say "That guy is up-and-coming, he's doing well, fairly well, and so he should be [able to help]". *So, those type of people, generally they are expected to be in a position to help.*²⁹³

Within the above narratives, respondents repeatedly depict the role of the black professional class as one that is perceived as being "able to assist" those from lower class strata. As respondent NM1 suggests, "It's your obligation in which to do that". Respondent TS1 adds in a comment about the compulsory nature of this responsibility as "you can't say you don't have" pointing to this responsibility as essentially a community regulatory device. In essence, the message is: if you want to be a member of this community – you must follow these reciprocity ground rules.

Another interesting point surfaces in the narrative of one of the respondents above. She elaborates on *why* the professional class in particular is targeted by these lower class echelons (in comparison, for instance to other higher classes). GM1 suggests that it is related to accessibility – "we are the ones that are seen". GM1 then goes on to describe the relationship of the black poor to the black elite as "I'm not talking about the people now that are far away in northern suburbs where they don't see them."

In contrast to the above description of the "northern suburb" black elite, respondent SM1 suggests that the black professional class is accessible to lower echelons: "people would always see you ... So they think you should be able to assist them and help them..." This and other previous narratives capture a picture of the black professional class as consolidated not so much

²⁹² Interview: GM1, Soweto, 22 August, 2007.

²⁹³ Interview: SM1, Fairland, 23 May, 2007.

to each other (as could be expected of co-members within the same economic strata²⁹⁴), but rather as still enmeshed in particular provisional ways to working-class communities. This does not negate, however, the possibility that respondents are simultaneously experiencing an increasingly driving pull towards ‘middle-class’ consumer behaviours.

7.2.6 *TransFixations*: The Reification of Consumption

Within the beginning sections of this chapter are highlighted what respondents recounted as class signifiers within the historic settings of traditional community contexts; namely education was mentioned as well as various capital-intensive assets such as vehicles and refrigerators. These were recognised as symbols of ‘success’ and status within communities of origin and were noted here in order to provide a brief representation of the contexts from which respondents came. Notions and enactments of class change over time, however, and our second goal is to elucidate how respondents defined class in the decade post-1994 so as to better understand the designations and inter-relations of classes in this more recent setting. Boldly featured in this contemporary context is the role that consumption habits play in defining the consumer playground that encompasses the social worlds of respondents.

7.2.6.1 *“We all want to be ‘Daddy’ from next door”*

Respondents suggested that class signifiers are changing over time, with now newer ‘symbols’ marking the ranking of social and economic strata. From rural and township symbols of status, to metro urban consumption experiences and attainments, shifts in the posturing and performance of class are making themselves felt amongst respondents.

Respondent GC1 meets me at his downtown offices in-between various other meetings and engagements that he has. He tells me that he has worked for the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and is now a human rights activist. He compares the ‘old’ and ‘new’ worlds of class, by making a differentiation between the traditional rural system and the more current class designations based on a more fluid cash system.

²⁹⁴ This is not to say that respondents indicated that there is not a genuine ‘comradery’ within the black professional class itself, but rather to point to their class strata as less ‘fused’ than would otherwise be expected. This was particularly exemplified in narratives that spoke of their *identity* as based on their communities of origin as opposed to their future trajectory.

A man, a man's wealth [previously] will be noticed by how many kids and how many wives and how many cows that person would have. So now, 'civilization' is now saying, one wife, one kid or two kids, and then you receive your worth by what car or what house; [or] how many Rands do you have in your bank account?²⁹⁵

Respondent EM1 is an engineer who works for a major mining house. He is a top earner and within a decade has probably doubled his salary three times. His narrative in particular, highlights features that associate class status in the post-1994 context, with frequently non-sustainable consumption habits.

Especially in the black community, coming up to the middle class – there is pressure. If you look at cars, there are many different models of cars and all sorts of things; this estate living with townhouses and whatever. Everybody wants to get to that level and drive that car ...

So there is a lot of pressure and that's why sometimes in the townships where even people are poorer – that's why they tend to spend money on these useless things. You know, you give somebody a R100 [and] they would rather, uh, instead of getting something that will help them, [they] go and buy themselves a nice pair of Nike so they would look nice with their friends, but yet at home there is no bread.²⁹⁶

Respondent TM2, the shiny-shoed lawyer who I met in Sunnyside Pretoria, explained the materialistic turn as the drive "for more".

But in your urban communities we, we're driven with getting rich quickly. We, we all, there's this expression that I've learnt from Guyana, that "*We all want to be 'Daddy' from next door*", because he always has something you don't have. Whether you want a spade, you say go ask next door and get a spade. So you also want to be "The guy from next door" who drives a Mercedes Benz. So, all of us are driven by that.

The motivation that we have is no longer in community but it's in more money, promotional work, you know, the overseas holiday. And in order to afford all that you need to get more and more and more. And Thabo Mbeki said at the Nelson Mandela lecture, there's a voice that says "Get more, get rich, get rich," and every time, we listen to that voice, you know. Hence most people don't sleep; whether they have an 8 to 4 job they will come back and do something else that gives an extra capital.²⁹⁷

The above narratives point to consumption habits as new symbols of class through which GC1 suggests "you receive your worth" and status ascriptions. Mining engineer EM1 remarks that this "pressure" even drives lower classes to aspire to these consumer trends so that they dress

²⁹⁵ Interview: GC1, Marshalltown, 31 October, 2007.

²⁹⁶ Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007.

²⁹⁷ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

well, but “yet at home there is no bread”. Respondent TM2 refers to this trend as acquiescence to the little voice that says “get rich, get more, get more”.

Moreover, on a deeper level respondents intimated that part of their having higher class status was intrinsically tied into enacting provisionary roles; what lawyer TM2 calls the aspiration to be the (sugar) “‘Daddy’ from next door”. Additionally, being able to be the rich “guy from next door” who provides you with what you need, carries with it certain types of prestige and recognition. This is important to mention as one of the very real ‘benefits’ that black professional respondents receive for their benefactor roles. Insofar as this is more of a latent and implicit kick-back, few respondents cited the recognition that comes with patronage as a primary motivator for why they gave, but several (JR1, BT1, TM2) mentioned it as a sort of ‘fringe benefit’.

7.2.6.2 “I have arrived ... if I want it, I can get it!”

In terms of the post-1994 context, multiple respondents talked about the trend towards *individual* consumption as a sign of class status²⁹⁸. In fact a majority of respondents qualified their comments about current class dynamics in terms that defined class as a variable that twinned together personal income and personal consumption habits.

Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents indicated that (1) Income Level²⁹⁹ was the primary class indicator amongst contemporary Gauteng black communities, followed by the ranking order of (2) Influence and Power, (3) Educational Level, and finally (4) Race as the last and least powerful predictor of ‘class’.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁸ By making a comparison between ‘class’ and ‘status’ ascription in his seminal research, Goldthorpe (2008) comes to the conclusion that status trumps class in the prescription of consumptions habits. He suggests that: “When we look at things like the risk of unemployment, or lifetime development of earnings, it is clear that class, not status, is important. If we shift, however to another field, that of cultural consumption – the extent to which people participate in various forms of music, theatre, dance, cinema, and the visual arts – then we get the reverse result” (Goldthorpe 2008: 351).

²⁹⁹ Respondents in their narratives indicated that they felt that income was a prime indicator of class. SM1, the Telecommunications expert that I meet in Fairlands, puts it this way: “It’s a ‘class’ thing, it’s a ‘status’ thing when you’re really in a certain *income bracket*. And also depending ‘where’ you work; like if I work in downtown Jo’burg .. that’s how you’re perceived.” (Interview: SM1, Fairlands, 23 May, 2007). A very successful business entrepreneur, Respondent ST1, summarises similar sentiments: “Class? I think it’s economically defined. And you will start seeing it in different social groupings ... The whole marketing that they’ve pinned down, you know, ‘Black Diamonds’; it’s definitely economically defined.” (Interview: ST1, Blackheath, 16 October, 2007).

³⁰⁰ This information gleaned from survey Question # 38.

Not only through the survey data, but also through their narratives respondents indicated that they felt that income was a prime indicator of class. SM1, the telecommunications expert that I met in Fairlands, puts it this way:

It's a 'class' thing, it's a 'status' thing when you're really in a certain *income bracket*. And also depending 'where' you work; like if I work in downtown Jo'burg .. that's how you're perceived.³⁰¹

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As the leading class indicator, a person's income level was additionally signified through certain individual 'lifestyle' attainments – a subject to which we turn next.

Respondent LB1 is a doctor who works at Baragwanath Hospital. She meets me in a side ward amidst the hectic cacophonous sounds of the hustle and bustle of patients being treated in surrounding units of this large Soweto hospital. LB1 is an attractive 35 year-old woman; she wears a scoop-necked form-fitting dress over which a medical smock of sorts hangs loosely along with her stethoscope. LB1 pauses amidst her busy work to talk to me about what she currently experiences as pivotal *signifiers of class* within her contemporary social circles.

I think in the African community, people are truly defining themselves [in terms of] the outside world because it is something tangible. It is something that you can make a statement that "*I have arrived*" – the car you drive, and the people you hang out with, and the amount of money you can spend and I mean people have gone to such [lengths]... [it] is an affluent thing to do. What kind of brandy do you drink, what kind of scotch do you drink? I mean people are talking about these things, what kind of malt is it – it is a single malt, a mixed malt, these are things that people are talking about, that feel they have come up in the world. People are talking cigars and what kind of cigar is it, is it a Cuban, is it ... Very superficial, you might think – but I think where I stand it is a 'definition' of a people who are trying to say "We have come out of bondage; we deserve as much as other people have had – *if I want it I can get it!*"³⁰³

Respondent TT1, the black female accountant who I meet in a corner office in Parktown, also echoes the sentiments expressed above regarding the tangible 'signs' of current class status.

³⁰¹ Interview: SM1, Fairlands, 23 May, 2007.

³⁰² Interview: ST1, Blackheath, 16 October, 2007.

³⁰³ Interview: LB1, 31 August, 2007.

The car that you drive [or] where you live or where you reside – the suburb that you stay in. Uhm, sometimes even the person that you're married to; I know it sounds ridiculous, [but] that classifies where you stand in terms of the society in Johannesburg. I think when you move around in circles, let's say I work for a particular company; you can feel when you don't fit into a particular class. [For instance], the car you drive. And I know it's [a] very naive thing, but it's actually very real.³⁰⁴

Respondent JB1 is a highly urbanised young man; he is a metro-male 'generation x' prodigy. He meets me in the 'arty' post-modern section of Parktown in low-slung ripped jeans and a stylish turtle-neck. He suggests that it's all about what he calls the 'cheese-boy' phenomenon:

Like I mean the whole 'cheese-boy' thing. You know, if you understand what that is ... it comes from a certain place – it comes from a certain mentality - people like the 'cheese-boys'. [From] kids that could not afford, or kids that can afford to put cheese on their bread; [whereas] we can't.³⁰⁵

From scotch to mixed malts, to cigars, cars and even spouses, class signifiers amongst respondents have made the material turn and have also shifted from assets that were more readily available for community consumption (the vehicles and fridges that were more freely appropriated by the community) to the "cheese"³⁰⁶ that now only certain people benefit from. The speed of this shift, however, has not come free of charge; its residual impact is reflected in respondents who though they are now full-fledge professionals, still primarily identify with those who don't ("[whereas] we can't") have the 'cheese'. The ways that respondents spoke about these divides demonstrated that their sights were not on the pastures they were currently in, but rather on the grass that was present on either side of the fence they found themselves riding.

7.2.7 *TransPeerations*: Deconstructing Class Mobility in Relation to the 'Other'

Written in the late 1950's under the shadow of the Algerian war for independence, *The Wretched of the Earth* was penned by Frantz Fanon as an attempt to unveil the ways that the colonial influence systematically tyrannised its subjects' minds and lives. Fanon clearly identified one of the most effective instrumentations of this tyranny as the internalisation of the 'imitation' instinct'; imbibed in such a way that the colonised form themselves in the image of their

³⁰⁴ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

³⁰⁵ Interview: JB1, Parktown North, 14 August, 2007.

³⁰⁶ In her research on class stratifications in Soweto, Ceruti (2007) points to how participants indicated that class was frequently defined by food consumption habits.

oppressors.³⁰⁷ Fifty years later, Homi Bhabha picked up and further engaged the same theme, developing it under the pseudo title of “mimicry”. Bhabha too focuses on the subtlety yet sinuous power of this instrument, suggesting that: “mimicry emerges as one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge” (Bhabha 1994: 85).

In the narratives that follow we encounter what initially and superficially may appear to smack of the “mimicry” of Western consumption patterns, but on further inspection turns out to be a discussion that in fact highlights respondents’ difference from the ‘other’.

7.2.7.1 “*Catch[ing] up with your white counterparts*”

Clearly economic and consumptive indicators impacted heavily on respondents’ current conceptions of ‘class’. However, a number of respondents also resisted the urge to singularly hang class designations on definitions that precluded the critical distinction between what constituted *black* in comparison to *white* ‘middle class status’; categorically these two versions of the ‘middle class’ were seen as both qualitatively and quantitatively different.

Respondent JM1, the banking sector retiree from Greenside, pushes these distinctions up, out, and into the open in the conversation we share over a cup of tea in her stately lounge.

I know everybody now is talking about ‘Black Diamonds’ – the new middle class. I think someone has to define for me what *is* the new (black) middle class firstly, before I accept that. Because if I look at the *old* middle class which is predominately white, (in comparison, the black middle class) is so low. ... I think [there is] this impression that there’s this huge (black) middle class. I think it is actually – I think it’s wrong! Because even the Western middle class, it took years to build, it took years to build.

But yes, a lot of people have moved up. ... People have got access to more opportunities today, but in terms of what they earn and what they can buy – I think we’re still very far to call that a ‘middle class’. Okay, its better than (the previous) struggling class. But whether you call it ‘middle class’, [can you compare] it to the same as the *old* (white) middle class that has been in South Africa? I don’t think that is the correct thing to say.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ Fanon describes internalised colonial oppression as follows: “The programme consists not only of climbing out of the morass but also of catching up with the other nations using the only means at hand. They reason that if the European nations have reached that stage of development, it is on account of their efforts: ‘Let us therefore’ they seem to say, ‘prove to ourselves and to the world that we are capable of the same achievement.’ This manner of setting out the problem of the evolution of under-developed countries seems to us to be neither correct nor reasonable” ([1963], 2001: 75).

³⁰⁸ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

Respondent NM1 is a senior trauma counsellor whom I interview in her organisation's board room on a sunny day in October. She puts it this way:

I just want to explain this issue in terms of the sort of 'middle class' (black) people and investing back. Uhm, I think one of the challenge that we face is that you kind of live this middle lifestyle that you expected to feed into. [But it is difficult] for you to *catch up with your white counterparts* whose parents don't expect anything from them [and] neither do the community.

And you find a group of middle class (black) people who have to match up with those (white) people in terms of the houses and the cars. But with us, if you're getting R 20,000, the 5000 or 6000 [of that amount] has to go there [to the extended family]. And that part of it – is just an expectation!³⁰⁹

'Black' and 'white' middle-class identities are contrasted in the above narratives, and respondents suggest that they are profoundly different on a number of fronts. Firstly, respondent JM1 asserts that added "opportunities" for black people does not automatically equate them (the newly enfranchised) with having an "old (white) middle class" identity.

Secondly, respondent NM1 points to one of the reasons as to why this is the case. She perceives that her professional "white counterparts" do not have nearly the same levels or types of "expectations" thrust upon them by relations from communities of origin. She indicates that this impacts not only on how black professionals spend their disposable income, but also on their overall sense of social responsibility in terms of what she calls "investing back".

Lastly, respondent JM1 points to actual levels of material disparity between historic white and black middle classes in terms of differences in the accumulation and transfer of wealth over time (this being one of the subjects that will engage our discussion in chapter 8). This she augments with the observation that perceptions around 'Black Diamonds' are skewed in the national psyche because of an inflated and inaccurate reading of their actual numbers; "I think [there is] this impression that there's this *huge* (black) middle class. I think it is actually – I think it's wrong!" On all of the above counts, (class identity, use of disposable [and non-disposable] income, asset accumulation and transfer, and actual numerical power³¹⁰) 'black' and 'white'

³⁰⁹ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

³¹⁰ UCT's Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing (2008) revealed that 'Black Diamonds' comprise 3 million of South Africa's population but are growing rapidly with a 15% growth rate that will most probably be increasing over time.

middle classes were found to be very different. Subsequent to the following summary, the author explores how these differences have in fact subjectively impacted on respondents.

7.2.8 Summary

Position-based reciprocities were investigated in this chapter under the rubric of two significant axes: the interaction between respondents' objective (material conditions) and subjective (class consciousness) experiences of class. In the first part of the chapter exploration was made of the 'objective' aspects of class, with these being specified in the survey data through the measures of (1) educational, (2) occupational, (3) income and (4) residential gauges. These 'material' class circumstances were then interrogated through respondent interviews which reflected on experiences of reciprocity both pre and post 1994. From this investigation process the following conclusions were drawn:

- **Parallel Systems of Exchange:** Customary exchange practices within respondent communities during the decades directly preceding 1994 embodied acts of agency in the face of the disenfranchisements of Apartheid's system of racial capitalism. Moreover black communities responded to circumstances of economic indeterminacy by means of the creation of what essentially became parallel systems of exchange. Reciprocities became key ways for communities to leverage agency and control over both human and material resources in ways that subverted them from external expropriation and yet still entrenched the value(s) of these resources within community circles. Respondents described the particular impacts of this parallel system in terms of the ways that it channelled exchanges into the following key reciprocity expressions:
 - (1) Practices that enhanced the pooling of resources (as exemplified in contingency schemes and co-operative mores which addressed conditions of economic insecurity, ill-circumstances or collective and ritualised community events).
 - (2) Mechanisms for the amassment of lump-sums of capital (e.g. stokvels as instrumental for capital-intensive purchases due to exclusions from formal monetary institutions).
 - (3) Support for the primacy of education and employment (community endorsement through collective material and in-kind support garnered in aid of those who would pursue employment or higher education at the bequest [and for the eventual benefit] of communities of origin).
- **Social Logics of Reciprocity:** The above mechanisms in turn reproduced particular social 'logics' that served as templates or normative 'rules of engagement' for how reciprocities were to be enacted:

- (1) Exchange processes followed informal channels and processes (as opposed to functioning under the auspices of formal institutions [e.g. they were enacted outside of the ambit of formal markets, and/or state apparatus]).
- (2) Resource transfers were generally internalised within black communities (as opposed to being expropriated outwards).
- (3) Reciprocities were primarily relationally based and accountable to community structures; (whilst they were highly ritualised, they were not institutionalised).
- The Regulation of Exchange: In their attempts to leverage power over resources (both human and material) communities of origin instituted regulatory devices to safeguard adherence to reciprocity mores. These included:
 - (1) Non-compliance to reciprocity mores was treated as a transgressive violation of sorts.
 - (2) Community grass-roots surveillance was used as a system for monitoring conformity.
 - (3) 'Disassociation' was implemented as a disciplining method that enacted the renunciation of ties of support and engagement.
- Shifting Landscapes: Whilst the above-mentioned pre-1994 patterns of reciprocity significantly pre-figured and shaped current exchange mores, other significant factors have also dramatically entered the equation post-1994, namely:
 - (1) Significant changes in the social locations of respondents as a result of the marked social mobility of black professionals.
 - (2) Changes in the physical mobility of respondents as black professionals relocate to the suburbs and metro areas
 - (3) Rising levels of within-race inequality as represented in the rising gini coefficient
 - (4) Substantial changes in the signifiers that define 'class' and status
- New Definitions of Class: Respondents identified the following as class signifiers in the post-1994 setting:
 - (1) They pointed to 'income' as the prime designator of class and status.
 - (2) New enactments of class featured in the formats of lifestyle enhancements and particular consumption habits.
 - (3) Whilst previously consumption patterns featured some level of collective use of assets, now the focus is primarily on the individual consumption of commodities.
 - (4) Distinctions between 'white' and 'black' middle class identities are coming to the forefront as fundamental differences, (material, numerical and perceptual) are reshaping definitions of 'higher class' status

- Changing Inter-class Dynamics: Due to growing levels of inequality within racial groupings, new types of divides (as well as changing forums of allegiance) are evidencing themselves:
 - (1) Communities of origin are using reciprocity norms as mechanisms through which to re-embed and co-opt material, human and information resources.
 - (2) This fosters an ongoing symbiosis and an entrenched co-dependence between black professional respondents and their communities of origin.
 - (3) Lower-class community of origin members look to respondents as potentially provisioning arms of the community due to the fact that they are ‘seen’ and still accessible.

7.3 Subjective Elements of Class

In the classic Marxist tradition, dialectic materialism exhibits in both the objective factors of class (‘material conditions’ that objectify class rank), and the subjective aspects of class (through the development of ‘class consciousness’). In the first half of this chapter, the author engaged with respondents’ conceptions of class in terms of material class signifiers in families of origin, as well as definitions of class in the new social order. These factors were interpolated along with a discussion of particular social practices (stokvel collections and non-compliance social sanctions) as well as certain social symbols (education, capital-intensive assets and more recently individual consumption habits) that respondents identified as critical to their notions of class.

The second half of chapter 7 turns its attention to the arena of inter-class relations. Here we look at how and why particular reciprocity repertoires are enacted between black professional respondents and lower class echelons. In this vein investigation is made of significant roles that respondents take on in the dance of interclass relations, and how these satiate the symbolic *Moral Economy* demands made by lower black classes on their black professional counterparts. Interrogated in this regard is the presence of class consciousness amongst respondents and the incongruous impulses that emanate when *class consciousness*³¹¹ is found to be contradictory to *class location*.

³¹¹ Leggett (1964) suggests that ‘*class identification*’ is in fact the most authentic measure of class consciousness.

7.3.1 Survey Data

Whilst the subjective elements of class have been variously ascribed to levels of class consciousness, class consciousness is by definition a very slippery notion to try and quantify. Moreover a number of significant attempts have been made over the years to engage with both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the notion of class consciousness (Centers 1949; Leggett 1964; Mann 1973; Giddens & Held 1982; Marshall et al 1989; Evans, 1992). It is Erik Olin Wright (1989: 64), however, who suggests that although class consciousness is not easily characterised as such, yet it produces behaviours that are observable:

Class consciousness is not susceptible to measurement. Class consciousness is a concept that specifies a set of mechanisms; what is 'measurable' (observable) are the *effects* of this mechanism. If class consciousness is a real mechanism ... then it must generate events ... and if it generates events, then in conjunction with our observational procedures, these events can generate 'facts'.

With the above in mind, this research rubric works off of the assumption that insofar as class consciousness is not concretely identifiable, yet it presumes a patterning of attitudes and subsequent actions that conversely indicate its presence. From this premise we turn to the second part of this chapter's research which focuses on the Vertical Axis of the initial scattergram in Graphic 7.1. The Vertical Axis pictorially represented levels of respondent class consciousness which emerged from their survey responses³¹². These survey questions³¹³ were based on the precepts of Wright's work, namely respondents' congruence with what Wright suggests are the three levels where class consciousness becomes enacted in behavioural outcomes: (1) Situational, (2) Institutional, and (3) Systemic.³¹⁴ As was previously noted, black

³¹² This pertains to survey Questions 39(d), 39(g), 39(h), 39(o), 39(r), and 39(t).

³¹³ In addition to Wright's work which influenced the formation of these questions, consideration was also given to Schlozman's research (1978) which identifies the following as characteristics of class consciousness: (1) Personal identification with the working class, (2) Felt workers were denied a fair share of society's rewards, (3) Considered the interests of workers and owners to be at odds, (4) Thought workers should stick together for collective power.

³¹⁴ Wright, Erik Olin (2001: 19), in an interview with Chronis Polychroniou, suggests the following typology. Note that in the interview Wright gives credit for this typology to Robert Alford and Roger Friedland in *The Powers of Theory*. Wright's summation of this typology reads as follows:

(1) *Situational* power refers to power relations of direct command and obedience between actors, as in Weber's celebrated definition of power as the ability of one actor to get another to do something even in the face of resistance.

(2) *Institutional* power refers to the characteristics of different institutional settings which shape the decision-making agenda in ways which serve the interests of particular groups. This is also referred to as "negative power" -- power which excludes certain alternatives from a decision-making agenda, but not, as in situational power, which actually commands a specific behaviour.

professional respondents followed a pattern of scoring very highly on the axis of ideological solidarity with the lower classes, a fact which belied their material accomplishments and higher class locations. Next we turn to the deeper question of why this was the case, delving into respondents' oral depictions and subjective disclosures.

7.3.2 Interview Narratives

7.3.3 *TransPositions*: A Self-Conscious Class Consciousness

One of the most salient qualities encountered in the respondents that I surveyed and interviewed was their ability to reflexively engage with issues surrounding their class consciousness. Moreover, respondents did not take for granted nor talk glibly about either their class locations or their class identity; in both instances they practised a type of *self-conscious* and introspective approach which simultaneously endorsed, and yet fundamentally questioned, the capitalist equation. Their approach was comparable to what Homi Bhabha describes as the ironic “difference” that is characteristic of “mimicry” (Bhabha 1994: 86):

the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. ... mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. Mimicry is, thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which ‘appropriates’ the Other as it visualises power. ... [it] poses an immanent threat to both ‘normalised’ knowledges and disciplinary powers.

In terms of the subjective aspects of their class identity, respondents approached this issue with a mimicry of feigned ‘traditional middle class’ sensibilities, coupled with a deep censure of ‘purely accumulative’ impulses. Many viewed the movements inherent in their ‘*TransPositions*’ as fundamentally instrumental; instrumental not only in terms of their own social and economic mobility, but also on behalf of those they considered to be significant lower class affiliates.

7.3.3.1 “*For most black people this is not a black thing to do*”

MN1 is a reputable ecumenical figure, a gentleman with an intense gaze which he dispenses from behind old-fashioned spectacles, and a distinguished powdering of grey across his hairline. I meet him in a somewhat ramshackle room of his down-town offices, where in a reflective

(3) *Systemic* power is perhaps the most difficult (and contentious) conceptually. It refers to the power to realize one's interests by virtue of the overall structure of a social system, rather than by virtue of commanding the behaviour of others or of controlling the agendas of specific organisations.

moment he encapsulates for me what he sees as the problem of entrenching a ‘middle-class consciousness’ amongst Gauteng’s professionals.

At this point, I think class is a ‘new consciousness’. I don’t think it still entirely defines the black members of [the] middle-class in that the second nature – at the heart – the black middle-class [person] is a black man or woman.

That’s why I say [that] as long as every black person has relations close to him, uncles, aunts, siblings, who are poor – you *can’t* pretty much call this person “class such-and-such”, because he really is too close to the pain of poverty to really not carry it with him. And that’s why I say [that] to entrench it (‘class’) – you probably need a hundred years [of] this ‘class thinking’.³¹⁵

In these comments MN1 captures the essence of what he sees as the collision of conflictual interests, the intersection of two paths whose end-points become increasingly divergent. On the one hand solidarity with recent experiences of poverty (notwithstanding affiliation with family members still entrenched therein), and on the other hand the path of increasingly ‘middle-class’ sensibilities and lifestyle enhancements. The overlay between these two, as MN1 suggests, will require a discordant morphing, a *TransPosition* of sorts, which will take time.³¹⁶

LB1, the Soweto doctor that I interview at Baragwanath Hospital, also reflects on this transposition and on the power of cultural expectations to still frequently *eclipse* class location.

I truly believe that we are at a time where everything is based so much on tradition, and the colour of who we are as a tradition. Black people can be upward and can own, and can have butlers, and can have these things, but the problem is that – *for most black people this is not a black thing to do* – it is such a white thing to do! And for most white people it is not a black thing to do; it is so common in white people who are of a certain standing even. So there’s a lot of transition in terms of people and their perspectives and paradigms about what is expected and what isn’t.³¹⁷

Norms and boundaries feature as themes in LB1’s narrative above, these being juxtaposed over the grid of changes over time. What remains constant, however, is the dissonance that respondents associate with the interaction between their communities of origin and their

³¹⁵ Interview: MN1, Braampark, 6 July, 2007.

³¹⁶ A recent study which confirms Sowetans’ ambiguity towards strict class designations is found in Ceruti and Mudau’s work (2006). What Ceruti and Madau did find, however, was a distinct *language* among Sowetans that housed the nuanced differences of a potent class stratification process at work.

³¹⁷ Interview: LB1, Soweto, 31 August, 2007.

prospects for upward mobility³¹⁸. Without formerly referencing it, respondents alluded to what Lukacs (1967, [1923]) suggested was at the core of proletariat class consciousness: the ‘consciousness’ that the reproduction of bourgeois class structure was a convention that whilst assumed as the ‘norm’ – was instead a ‘not normal’ aberration which assumes the exploitation of surplus value.

7.3.3.2 “[For the elite] affluence is ‘normalised’ and poverty is the ‘not normal’”

With the collar of his white cotton shirt open, and his khaki-trousered legs resting akimbo, respondent TS1 sits back and narrows his eyes. He proceeds to explain to me his self-consciousness about the fact that whilst his black middle class status ‘requires’ of him to stay invested in the upliftment of those of lower class statuses, yet the black elite on the other hand have more successfully insulated themselves from these inter-class pressures.

Sometimes I feel that the responsibilities are just too much. Surely somebody must do something. [Then] I begin to point fingers at so-and-so [who] is a (black) millionaire. Why can’t he or she just help out? Why he or she can’t feel the same pressure or frustration?³¹⁹

TM2, the well dressed Pretoria-based lawyer whom I interview in Sunnyside, puts it this way:

It’s a Western capitalist lifestyle; [it] is bad. It’s the, “I would want my kids to go to the best schools”, but then at the expense of who? Because the moment you, your kids go to a best school, with that there’s a poor school. And it’s a trend you can’t run away from; otherwise I would have said I would want my kids to go to [the best] school. So it’s either at the expense of poor people or the expense of, you know, disadvantaged people. We’re riding on their waves because we always want to compete higher, you know.³²⁰

Moreover, NGO manager respondent TS1 suggests that the key to understanding the difference between black professionals’ feeling of connection and ‘responsibility’ to the poor, versus the black elites’ progressive physical detachment from the poor, lies in what he sees as the “normalisation of poverty” for the majority, whereas the ultra-rich have instead (albeit some only very recently) bought into the experience and values of “normalised affluence”.

³¹⁸ In chapter 1 of his (1980) text, Goldthorpe makes the interesting observation that in Marx’s writings very little attention is given to conceptions of *social mobility*. In this regard, Marx’ notions singularly viewed ‘mobility’ as a collective mobility per se. With in mind the broad-based influence of the current capitalist equation, and black middle class mobility in South Africa an individual journey, this is an oversight that cannot go unaddressed.

³¹⁹ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

³²⁰ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

I think for them (the African elite), poverty now is alien. They would give excuses as in: “No, you need to work harder. You are lazy” and all that; “We are where we are because we worked for it”. It may be true, but I find that those (African elite) have a disillusioned understanding of the poor and how to go about helping out, because *to them affluence is normal. So affluence is ‘normalised’ and poverty is the ‘not normal’*.³²¹

Essentially respondent TS1 communicates to me the crux of the manner: black professional respondents look back to poor and ‘working class’ communities of origin for much of their class consciousness, even though their own current standard of living usually placed them outside of the classic ‘working class’³²² definition. On the other hand, they perceive the black elite as increasingly associating themselves with the ‘values and sensibilities’ of the bourgeoisie. These two schizophrenic calls (proletariat versus bourgeois loyalties) play out as a competitive cacophony in respondents’ internal dialogues as well as social interactions.

Respondent MM2, a project officer who I meet in Braamfontein, describes this phenomenon in more depth:

You will find then two category of people, where people will say “I’m looking at myself, to improve my own lifestyle” you know, and “I wouldn’t care about the next person”. ... Then when people move up the ladder, they forget about people ‘on the ground’ – you look at uplifting yourself but then you don’t uplift other people as well. So you find that, when you move around Soweto, maybe a person has visited over the weekend, and they don’t even uplift the standard of living of their own family members!

So they are moving into this individualist [mindset] to say “If I can make it – it’s like me, myself, and I”. And they don’t look at the collective to say “If I have something – can I then really look at uplifting even my own family members, for them not to be where I am, but at least to bring them half way?”

So you find that the inequality gap between the ‘have’s’ even with black people, those who have money – just continue to acquire more money. And those who don’t have money – continue to suffer, and they continue to be poorer. So it is hard to balance the two.³²³

The above narratives focus on growing levels of within-race inequality that are significantly increasing in the post-1994 context (Bhorat & Kanbur 2006). Moreover whilst most respondents communicated a ‘working class’ consciousness, this is not to say that there were not some

³²¹ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

The reader to note that the last sentence in this transcription is a paraphrase by the interviewer.

³²² I use the term ‘working class’ in this context as a designation for proletariat identity and experience; certainly during the South African Struggle the black ‘working class’ were described in these terms also. For more on this see Pallo Jordan’s 1997 article entitled: “*The National Question in Post 1994 South Africa*”.

³²³ Interview: MM2, Braamfontein, 28 August, 2007.

respondents who veered towards a more ‘bourgeois’ mindset on some particular issues. Certainly we should problematise the assumption that class consciousness amongst this group of respondents was somehow uniform. (In line with this, note that the Graphic 7.1 scatter-gram spanned a variety of levels of class consciousness within the framework of the overall pattern that was identified.) However, the premise here is that the points of departure upon which these black professional respondents chose to deviate from the ‘working class’ script, were primarily related to circumstances that penalised the black middle class disproportionately. These included, for instance, financial and social pressure points that emanated from an inordinate caregiving or tax load leveraged on this relatively small sector of the population; namely areas affecting their incommensurate share of the ‘tax’ burden (referred to here both personally and structurally).

One of the several black lawyers interviewed, respondent TM2, met up with me in Sunnyside Pretoria where his shiny square-tipped black shoes accompanied me up the marble steps of a conference venue used by legal experts. His deference and social graces were evident in the way his agile body fluidly moved and in his dapper dress code. Speaking of the UNISA students that were meeting on the adjacent campus, he put forward several sequential opinions, with comments that seemed to be contradictory one to the other:

And when you pay tax or when you look at your pay-advance, and you see how much they’ve taken tax, you get angry when students are on strike! Do you know how much I pay for [these] guys to study?

Ah, and you know on the other hand, you really appreciate that the money (taxes) is being spent to uplift the lives of the people. But as an individual, of course, it (giving) will obviously be, uh, [based] on relationship or out of people knowing you.³²⁴

Respondent TM2 then went on to comment on what he sees as the double-edged (and again contradictory) nature of the ‘grant economy’ equation.

My fear is that we might become a grant economy, where a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot of people depend on grants. ... and that will stall the economic growth.

But the *objectives* of the social development, social development and welfare, I agree with that. You know there are poverty alleviation schemes in the rural areas; there are food packages and all that. They really [do] assist, uh, people who are poor.³²⁵

³²⁴ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

³²⁵ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

In the previous narratives, again the repeat chorus of discordant impulses make themselves heard. Respondent TM2 agrees with the “objectives” of poverty alleviation schemes for which he is being heavily taxed, but simultaneously his bourgeois mindset communicates itself in his fears regarding a grant economy system that would “stall economic growth”. How respondents hold simultaneous allegiance to these contradictory scripts is what will next engage our investigation, with a discussion specifically of the negotiated roles that they play as they enact these bridge-spanning functions.

7.3.4 *Trans*Actions: Intermediary Roles and Repertoires

In his work on social stratification, Anthony Giddens (1992) suggests that two definitive yet particularistic aspects surface as the primary activities of class: (1) ‘Class awareness’ on the one hand, which is linked to common lifestyle and consumption patterns amongst members of the same class, and/or (2) ‘Class consciousness’ which is derived from a class solidarity which translates class interests into collective action. The second of these (class consciousness) stems from a more Marxist perspective regarding the impetus for class actions, whilst the former (class awareness) speaks to more recent readings of class originating from within the modern (Wallerstein 1989) and post-modern (Macey 1993) eras.

What was highlighted in the previous section of this thesis was the growth of respondent class awareness in terms of increasing standards of consumption; subsequently we now turn to the presence of class consciousness as demonstrated in respondents’ actions: reciprocity roles that supported solidarity with the working classes. These enactments housed a spectrum of tasks and responsibilities in which respondents described themselves as ‘channels’, ‘conduits’, ‘points of connection’, ‘referral systems’, and ‘links in the chain’ under the overall banner of intermediation roles.

7.3.4.1 “*It’s like I am a hosepipe*”

Respondent ST1 epitomises what one could expect a successful businessman to look like; he walks into the Cresta Mall where I meet him with an easy and confident stride, briefcase in one hand and the latest cell phone in the other. He sports a stylish watch and a fashionable hair cut; he is well heeled and articulate. Respondent ST1 describes the industry that he is in and explains that he runs a company that targets the niche of creating synergistic connections between big

businesses and small to medium enterprises. The income category that he checks in his survey indicates that he has been more than successful in this venture. He explains to me that his aspiration is to *span* economic and ideological divides:

My concept has always been that I need to be able to be in the boardroom (effectively mix with corporate entities), *and* be on the field (being supportive of grass-roots initiatives). So, being able to speak the boardroom talk, [but also] have corporate[s] use their monies to fund development aspects.³²⁶

Multiple respondents explained that whether voluntarily or by cooption, they used their professional auspices as a medium that fostered giving back to their communities of origin. One of the lawyers that I interview, BT1, described this as a semi-mandatory process:

The fact that I come from the poor rural areas, it just made it worse. People expected ah; people [who] could not pay Lawyers would always then come there (to the law offices); always through my parents or through my uncle or someone. So you have this duty that you've got to actually go defend these people and they don't pay you! And you can't sue them, because then it's a big issue...³²⁷

Respondent GM1 is a talkative, vivacious and colourful woman who heads up a health department unit. She tells me that in most instances there is an explicit 'expectation' that one uses their professional auspice and resources for the enhancement of the community.

There is such a lot of demand [on] black professionals. Like the Doctor, who is a Doctor when he goes to the community, whether he likes it or not, he's a Doctor! [Also] when there's a function, say it's a funeral [or] somebody is getting married, even the presents... Because when there are funerals, your car, it's budgeted that it's going to carry visitors; your car it's going to make the funeral look good.³²⁸

Respondent EM2 who is an engineer at a major mining house, describes the role of black professionals as conduits for resource procurement by their less fortunate community affiliates.

*Ja, it's like I am a hosepipe you know, as it waters I get wet in the process, but it's going somewhere; like a warehouse or something.*³²⁹

As channels for both resource procurement and conveyance, respondents articulated that they in turn used their professional auspices as mechanisms through which to benefit their affiliated requisitioners. They did this both informally as well as through more formal routes; in fact many

³²⁶ Interview: ST1, Blackheath, 16 October, 2007.

³²⁷ Interview: BT1, Pretoria, 9 November, 2007.

³²⁸ Interview: GM1, Soweto, 22 August, 2007.

³²⁹ Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007.

times they conducted themselves informally within the jurisdictions of more formalised institutions.

7.3.4.2 “*The banks they treat me as somebody who is reliable to invest in ... they (poor) cannot do that ... so [they] will ask me*”

Particularly of note were the various comments that highlighted the role that respondents felt they played in accessing funds from within the formal monetary system; the benefit of the “overdraft facility” that was afforded them as professionals, and which they used on behalf of less fortunate family and community members.

Respondent TN1 is a Soweto Priest who has spent many years with a parish in Pimville. He meets me at his home southwest of the city, where we sit on brown suede couches opposite a black lacquer coffee table upon which rest African artefacts. He recounts to me how he has used his credit capacities in order to facilitate helping many members of his extended family, parish and community.

And even to this day, somehow I still help if they ask me to help. Like [they] would phone and say “Listen, I don’t have money, can you do this?” And then, because this country and *the banks they treat me as somebody who is reliable to invest in*, e.g. they give me the loan, then also this facility – the overdraft. And then a person [like them] *they cannot do that, so [they] will ask me*.

When I say I don’t have money, I don’t mean like “I don’t have a cent in my pocket, I don’t have any personal money”, but I’ve got the bank’s money in my pocket, so I’m able to use it; so that’s what I’ve been doing.³³⁰

Respondent BT1, who works for a well known security studies think-tank, describes it this way:

You’ve got better resources. I mean, I can walk into a bank and appreciate an over-draft, if I don’t have the money. Or I could call a friend somewhere and stuff.³³¹

The narrators above indicate that the breadth of their resource procurement network extends across multiple sectors and that their ability to generate resources spans *formal* as well as *informal* systems. This capacity is an asset that is in turn recognised and appropriated by lower class members who have not, as of yet, gained full endorsements of gainful admission into these more formalised systems.

³³⁰ Interview: TN1, Eikenhof, 31 May, 2007.

³³¹ Interview: BT1, Pretoria, 9 November, 2007.

7.3.4.3 “I’m working like an ‘information centre’ for the community”

Whilst many respondents described themselves as resource conduits, they secondly suggested that they frequently functioned as a referral system to other available ports of call, if they could not meet immediate needs themselves.

Respondent JR1 is a slightly built Muslim man who resides in Diepkloof, Soweto. He currently serves on various education boards and councils, but has a background specifically in the labour union movement, having worked for both NUMSA³³² and the CCMA³³³. As we discuss inter-class relations within his community, he describes the following scenario:

If you come to me, and you need bread – [and] at that time I don’t have bread – but *I will make means through the connections that I have to get bread*. Like the local bakery there, the guy who owns it is a friend of mine and if I go to him and say “There’s a problem here and we need to assist”, he will definitely assist in that. Even if it is not really from my own resources, but by referring him, showing him [and] advising him, it’s giving help.³³⁴

FN1 is a young case worker for an organization that works with survivors of violence (both current and historic). He tells me of his organisation’s work with memorialisation and commemoration projects. He is young and able, but slow and careful in his speech. He meets me in a small downtown office in a room adjacent to where the organisation’s secretary sits smoking and talking non-stop on the telephone. As we commence with the interview, he depicts himself as an “information resource” for his community of origin.

Where I stay, the community members they used to come to me to ask for advice; or they invite me if there’s a family [or] community member who’s suffering. They say “Can you direct us where we can go, [or] where we can do this?” ... They come to [me] for information. I can say at that time, *I’m working like an ‘information centre’ for the community*.³³⁵

Respondent TM2, the well-dressed lawyer that I meet up with in Sunnyside Pretoria, tells me about the many networks that he hooks people into. He typifies this reciprocity process as a large vortex of ongoing referrals:

³³² NUMSA stands for the National Union of Metal-workers of South Africa.

³³³ CCMA stands for the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

³³⁴ Interview: JR1, Soweto, 28 November, 2007.

³³⁵ Interview: FN1, Braamfontein, 16 November, 2007.

Because also, working in (respondent's place of employment) has quite a variety of networks. So you could not necessarily assist financially, but you could also assist with information. You could also assist with referrals. Even recently people, because of the law degree you know, I have been consulting a lot of people, and referring them to appropriate bodies to some people where I know they would get legal advice for free, and all that. So that - that assists.³³⁶

Respondents depicted themselves as not only channels of material resources, but also information resources, such that if you could not “assist financially ... you could also assist with information” (TM2). This was done through accessing relational networks so as to “make means through the connections that I have” (JR1). Moreover, all respondents assumed that using the mechanism of these non-formal relational channels was the most natural and effective modus operandi for how to best garner resources.

This very relational referral system was characterised by intricate communication and reciprocity check-points. Respondent MM4³³⁷ described this as a process whereby if you promised but “*did not deliver*”, you would lose “*integrity*” in the eyes of recipients. Moreover accountability was an integral part this equation and respondents communicated that they felt responsible to ‘deliver’ to their communities of origin. In much the same way, recipients were also responsible to respondents regarding whether they used respondents’ bequeathments for the purposes for which they had been designated. Next we will look at this second part of the formula: respondent stipulations regarding on what they wanted their benevolence resources spent.

7.3.4.4 “*We play a facilitating role*”

Many respondents suggested that they desired their contributions (to needy members within their relational contexts), to be used for activities that would increase what Max Weber described as a

³³⁶ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

³³⁷ Interview: MM4, Hillbrow, 12 November, 2007.

Respondent MM4 is a middle-aged woman who works as an education officer for a programme that services the centre-city's destitute. She has kind eyes, and I sense a compassionate ‘Gogo’ heart behind her commitment to the work that she does. She suggests to me that she is a *link in the chain* that connects provisions from those who have to those who don't have; she also adds that she is mindful to follow up on what she commits to. “I'm careful not to promise something that I will not deliver. But if there is need, I would communicate that need to somebody who would help. Then if I had a positive response, it is then that I would communicate to the person in need that we are going to get this particular thing for you. Because there is a danger in promising – when you do not deliver. It's like people will not, you know, they will actually doubt or question your integrity, especially when we work with communities.”

recipient's "life choice"³³⁸ options. As previously mentioned, education was viewed as a high priority in this regard, as was housing (temporarily accommodation for those studying or looking for work in the city - as recounted by respondents MM1, VM1, KJ1, BT1, FM1, TN1, JM1, VN1), as well as access to transport in cases of emergency or in instances when it would enable increased employability.

SM1 works in the telecommunications industry and meets me at company headquarters. I wait for him in an ultra-nouveau foyer that houses life-size modern art statuary and low-slung chunky furniture in muted colours. SM1 is not a tall man, but he carries himself with assurance and sports a handsomely shaven head and singularly angular features. He has kindly organised for us to meet in one of the company board rooms, and so as we check availability and then situate ourselves, I request his permission to 'out' the proverbial tape-recorder and proceed with the interview questions. SM1 provides me with examples of when he has helped others with transport-fare in order to increase their possibility of getting work or augmenting their reliability.

Because I'm fairly known in the community, they will always come to me and I'll be able to offer them help. Whatever they would [need], maybe they need transport sometimes... Recently I've been approached by somebody I know [saying] "I need taxi fare; I've got a new job, I'm going for an interview and I just need to get there". And then you may need to assist that person up until they are able to earn their income and just carry themselves.³³⁹

Another professional, TM2, the well heeled lawyer whom I meet in Pretoria, tells of a similar situation:

Like someone will say "I must go to Polokwane. I have an interview. You know, I can't really afford to go there but can you assist?" It's out of that. And the response that you'd normally get is "Yes, I could help, I could meet you half way, I could ask someone to drive you there - I could get you a lift."³⁴⁰

³³⁸ This term emerges out of Max Weber's work ([1914], 1978: 927) in *Economy and Society*. According to Weber, each person possessed 'life chances' (*lebenschaucen* [German]) which comprised of the opportunities they had to improve their quality of life. These 'opportunities' depended upon one's social situation as well as access to societal resources (both material and affiliative).

³³⁹ Interview: SM1, Fairland, 23 May, 2007.

³⁴⁰ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

Respondent TS1, the NGO manager who works in the HIV/AIDS field, recounts recurring instances in his experience of helping others with transport, as do others too (SL1, TM2, JM1, BT1). He describes it as: “*we play a facilitating role*”.³⁴¹

7.3.4.5 “*To propel [them] into their future*”

On the whole, respondents wanted their ‘benevolence’ assets to be used to expand the beneficiary’s ‘life-chance’ possibilities for the future. Several respondents mentioned, however, that they were irritated when their designated benevolence funds were used for things other than these ‘expanding life chance’ essentials. TM2, the well dressed and nattily-shoed lawyer whom I meet in Sunnyside, Pretoria, recounts this story about fancy foot-wear.

Let me give you a classical example. My younger brother wants to wear shoes that are more expensive than the ones I wear! I really had to sit down and talk about it, “Look brother, they are very expensive shoes. I don’t wear those shoes myself. And I won’t feel comfortable buying you (more) expensive shoes than I wear.” And he understood that. But, you know, he, he’s a teenager, so he always have a lot of tactics that he will do. And every time we’ll talk about it. ... So, about that we say “Look, this can’t work; this can’t work!”³⁴²

Respondent MP1 oversees the citizen leadership unit of an influential NGO based in Pretoria. He has his fingers in any number of large and high profile government initiatives and yet he still gives half a day on a weekly basis to being a ‘patron’ to a small crèche in one of the more destitute areas of Kliptown. When I interview him he strikes me as an exceptionally wise but humble sort of chap; he wears jeans and a non-descript T-shirt to our meeting. Through his survey responses I discover that his income regularly supports at least 6 members of his extended family. He recounts for me that he too is discriminating in the way he wants his community investments used for ‘essentials’, and not just ‘luxuries’.

I will actually make a typical example with my sister’s boy. He had a phone and then his cell phone was, you know, it sort of fell down – it stopped working. And so he wanted a cell phone. I said “No, you don’t need a cell phone right now”. So actually we still have to, he can still wait up to a certain time, you know until we’re okay. So basically [these] are issues like luxury.

But if he says to me “I need shoes for school”, then I would definitely buy the shoes for school ... I would actually gladly do that. I think for me, that’s the most important thing.

³⁴¹ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

³⁴² Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

And I think that has been one of the important aah issues that drives me to say “It’s not only about giving – *it’s also about helping somebody else to see his life in the coming five years, ten years time*”³⁴³.

Another respondent, EM1 who is a mining house engineer, shares this perspective:

But for somebody who just wants money for clothes when they call you; they never call you to ask like ja, “I need to go for a driver’s license; I need money to do that” – or something that will help them for the future – to take them out from where they are. But if they will just ask for money for clothes or shoes – that’s really just depressing. ... That is why I say: believe in the time and effort to get the person to *be* someone, [to] *propel [them] into their future*.³⁴⁴

Respondents repeatedly described instances in which they played a “facilitating role”, at the behest of their less economically empowered affiliates, towards the aim of bettering the economic prospects of these community members. These resourcing energies focused on activities such as education, housing and transport that could facilitate increased employability and economic mobility prospects.

As opposed to having a ‘poverty mentality’ which respondent EM1 depicts as characterised by the making of “useless” choices (spending on disposables such as shoes and clothes), across the board respondents communicated sustainability as well as long-term impact, to be the desired outcomes of their giving. Whilst they narrated their goal of helping others in terms of immediate relief, they communicated that they wanted these resource augmentations to feed into projections towards the future. Respondent MP1 suggested that its’ “about helping somebody else to see his life in the coming five years, ten years time”, so as to “propel them into their future” and “take them out from where they [currently] are” (EM1).

From these narrations two significant factors should be given attention: the one relates to the individual (as opposed to collective and structural) nature of respondents’ interventions in the lives of lower class community members, and secondly, the way that these interventions reside outside of formalised institutions and are rather ‘hidden’ within deeply relational repertoires. In that black professional respondents are intimately ‘class aware’, they communicated their knowledge of consumer trends and even acknowledged the profound pull of such fixations. On the whole, however, they did not advocate for dramatically changing the capitalist system from

³⁴³ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

³⁴⁴ Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007.

which they were garnering significant benefits. Rather they sought to make impacts on what chapter 6 described as the ‘one-on-one’ basis, outside of the gaze of institutional powers. In this regard respondents did indeed display a ‘class consciousness’ of sorts (identifying with lower classes), but they did not use it in a collective or traditionally Marxist format in the interests of destabilising the dominant capitalist equation.

7.3.5 *Trans*criptions: Exposing ‘Hidden Transcripts’

In his seminal text *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, James C Scott describes a variety of resistance mechanisms used amongst the peasantry in Southeast Asia. Scott suggests that these resistance repertoires were generally not forthright as such, but rather that they spoke “truth to power” (Scott, 1990: 1) through a variety of subversive routes; they cloaked themselves outside of the purview of public discourse and instead emerged within the hidden spaces of “dissent subculture” (Scott, 1990: 108). In this regard, Scott asserts that the key to deciphering these instrumentations rests in capturing the elemental meanings behind everyday activities – decoding the hidden transcripts – the essential meanings that the peasantry were ascribing to particular behavioural repertoires.³⁴⁵

As respondents wrestle with the pull of their own bourgeois ‘class awareness’ whilst simultaneously being deeply aware of the ‘class consciousness’ of the poor³⁴⁶, what are the significations they attach to this complex dance of divergent allegiances? Moreover, what are the frequently camouflaged *Tran*scriptions that respondents subtly attach to the reciprocity mores that punctuate their lives; what are the imagined constructs that provide meaning to these reciprocity performances?

Three themes emerged within respondent narratives that provided indications to a patterning of meanings; the first two were experienced as contradictory pressures, whilst the third was an outgrowth of the interaction between the previous two. These themes surfaced as follows: (1) an underlying anxiety around poverty which necessitated a ‘contingency mindset’ accompanied by a temporal connection to community of origin supports, (2) what one respondent called the

³⁴⁵ Moreover, a perfect example of this is found in E. P. Thompson’s analysis of the “*Moral Economy*” behavioural repertoires of the English working class.

³⁴⁶ For instance, note Respondent GM1’s comment that “I’m from there”, indicating a sense of connection and understanding with circumstances of poverty.

legacy of “mental oppression” which resulted in an opposite and marked desire to detach oneself from anything to do with circumstances or conditions of poverty, and lastly (3) what one respondent described as the “privilege complex” in which respondents felt that although they themselves had ‘escaped poverty’, they experienced guilt around leaving others behind.

The outgrowth of the first impulse (#1) had respondents staying deeply tied³⁴⁷ to their communities of origin in an attempt to create a safety net for themselves (and the community) should either encounter ill circumstances that would require a collective response. The outcome of the second impulse (#2) was respondents strong, yet opposite, desire to disassociate and create distance between themselves and conditions of poverty because these were seen as compromising current prospects of class mobility and advancement. The third impulse (#3) functioned as an overlay between the first two impulses in that newly acquired middle class ‘privilege’ was perceived as a mechanism that could be used to satiate the incongruities of the first two impulses; class awareness could be kept through a maintenance of middle class consumption habits and aspirations, whilst class consciousness could still be aligned towards placating the poor by fostering the ‘life chance’ options of individual lower class members without challenging the larger capitalist equation itself. The covert nature of this ‘marriage’ to two very different trajectories is what brings to mind Scott’s argument that social transcripts are often hidden precisely because their presence challenges hegemonic assumptions.

7.3.5.1 “[There is] this huge anxiety around poverty”

Respondent NM1 is a senior trauma counsellor at a well-established NGO in Johannesburg. Everything about her shouts ‘middle class’; from her ‘flat’ accent and smooth articulation, to her jewellery and nails, she is a well-kept woman. She tells me that her husband is heading up one of UNISA’s³⁴⁸ business studies programmes and that her two children attend private schools in the suburbs. NM1 comes across as kind, genuine, and as a person who easily connects the dots between the impacts of individual and collective experiences of trauma. She explains to me the ways in which the trauma of poverty affects successive generational outlooks.

³⁴⁷ In chapter 8 we look at reciprocities through the lens of *frequencies* of association, which gives further depth to the issue of ‘connection’ between respondents and their communities of origin.

³⁴⁸ UNISA stands for the *University of South Africa*. It boasts the biggest student body in southern Africa, through the utilisation of a high rate of non-residential and international studies by extension.

But then what you find is that for the people who came from the poor communities, it's like they strive for money as a way of replacing the thing – that if I get money my problems will be solved. Because as children they felt I'm suffering, cos they defined their problems around the money. You know that "I'm suffering - I'm like this, because there's no money at home"...

And that is accompanied with a lot of anxiety around poverty – where you find that the people have money but it was so painful to be poor, [that] they become so anxious about not having money. Uhm... So I think your own woundedness and areas where you were wounded as a child - defines what you see as a quest for happiness.

So it's a combination of money being a definition of your status and saying "I was never valued or important as a person because I was poor, so I need this money accompanied by the fear of being poor". So the minute the people get, ... [this acquisition is coupled with] *this huge anxiety around poverty*.³⁴⁹

In the above narrative, respondent NM1 describes the internal dialogue that she perceives accompanies her own journey as a black professional emerging from the historical experience of poverty. This is relevant to this research insofar as only 23% percent of respondents indicated that their father's were 'professionals' and only 18% percent came from families where mothers were depicted as 'professionals'. Three-quarters of respondents came from families where parents were 'unemployed, un-skilled or semi-skilled'³⁵⁰ workers who experienced the ongoing and very real daily threats of economic insecurity. Insofar as 'middle class' status was thus a new phenomenon and experience for a majority of respondents, many expressed the need to hark back to community supports as a type of protective sheltering whilst they developed their own newly acquired social mobility – they expressed that cutting off ties from these networks was thus a threatening and anxiety-inducing phenomenon during this time of transition for them.

NGO leader TS1, is a senior manager overseeing several HIV/AIDS projects in the greater Gauteng area. He describes the possibility of materially disconnecting with his community of origin as an experience that induces "fear".

So it's just, those are the driving reasons to most of my giving. ... I think it would be rude to say I'm cutting off ties. Also for fear that there might be a genuine case that might

³⁴⁹ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

³⁵⁰ This information emanates from survey Questions #20 and #22, in which respondents were asked to characterise each of their parents as falling within one of the following categories: (a) unemployed, (b) non-skilled, (c) semi-skilled, or (d) professional. Note also that survey Questions #11 and #12 were used as a reliability cross-reference on parents' 'class location' in terms of their education: 72% percent of respondents' fathers did not have more than a high-school education followed by an even higher percentage (82%) of mothers who had not been educated past a matriculation (or lower) level. More discussion on inter-generational social mobility will be conducted in chapter 8.

arise in the future, and if I have announced that “No more ties”, I would be kind of rejected.³⁵¹

Respondent BT1 is a lawyer who grew up in Limpopo but currently resides in a house he owns in Kempton Park. In his Kempton Park home, BT1 gives pride-of-place to housing his uncle who financially sponsored BT1’s costs during his undergraduate and law school education. BT1 tells me that he also currently houses six other young people in his home, most of who are extended family relations or community members from his home area in Limpopo. On weekends BT1 drives back to Limpopo where his wife and child reside. As BT1 is keenly and personally aware of his ties ‘back home’, he describes the threat of disconnection from community reciprocity mores as:

There’s a sense that (we) will be cut off from that [provisional] network!³⁵²

In that a majority of respondents were first-generation and newly enfranchised members of the ‘middle class’, many shared collective experiences of poverty whose traumatising influences resulted in a residual “anxiety around poverty”. Interestingly enough, these feelings of economic insecurity were also twinned with a relational anxiety related to the potential of being “cut off” from communities or origin. In essence, respondents did not feel high enough confidence levels in newly acquired social or economic support systems in order to relinquish their support from communities of origin. In this regard, the enmeshments between black professional respondents and communities of origin, enacted a truly reciprocal pull one on the other. However, as the next narrative reveals, this has not always been an easy or comfortable alliance.

7.3.5.2 *“It is like wanting to dissociate yourself from the past, by denying the past”*

Respondent MM3 is a Struggle hero who spent more than a decade on Robben Island. He is one of the most humble and insightful men I have ever had the privilege of encountering. His story encompasses being incarcerated for spear-heading a food cooperative in Westrand Townships as well as teaching literacy classes during the Struggle. He underwent severe torture at the hands of Apartheid officials in the form of being stuffed into food-grain bags and then being lowered by helicopter ropes into cold dam water, up until the point of suffocation and near-death; one of his

³⁵¹ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

³⁵² Interview: BT1, Pretoria, 9 November, 2007.

eyes has been damaged by torture, and other forms of torture are evidenced by markings on other parts of his body as well.

I meet MM3 in Pretoria where he is the head of a large government department. We meet in his corner office where his long legs have room to stretch-out and where his proverbial cigarettes adorn the corner of his desk top. MM3 is a deep and profound thinker. At one point in his life he was an ardent AZAPO supporter; in his narrative the strong influences of pan-Africanism make themselves heard along with a stalwart Fanon and Biko bias.

MM3 explains to me why there is a ‘war within’ him regarding ‘class’; he surfaces the fact that upward mobility is experienced by the Struggle cohort as simultaneously a sell-out to the “oppressor’s” capitalist agenda whilst conjointly and ironically also a means by which to distance one’s self from the painful past.

You’re acting out that. And deep down in, you have so internalised the oppressor to the extent that now, to eject the oppressor, it’s going to take time. Because there’s going to be now this battle mentally, between the oppressor and the oppressed that is going to endure. In a different form, in that now you are going to be doing certain things unconsciously, which are essentially the oppressor activities. ...

Uhm, and it’s going to be hard. At times, you know, I mean, it’s forgivable to be seeing some of the things that we are seeing. I mean, (black) people that were involved in the Struggle, to be seen today to be the ones that are, that play the oppressor role. You know for me at times, it could be understood. And I’ve said previously that now, you can’t divorce yourself completely from where you come from, from your history, from your roots, you know. And now we see people acting out as though they’ve never been that thing (in the trenches).

I mean there are people that I know, that we were like call it “[We were in the] trenches together”. But [now] they’re out of that thing but they don’t want to have anything to do with the trenches (and poverty), because I think in a sense, subconsciously, it reminds them of what was happening there. And they don’t want to have any association with it. So ... that is what is happening in them. *It is like wanting to dissociate yourself from the past by denying the past*, [when in fact,] you recognise the past by denying it.³⁵³

Respondent MM3 encapsulates the contested sentiments around contemporary black class mobility by his assertions that during the Struggle, the capitalist trajectory was associated with the abuses of the “oppressor” system. Now that restrictions on black class mobility have been

³⁵³ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

‘somewhat’³⁵⁴ lifted, the deconstruction of this conjunction is being explored by black professionals albeit sometimes through an amnesiac renunciation of the past. MM3 vividly describes why the black middle class may sometimes veer towards disassociation as opposed to the encumbrance of ongoing relationship with communities of origin; in so doing, he highlights the ambivalence and love-hate symbiotic entrapment that overshadows black professional respondents’ social mobility.

7.3.5.3 “The ‘Privileged Complex’ ...like you owe the community because you’re the privileged one – you were able to escape”

E. P. Thompson’s work on conceptions of *Moral Economy* amongst the 18th Century English working class suggested that certain behavioural repertoires were enacted between classes in order to regulate a ‘just price’. These ‘just price’ regulatory devices served to lessen power disequilibria between classes; they surfaced a type of negotiating power between peasants and the land and capital owners. When effectively used, ‘just price’ repertoires also served the interests of potentially stabilising class inter-relations. Whilst subsequent historians and social theorists³⁵⁵ have focused primarily on the breach of *Moral Economy* protocols as reasons for the instigation of peasant insurrections, this research focuses on the utilisation of *Moral Economy* reciprocity mores as potentially placating mechanisms within the ambit of inter-class relations.

Thompson asserted (1971: 76-136) that crowd activity amongst the 18th Century working class was not the result of an irrational and disordered ‘mob’ at work, but rather that protesting crowds had a definable and limited set of objectives which defended the traditional rights and customs of the poor in a highly bifurcated class system. Thompson went on to maintain that the *Moral Economy* of the poor comprised of a set of inter-class reciprocity repertoires which obligated certain social norms and expectations from those classes who wielded more power over capital. The argument made in this thesis is that in light of aggressively growing levels of inequality within race groups, that inter-class social reciprocities within black communities are now being used as a type of *Moral Economy* protocol which attempts to re-entrench traditionally-sanctioned ‘entitlements’ across class divides.

³⁵⁴ For more on how government’s remedial efforts have impacted the interaction between race and the labour market in terms of ‘differential returns’, see Burger and Jafta’s (2006) article.

³⁵⁵ For instance, the works of James C. Scott as well as E. P. Thompson are cases in point.

In the last part of this chapter on the ‘hidden’ impulses that motivate reciprocities, we look at the *TranScriptions* associated with ‘privilege’. Having in the previous two narratives looked at why black professionals may simultaneously want to endorse and yet escape reciprocal interactions between themselves and lower black classes, we now investigate why or how they may turn to playing an intermediating role.

As a senior trauma counsellor, respondent NM1 is a cutting-edge practitioner with excellent people-skills and a sharp mind. She leads a trauma and recovery unit at her place of employment and brings to her workplace a broad educational background. She kindly takes the time to narrate for me the dynamics of how expectations surrounding ‘privilege’ impact reciprocities.

So it’s the ‘*Privilege Complex*’ that the middle class black people tend to experience, and then the pressure that they have. ... Because you kind of feel, you know, it’s an expectation, I should do it (giving) – and you actually feel guilty that you feel that you’re not necessarily doing enough and you’re expected to do more! ...

This other lady called it, Nomfundo Alanza, who’s also one of the leading people in trauma, she called it ‘*The Privileged Complex*’. Which I think that it’s just a term that for me it really means: it’s the privilege complex that you kind of have. That you can’t really enjoy what you have because you know that there’s people who are suffering, but you can’t help everybody

Its part of investing back into the community ... the various underprivileged complex where, uhm, you really see how much people are suffering and you also most feel like *you owe the community because you’re the privileged one – you were able to escape – you were all affected, [but] you are the one who’s benefiting.*³⁵⁶

Moreover, respondent TS1 who works as a manager for an HIV/AIDS NGO adds that even as a professional who now resides in the suburbs, he still feels an internalised “guilt” resides within him when he feels like he has benefitted “too much”.

I think it’s getting to a point where you feel like you have too much than other people and beginning to feel guilty. Just this morning I was saying to my wife: “Why is it that there are too many shoes here? I think we need to find someone to give out, to give these shoes to; it doesn’t feel right having this many shoes.” So that’s one aspect where I have too much and surely there are other people out there that do not have. ...³⁵⁷

Mining house engineer respondent EM2, puts forward one formal sentence that he feels captures what he sees as the deeply internalised and self-evident explanation as to why he gives:

³⁵⁶ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

³⁵⁷ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

It's like I feel I'm more 'privileged'.³⁵⁸

JL1, who heads up a criminal justice programme on the Westrand, suggests that reciprocities in fact function as an inevitable outgrowth of the class differentials that divide the more and less privileged:

As black people, we are expected to give, right. How much of it will be guilt? A lot of the philanthropists across the world are not giving because they wanted to – they're giving because of guilt, yes! And I tell you, if the whole world was a classless society and everybody had exactly the same as everybody else, there's going to be a serious problem. Would they still give??³⁵⁹

Respondent VM1 is an NGO manager who is married to a doctor. I meet him at his newly built home in Ruimsig, where we sit together next to an elegant hard-wood table. VM1 is physically agile and has a ready smile; he laughingly tells me that his school-mates used to call him 'spider-legs' when he was a youth. Together VM1 and his wife have one child and he comments that they have now also adopted two other children into their family circle.

VM1 echoes the sentiments that respondent JL1 mentions above, with the additional proviso that he feels reciprocities are all about "balancing out" inequalities within the black community. When I ask him about sharing and giving practices in his own experience he responds readily:

For me? I know what it is for me. I think it is about turning to 'balancing out the equation'. Because in an informal way, there's not a single black person or friend that I know who does not have that similar kind of situation.³⁶⁰

In all of the narratives above, the issue of 'privilege' sat at the nexus of reciprocities for precisely the reason that most respondents viewed their newly enfranchised middle class status as a 'privilege' which differentiated them from many in their communities of origin. Inasmuch as they wanted the advantages that accompanied this 'privileged' status, they repudiated the disconnection that they sensed it could potentially cause with their communities of origin. In order to bridge this divide, respondent JL1 suggests that reciprocities become the transactional language used between those who have been able to establish themselves ("escape poverty" [NM1]), and those who are still entrenched in its grips. Reciprocities are thus practised as a way

³⁵⁸ Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007.

³⁵⁹ Interview: JL1, Roodepoort, 31 October, 2007.

³⁶⁰ Interview: VM1, Ruimsig, 25 May, 2007.

of “balancing out the equation” (VM1) and class divides become a primary impetus for why respondents are ‘giving’. As respondent JL1 so aptly reminds us, “if the whole world was a classless society... Would [people] still give?”

7.3.6 *Trans*Versions: Enacting Contradictory Class Locations

When ‘class awareness’ and ‘class consciousness’ are at odds with each other then the *objective* and *subjective* aspects of class are not congruent. This is characterised in sociological thought as the condition of ‘Contradictory Class Location’. Erik Olin Wright (1997) uses this term as an explanation for the growing incongruence of classes who find themselves betwixt and between multiple allegiances to proletariat as well as bourgeois interests; in this sense he captures the contradictory nature of their position within the social relations of production. Wright puts forward the following description (1976: 23):

If classes are understood as social relations, not things ... certain positions have a contradictory character within those social relations. On certain dimensions of class relations they share the characteristics of one class, on others they share the characteristics of another.

In generating a taxonomy of class segmentations, Wright made the observation that there can exist class ranks whose positions within class structure induce them to simultaneously share characteristics of the classes both above, and below them. In this regard, Wright (1997) depicts class as not only a gradational concept but also as a relational notion; this didactic allows for the possibility that the *subjective* class consciousness of a class can be at variance to its *objective* material conditions.

This research project found that black professional respondents identified with the working class in terms of various precepts from the Struggle’s ideology which was enacted regularly through their (reciprocity) giving practices. In regards to gradational measures, however, their consumptive habits and lifestyle patterns aligned them more with professional class status and aspirations. This paradoxical condition has necessitated a *TransVersion* of sorts; what the Webster dictionary calls ‘a mutation’ which has impacted on both personal and collective experiences. The final section of this chapter is dedicated to exploring how respondents experienced the ‘dissonance’ of existing within contradictory class locations.

7.3.6.1 “*The transition is very tectonic*”

The juxtaposition of hyper social mobility³⁶¹ coupled with contradictory class location³⁶², has created a rather tumultuous environment for black professional respondents. LB1, the attractive and articulate young doctor who I meet at Baragwanath Hospital puts forward the following word picture of what she calls “tectonic shifts” within deep-set definitions of identity.

*The transition is very tectonic; it’s not just superficial movement. It is [a] movement of peoples, definitions of who we are.*³⁶³

In describing the contours of this *TransVersion* process, senior trauma counsellor NM1 speaks of it as a type of bipolar transition in which black professionals’ loyalties are pulled in two different directions; one direction that dictates suburban aspirations, whilst the other pulls them towards township relational allegiances over the weekend.

I think what’s happening with us as the current middle class – we are the transition. *One foot is in the suburbs but our other foot is in the townships* because our family’s there. You know you can’t stay in the suburbs forever. You know you have to consistently visit your family. Our children are in the suburbs and your private schools, but some of our cousin’s children are studying in the townships. ... What the black middle class do is that they go Monday to Friday, they stay in the suburbs. But Sundays, you know ... [they are in the townships again].³⁶⁴

Respondent RS1 is a professional that works in the educational research sector. This is her first post-Honours employment position, and I sense that she is determined to give it her best efforts. She is young and articulate, but still she practises a cultural deference to me because of age. RS1 tells me that she grew up in a ‘traditional’ context within a rural area. She meets me in Emmarentia at her organisation’s offices which are located in a suburban studio which faces an expansive park.

RS1 explains to me that she finds herself in the following conflictual situation: there are traditional community expectations that impinge on her time; these commitments regularly

³⁶¹ I use the term ‘hyper social mobility’ here with some qualification, not so much in real-time and absolute terms, but rather with in mind dramatic new opportunities that have opened up for black professionals within the last two decades. For a more quantitative look at progress as well as set-backs in this regard, see Burger and Jafta’s (2006) article.

³⁶² See particularly Wright’s chapter 5 (1997) on porous class boundaries.

³⁶³ Interview: LB1, Soweto, 31 August.

³⁶⁴ Interview: NM1, Braamfontein, 23 October, 2007.

compete with her professional work obligations. She finds these customary expectations and professional obligations to frequently be at odds. RS1 describes this predicament to me as:

...being caught between two worlds.³⁶⁵

In his 1893³⁶⁶ work entitled *The Division of Labour in Society*, Emile Durkheim described ‘anomie’ as a condition associated with the breakdown of social norms and regulated systems of connection. He suggested that this state was frequently characterised by feelings of anxiety and disruption resulting from a lack of social control due to the erosion of knowable standards and values. As surrounding social systems came increasing under pressure, he suggested that individuals were frequently left without an overarching framework to guide them according to a regulated set of mediating norms.

Many respondents communicated that as they encountered the “tectonic” movement of upward social mobility, they did indeed feel in a quandary regarding *which* rules of social regulation to adhere to: customary mores, or newer market-oriented types of exchange. In this regard whilst they did not exist within a state of de-regulation, they did share the anomic space of multiple and competing regulations. These were frequently experienced as the collision between “two worlds”, the overlaps and ascendancy between which, respondents were yet negotiating. As respondents wrestled with the multiple instincts encompassing contradictory class locations, they frequently found that they experienced the anomie of “not fitting” standard definitions of class stratification.

7.3.6.2 “If I ‘give back’ – I don’t necessarily fit into the class [scheme]”

Exacerbating the cacophony that surrounds contradictory class location, are the structural and financial implications of practising customary forms of reciprocity albeit within a modernist and market environment. Many respondents complained that financially they just weren’t making it because of the ‘extra’ pulls that extended family and community members made on their resources. Respondent TT1 explains how reciprocity practices have, in very practical ways, impacted her class location.

³⁶⁵ Interview: RS1, Emmarentia, 12 October, 2007.

³⁶⁶ Of particular relevance are Durkheim’s (1997, [1893]) comments on this in Book II, Section I.

Respondent TT1, is the dread-locked black female accountant who I meet in Parktown. Whilst her mother still resides in the rural areas, TT1's younger sister has now been sent to join TT1 in Johannesburg. TT1 tells me that she is expected to carry her sister's costs while she studies at the local University and that she is also expected to support her mother and other community members 'back home' as well. She explains the experiential dynamic of sacrificing social mobility at the behest of customary reciprocity mores.

I think the more you give – the less you have. Meaning you can't keep up the standard of living as your other 'class' people in your group would. ... If you hold a lot, then I get to buy more for myself and I get to fit into that class. *But if I 'give back' – I don't necessarily fit into the class.*

I can't afford that expensive car because I'm giving back to my community; I can't afford those expensive clothes because I'm doing something else with my money. Whereas if I'm keeping it, then I can keep up with all the [class] hype that's happening around me.³⁶⁷

Another female respondent, a project officer who I meet in Braamfontein, is a professional who supports her deceased brother's two children as well as her parents and another un-related dependent. She explains her circumstances as follows:

I mean, for instance, I'm still living at home (parents' residence in Soweto). I mean I'm turning 40 in December and I'm still living at home! I can't access a 'house' because I can't apply for a bond; I don't qualify. And I also don't qualify for a RDP house. So I'm stuck; stuck somewhere in the limbo.³⁶⁸

The above narratives suggest that the contradictory class 'dissonance' that respondents experienced was not only of a cognitive nature; it also exhibited itself in very material ways. Moreover not only were its impacts cognitive and material, but thirdly and probably more importantly, they were also profoundly social. And it is here that consideration must be given to the larger structural issue of how rising *within race* economic inequality ("economic Apartheid") is affecting the structure of social relations devolving from contradictory class locations.

7.3.6.3 "I think we're moving in the direction [of an] ... 'Economic Apartheid'"

Respondents pointed out that part of their discordant 'class' experience was bound-up with the marked growth of post-1994 within-race economic disparities. Patrick Bond (2000) asserts that this is the outgrowth of a neo-liberal elite transition whilst Seekings & Nattras (2002) add in the

³⁶⁷ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

³⁶⁸ Interview: MM2, Braamfontein, 28 August, 2007.

nuances of post-Apartheid redistributive regimes that they suggest have been biased towards capital-intensive growth as opposed to fostering widespread multi-class expansions. Multiple respondents identified these disparities as problematic both personally and structurally.

Respondent GC1 is a very busy and outspoken gentleman. He works for a well known Struggle-affiliated organisation with downtown offices in the higher storeys of an historic building in Marshalltown. GC1 squeezes me into his schedule with little time to spare. Surprisingly he begins by telling me, in his characteristically forthright manner, about what he sees as the nation's current problem:

I think the emerging elite; I think in the long run it's going to be [a problem]. So if you don't begin to close the gaps between the 'haves' and 'have-nots', in the long run I think it's going to really cause us a problem.³⁶⁹

In their survey responses, a majority of respondents identified 'Poverty' and 'Unemployment' as the number one problems facing South Africa.³⁷⁰ These were seen as key issues because of the way that they critically impacted on the day-to-day 'lived experiences' of those at the margins. Moreover respondents highlighted these larger issues in their narratives because they saw these disparities as critical points of national fissure.

MM3, the long-legged Robben Island 'graduate' who heads up a government department in Pretoria, warns me that he sees the ominous threat of "Economic Apartheid" on the horizon.

*I think we're moving in the direction where there is going to be an 'Economic Apartheid', where those that have, would like to see themselves [as] distinct from those that don't have. And it's going to blur the racial division. ...*³⁷¹

Respondent TM1, the fancy-footwear lawyer who I meet in Sunnyside, says that while he frequently entertains the benefits of his bourgeois status as a black professional, yet he simultaneously cannot rid himself of the conviction that the "de-racialisation of capital" still does not address the underlying issue of inequality.

³⁶⁹ Interview: GC1, Marshalltown, 31 October, 2007.

³⁷⁰ This information emanating from survey Question # 33. Note that only 16.6% percent of respondents suggested that "Crime and Security" were the number one problem facing the nation, whilst over half opted for "Unemployment" and "Poverty" as the most salient problems. A provisional association could be made between these two sets of answers, inferring that possibly respondents felt that if the problems of poverty and unemployment were adequately addressed, crime and security would feature less highly in the public's discourse.

³⁷¹ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

They have a whole lot of, you know, creating mental images in your head which one doesn't have a problem with, because it de-racialises capital. But what it does do [is] it *creates another elite*.³⁷²

Whilst carrying significant professional portfolios in many very different spheres and sectors, respondents shared one characteristic in common: unequivocally respondents were systematically not only aware of the presence and needs of the poor, but they also frequently identified with these needs and suggested that supportive relations with the under-classes resided at the nexus of successful future prospects not only for themselves, but for the nation as a whole. Moreover repeatedly identified was the critical role that they played as intermediaries between the poor and formal structures and institutions; as we shall see next, this mediating role carried with it risks as well as benefits.

7.3.6.4 *“The poor they are the people that are holding the solutions ... they are the key”*

Respondent JL1 meets me at his Roodepoort second-floor offices wearing a Muslim Taqiyah skullcap on his head. He tells me that he wears it because in his neighbourhood people honour him as a spiritual leader and elder in the community. JL1 is by far the most eccentric respondent that I have met to date. Interviewing him is much like following a tangential stream of consciousness that cavorts its way through many a diversionary path; he is also probably the most creative thinker – a person who prides himself in seeing the wisdom of inverse points of view. He problematises experiences of reciprocity by alluding to their tendency to ‘entrench power’ in the hands of those that give (patrons).

Sometimes giving can be used as a tool to keep people, to keep what Karl Marx said: “Religion is the opium of the oppressed”. And ‘giving’ could also become the opium of the have-nots, because you can oppress them. As long as they have nothing, you can control them. You can do whatever you want with them.³⁷³

Whilst few respondents spoke explicitly about the power dynamics inherent in their relations with communities of origin, they primarily presented themselves as targets of community encroachments (whether positively or negatively). Few engaged with what JL1 refers to above as their own power in the reciprocity equation: “giving can be used as a tool”. This was because respondents did not see themselves (‘Black Diamonds’) as a consolidated group as of yet,

³⁷² Interview: TM2 Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

³⁷³ Interview: JL1, Roodepoort, 31 October, 2007.

whereas they saw their communities of origin as cohesive identity structures. Respondents' newer class identities were yet emerging and were thus not as definitive nor cohesive. As a result (and as evidenced in the next narrative), respondents frequently turned to 'stock' interpretations that simplified their transversive roles. In so doing, they explicitly and vividly showcased their contradictory class locations.

GM1 is a dynamic and vivacious middle-aged woman. She meets me in traditional African garb, and with headwear that she carries off with sophisticated aplomb. When I come to her at her place of employment, our sojourn through the hallways of this institution takes no less than half an hour as she introduces me to each and every functionary (who I respectfully greet in multiple languages) in-route to her office. Once we commence with the interview, GM1 speaks with much speed and agility, interspersing her words with many Xhosa and Tswana phrases and explicatives. The many gestures that accompany her conversation are so animated that watching her is as entertaining as listening to her.

Inasmuch as GM1's flair parades at the forefront of her public presence, yet there is no hiding her keen mind and strong sense of proletariat class consciousness. Contrary to classic capitalist³⁷⁴ thinking (note the stark contrast of GM1's narrative to Smith's sentiments in the footnote below) she communicates to me that she vehemently believes that the "poor" are having the "solutions".

*The poor are the people that are holding the solutions. If we're going to lose the poor, we're not going to take care of our poor. Because they are the ones that are having the basic solutions of how to make it in a world where you don't have education, you don't have a job, you don't have a home, you don't have the entitlement. ... [So] they are the key.*³⁷⁵

7.3.7 Summary

The first half of chapter 7 investigated the objective and gradational elements of respondents' class locations. In the second half of the chapter an interrogation was made of the subjective and relational aspects of respondents' 'class' experiences. More specifically, attention was given to

³⁷⁴ Adam Smith (2002, [1759]), the well-known father of the capitalist 'invisible hand' theory suggests that the rich are the key to 'just' economic distributive regimes (not the poor). In Part IV of chapter 1 in the text above Smith asserts the following: "The rich ... divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements. They are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessities of life which would have been made, had the earth been divided into equal properties among all its inhabitants."

³⁷⁵ Interview: GM1, Soweto, 22 August.

exploring the four aspects of: (1) respondents' inter-class reciprocity roles, (2) key class consciousness themes, (3) *Moral Economy* exchange repertoires, and lastly (4) how respondents experienced their contradictory class locations. This investigation surfaced the following findings:

- The inter-class reciprocity roles that were engaged in between respondents and members of their communities of origin, were characterised as follows:
 - (1) Respondents communicated that they intended their benefactor roles to enhance the “life-chance” options of their recipients so as to significantly better their economic prospects and opportunities.
 - (2) In light of this respondents designated their giving primarily³⁷⁶ towards recipients' education, housing or transport.
 - (3) Respondents communicated that they were working towards goals of sustainability and long-term impact in order to “propel [beneficiaries] into their future”.
 - (4) Respondents were regularly involved in resource procurement, conveyance or referral processes as part of the intermediating roles that they enacted.
 - (5) These roles were part of a ‘hidden transcript’ insofar as they were non-structural and dispensed at the individual-level and because provisionary roles also had hidden benefits for respondents due to their association with status (being “Daddy from next door”)
- Respondents' narrations regarding their own ‘class consciousness’ revealed the following:
 - (1) Respondents were found to be markedly reflexive and self-conscious about their own class mobility.
 - (2) They communicated a discomfort (“being caught between two worlds”) with the way that their class awareness and class consciousness were frequently at odds one with the other.
 - (3) ‘Affluence’ was not yet ‘normalised’ in the experiences of most respondents.
 - (4) Respondents tended to deviate from the ‘working class script’ generally only over issues that they felt exacerbated their incommensurate part of the ‘care and share’ burden they carried.
 - (5) Many respondents questioned (and verbalised that they had mixed feelings about), a strictly capitalist (neo-liberal) trajectory.

³⁷⁶ The exception to this rule was in instances of emergency wherein respondents' resources were called on to meet urgent needs or unanticipated extenuated circumstances.

(6) Respondents tended to talk of communities of origin in ways that reflected on them as cohesive and consolidated entities, whereas they did not refer to their own professional class or ‘group’ as an already fully established or totally internally fused entity³⁷⁷.

- In terms of the overarching Moral Economy interplay between respondents and their beneficiaries, several key repertoires were evidenced:

(1) Communities of origin expected (and summarily found ways to enforce) respondents’ enactments of provisioning roles on their behalf.

(2) Respondents in turn obtained value from communities of origin, accessing from them social and existential support (“one foot is in the suburbs, the other is in the townships”)

(3) The prospects of possible ‘disconnection’ between respondents and their communities of origin were anxiety-inducing and were frequently³⁷⁸ met with resistance from both sides (but for different reasons).

(4) A symbiotic and mutual co-dependence existed between respondents and communities of origin, with each exerting negotiating power over the other so as to exact a “just price” for reciprocal exchanges.

(5) Reciprocities were used as a type of inter-class ‘transactional language’ between respondents and their communities of origin.

- Respondents’ narrations indicated that they found themselves enveloped in conditions of contradictory class location. They described their experiences of these circumstances as follows:

(1) Respondents’ class location was depicted as ‘dissonant’, cognitively (ideologically in terms of a proletariat versus bourgeois identity and trajectory), materially (in terms of fiscal constraints due to sharing with poor family and community members whilst simultaneously attempting to pursue their own class advancement), and socially (in terms of the pressures of ‘professional’ as well as ‘customary’ demands on their time).

(2) Respondents described themselves as being at the cusp of “tectonic” changes that left them in “limbo” and in the anomic space of competing normative systems.

(3) Respondents’ contradictory class location meant that because they were “not fitting in” to traditional class schemas they could play a unique mediating role within the context of growing inequalities and the threat of the preservation of “Economic Apartheid”.

(4) These intermediation roles were seen as having the potential to provide relief for the needs of the poor and unemployed whilst also assuaging the ‘guilt’ (“privilege complex”) of respondents who themselves had been able to “escape poverty”.

³⁷⁷ This is not to say that the *very rapid consolidation* of black professional identity is not an imminent prospect in the very near future.

³⁷⁸ Note must be made of respondents who attempted to ‘disconnect’ but were repudiated in the process.

(5) The role, power and significance of those affiliates yet in poverty was not underestimated by respondents, but rather the inequality equation was highlighted as an issue central to the wellbeing of both respondents and the nation as a whole.

(6) Lastly, black professional respondents in the post-1994 context chose to engage these issues (poverty and inequality) not so much explicitly and structurally, but rather implicitly and through the medium of one-to-one informal, and yet powerful, repertoires of exchange.

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Chapter 8: Strategy-based Reciprocities

8.1 Introduction

A bird's-eye view of conceptions of social reciprocity within Sociological thought reveals that classical notions of reciprocity have been variously conceived, then markedly revised over time. As was captured within the literature review (chapter 2), Marcel Mauss first suggested in his signature piece *The Gift* that within archaic societies, social reciprocities functioned as cycles of solidarity that created flows of anticipated mutual transfer. These cycles of solidarity not only bolstered kinship relations, but they articulated and institutionalised primary filial allegiances. Moving from the framework of archaic communities to the industrial and early modernist context, Karl Marx suggested in *Grundrisse*³⁷⁹ that social reciprocities were a subset of inter-class relations, a process whereby exchanges were articulated on the basis of the surplus value extracted from the proletariat. Now within the setting of the late (or high) modernity era, social reciprocities have been re-conceptualised yet again, this time in terms of what Pierre Bourdieu suggests is their primary value as instruments of 'strategy' within the arena of social capital transfers.

Having explored *Affinity-based* reciprocities (kinship and identity) within chapter 6, and in chapter 7 *Position-based* reciprocities that focused on class inter-relations (class locations and class consciousness), we now turn to *Strategy-based* reciprocities in chapter 8. This third layer of exchanges refers back to the venn model in chapter 2 which defined *Strategy-based* reciprocities as follows:

The third sphere within this venn model follows the movement towards more rigorously transactional (as opposed to deeply relational) reciprocity modes. This sphere focuses on *Strategy-based* reciprocities which pivot primarily on measures of the 'symmetry' (or lack thereof) of resource transfers, whether these be symbolic or otherwise. In this tier, reciprocities are seen to be more figuratively-driven and are viewed as fundamentally 'interest-based' in what Emile Durkheim suggested were 'organic solidarities' practised

³⁷⁹ In the *Grundrisse*, Marx provides an account of how social exchanges manifest as intra-class dynamics based on access to production: "The content of the exchange, which lies altogether outside its economic character, far from endangering the social equality of individuals rather makes their natural difference Regarded from the standpoint of the natural difference between them, individual A exists as the owner of a use value for B, and B as owner of a use value for A. In this respect, their natural difference again puts them reciprocally into the relation of equality. In this respect, however, they are not indifferent to one another; so that individual B, as objectified in the commodity, is a need of individual A, and vice versa; so that they stand not only in an equal, but also in a social relation to one another." (pp, 242-43).

in increasingly individuated societies. Reciprocities in this sphere are usually accompanied by a gauge of the degree to which they will/will not be mutually beneficial and reciprocated, and are measured over the interval of *time*. These types of reciprocities resonate with what Pierre Bourdieu suggested was the ‘strategy’ element behind reciprocities, whereby social structures are mimetic of economic or other interests.

8.1.1 Taking ‘Capital’ Beyond Marxist Definitions

In his article entitled *The Forms of Capital*, Pierre Bourdieu ([1981], 1986: 241-258) proceeded to expand the notion of ‘capital’ beyond Marx’s economic conceptions of material exchange, to include also non-material forms of capital such as social, cultural and symbolic capital.

Bourdieu’s interest in this regard was to interrogate entrenched forms of inequality by means of suggesting that ‘capital’ could be found in less tangible formats (for instance in the symbolic capital embedded in the status associations of education) which though more hidden, still exerted tremendous influence on the distribution of power and access to resources.³⁸⁰

In so doing, Bourdieu sought to explain how these additional forms of capital could be strategically³⁸¹ acquired, and exchanged or converted into accumulated forms of capital over time³⁸². This augmentation to the rubric of notions of ‘capital production’ served to revive interest in the topic of social capital³⁸³ per se, with subsequent sociologists such as James

³⁸⁰ Whereas Bourdieu’s writing encompasses a broad spectrum of topics, I note here that his chapter, “The Forms of Capital” (in Richardson’s text) is his signature piece that develops a conceptual framework for other forms of capital. In light of this, I predominantly use that article as the primary reference point for this chapter.

³⁸¹ Bourdieu’s use of the term ‘strategic’ (1990: 11-112) begs some explanation as he equates it with what he refers to in his early writings as social ‘sensitivity’. In his original (1949) work among the Kabyles, Bourdieu suggested that strategy manifested as the intersection between the Kabyles’ habitus (internal dispositions) and the social ‘game’ field (external social structures) that they inhabited; in the collision of these two worlds the ‘sensitivity’ of how to interact became implicit: “It is because native membership in a field implies a feel for the game, the art of practically anticipating the forthcoming [l’a-venir] contained in the present, that everything that takes place in it seems *sensible*, objectively endowed with sense and objectively oriented in a judicious direction.”

³⁸² The ‘time’ interval between social capital investments and their ensuing yields was critical for Bourdieu. Whereas previous theoreticians had measured capital in the material sense and primarily from within a fixed time-frame, Bourdieu augments the equation by suggesting that most social capital bequeathments (‘gifts’ as it were) can best be understood from within the horizon of multiple time frames as givers and receivers do a delicate dance around gauging how long reapportionments can be delayed or postponed.

³⁸³ For some very apt criticisms of the concept of Social Capital, see Campbell’s work. Campbell (2001) critiques an over-enthusiasm with the notion and an under-investigation with how it has been politically and expediently disabused: “many others, have pointed out that the reason why the concept was grasped so enthusiastically was -- in the absence of any theoretical grounding within a broader theory of power relations -- it has served as a blank cipher which could be moulded to a range of political agendas. The concept came as something of a ‘gift’ to thinkers of the neo-liberal free market persuasion -- who argued that grassroots voluntary organisations and neighbourhood networks should take over many functions (e.g. welfare) previously assigned to governments. Building social capital became a justification for cuts in welfare spending in more affluent countries; and for reduced development aid to less affluent countries” (2001: 1-2).

Coleman³⁸⁴ and Robert Putnam³⁸⁵ picking up on this theme (albeit with them conceptualising it through a more northern-hemisphere lens than Bourdieu).

Bourdieu focused on *social capital* as an asset which, much like in the Marxist tradition, could be treated as representing the product of accumulated and collective labour power; but he also developed it further by highlighting the power differentials inherent in various types of associational linkages and social networks. According to Bourdieu (1990: 2), “different individuals obtain a very unequal return on more or less equivalent capital, according to the extent to which they are able to mobilize by proxy the capital of a group...” This led him (in conjunction with Loic Wacquant) to put forward the following definition which serves as a significant reference point for this chapter’s research:

Social Capital is the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a *durable network* of more or less institutionalised relationships³⁸⁶

³⁸⁴ Coleman’s significant contribution to Social Capital theory (1994 & 1988) comes in the form of his research on its impact beyond just realms of power and prestige (as Bourdieu had studied it within the halls of French academia). Rather, Coleman addresses the uses and benefits of Social Capital acquisition and transferral within marginalised American communities and within the context of groups. This is significant in terms of the development of this concept and its deployment also within two-thirds world contexts that regularly employ the benefits of associational networks. My biggest criticism of Coleman, however, relates to his subsequent use of ‘rational choice theory’ (the assumption that choices are generally based on economic self-interest) as an explanation for network transactions. It is here that I believe Bourdieu demonstrates more clarity of insight. Bourdieu nuances this equation by adding in the ‘time’ factor: networks of cooperation intuitively understand what Bourdieu called the ‘game rules’: cooperation is not just about individual interests but about group interests which may well pay better dividends over the sequence of time.

³⁸⁵ Putnam’s focus within the last several decades (2000) has been on the role that Social Capital (which he primarily measures in terms of levels of civic activity and associational linkages) has on enhancing civic quality of life as well as governance. Whilst his contributions are helpful in terms of the way that they feature the potentially positive benefits of associational life, he has less to say about what Gramsci understood to be the *subversive role* that civil society could and should play as regards ‘institutionally disciplining’ (Foucault) government structures. In this regard, Putnam assumes government to be an ally in the equation of civil performance, and does not address in depth other possible scenarios.

³⁸⁶ A more complete form of the cited quote from the “Social Capital” subtitle within Bourdieu’s (1986: 249) article highlights the importance of “exchanges” as the language of social capital transfers; it reads as follows: “Social Capital is the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various sense of the word. These relationships may exist only in the practical state, on material and/or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them. They may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name ... and by the whole set of instituting acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them; in this case, they are more or less really enacted and so maintained and reinforced, in exchanges.” (*Emphasis mine*).

8.1.2 Overview: Reciprocities as Capital Accumulation Strategies

Bourdieu's work on Social Capital forms the conceptual scaffolding for what this chapter suggests are *Strategy-based* reciprocities. Moreover, five key concepts create the research rubric that frames this chapter, namely how processes of non-material capital 'accumulation' are generated across time and are transmitted through (1) social capital transfers; these are (2) 'productions' of historical eras that affect particular (3) age cohorts, such that unique reciprocity patterns frequently exhibit (4) between generations, these functioning primarily (5) through the medium of networks.

More specifically, this chapter analyses respondent reciprocities in terms of the presence (or lack thereof) of the five above-mentioned instrumentalities:

(1) *Across Time*: Social Capital Transfer Mechanisms

Whilst in chapter 6 the observation was made that levels of reciprocity were high between respondents and extended family members, this was done through measures that indicated levels of financial giving. Now in chapter 8, we investigate levels of other forms of giving (e.g. the provision of in-kind resources as well as time or expertise) that align themselves more closely with measures of social capital transfers. This will be followed by probing whether respondents' perceived their giving as comprising of 'once-off' interactions, or whether social capital transfers were sustained over time as part of a larger equation of exchanges. Examined last will be qualitative patterns that indicate how levels of respondents' social capital transfers compare to other settings, and possible meanings behind variations.

(2) *Across Eras*: The Historical Matrix

Insofar as social capital transfers are housed within larger macro-level historical processes, they are embedded within specific circumstances (political and economic) which frame how they function. In this section inquiry is made specifically into how the construct of 'Apartheid' has shaped respondents' reciprocities, and how they view its residual impacts on their recent relations with communities of origin. More especially attention is given to how 'norms' of solidarity were instituted during the resistance movement, and since then what rationalities govern if and when these norms are activated in the post-1994 context. Further to this, the distinct 'logics' that currently motivate social capital transfers will be examined, particularly as pertaining to perceptions of who 'benefits' from reciprocities.

(3) *Across Age Cohorts*: Examining the Direction of Change

In this section the issue of how reciprocities are changing will be addressed; specifically whether levels of social capital transfers are perceived to be rising or falling over time. Narratives will be explored which reflect on why shifts are occurring and what direction they may be taking. The author explores how particular age cohorts have been affected

by exchange mores and how they either retain and champion, or jettison and disengage, from these meta-narratives. Also addressed will be how these various approaches tend to consolidate age cohorts in particular ways, structuring their reciprocity habits such that age-specific patterns can be traced.

(4) *Across Generations*: Impacts of Respondents' Social Mobilities

The cross-generational nature of reciprocities will be examined in this section through the lens of inter-generational social mobility; how have shifts in the economic prospects of sequential families changed and how has this impacted on the reciprocity dynamics of who is expected to provide for whom? This issue will be investigated in light of respondent experiences of the pre-1994 economic dispensation, as well as more recently in terms of changes in their economic prospects since 1994. Gauges of inter-generational social mobility will be measured through a comparison between respondents' mean school attainments, in contrast to those of their parents. This will create a base-line for understanding changes in economic opportunity that have affected successive households, and also how social capital transfers may have been used as active mechanisms for addressing the impacts that dramatic inter-generational economic mobility shifts have had on family provisioning dynamics.

(5) *Across Networks*: Social Capital Formation as a By-product of Network Investment

Investigated last is how networks and associational linkages have played significant roles in the transfer of social forms of capital. We will do this by means of measuring respondents' levels of membership in civic associations, and additionally through an analysis of narratives that explore how the density as well as durability of respondents' social networks has significantly enhanced the cohesiveness as well as efficiency of their social capital transfers. In conclusion, the author interrogates how various forms of capital, when activated in combination one with another, breed new capital, particularly through the use of both 'strong' and 'weak' tie proliferation systems.

8.2 Across Time: Social Capital Transfer Mechanisms

So really, to tell the truth, giving is not money exactly, you know - it's much more than money. People come to you for some support, for talking to you about issues. They want some stuff done. They want to know if you can help with information. Or if you are in the level like I am, I'm not only seen as the person who's supporting only with money. It's also advises, you know, you become a career counsellor ... [and] still in many [other] ways. And I think for me, those are givings. But we are not quantifying them in terms of money. But if you sit down, [you] realise that you've spent [the equivalent of] a lot; a great deal of money.³⁸⁷

The crux of Bourdieu's contribution to a re-conceptualisation of 'capital' (1986: 243) rests on three critical factors: firstly he adds 'social capital' accumulation (symbolic as well as cultural) into the traditionally 'material' capital equation, secondly he characterises the formation of social capital specifically as a transactional activity between people, and thirdly he suggests that the

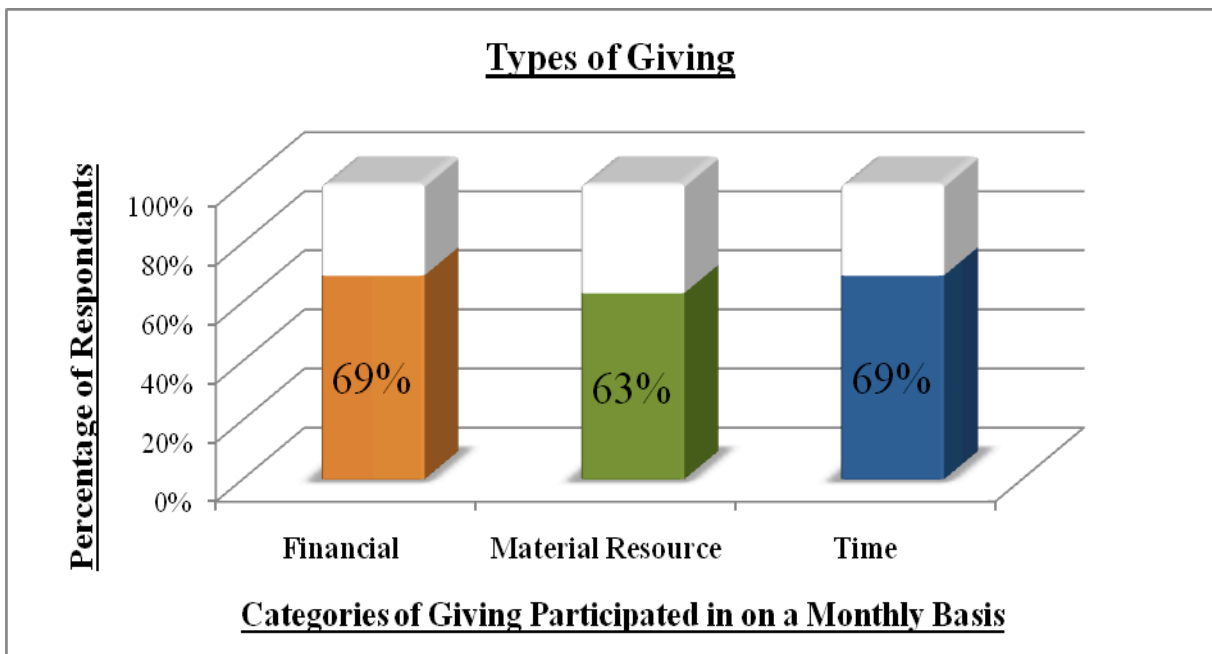
³⁸⁷ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

pay-offs of these transactions accumulate over the duration of time.³⁸⁸ In light of this, we begin our investigation with a focus on respondents' social capital transmissions (levels and types of non-financial giving), next we explore how these resource flows become normative transactions, and lastly we examine how exchanges are enacted over significant time intervals.

8.2.1 Profiling Social Capital Distributions

In this research, resource transfers were gauged in terms of three dimensions: (1) financial giving, (2) material resources (donations of food, clothing, supplies, or in-kind provisions such as transport or housing), and (3) contributions of time or expertise. Findings related to these three tiers revealed that the distribution of transfers that respondents participated in were unusually evenly matched between these three types of giving, with 69% percent involved in monthly financial giving, 63% percent in goods or in-kind contributions, and 69% in the donation of their time.³⁸⁹

Graphic 8.1



³⁸⁸ Bourdieu suggests (1986: 245) that social capital, which he describes as ‘embodied’ capital, is different from economic capital precisely because of the ‘time’ differential: “embodied capital, ... cannot be transmitted instantaneously (unlike money, property rights, or even titles of nobility) ... It can immediately be seen that the link between economic and cultural capital is established through the mediation of *the time needed for acquisition*” (*emphasis mine*).

³⁸⁹ Each of these figures emanates from a universe of 100%, so that roughly two-thirds of respondents were involved in each type of giving (though not necessarily the same respondents in each category).

The three gauges exhibited on the previous page correspond to what Robert Putnam refers to as high levels of ‘social altruism’. Putnam found that communities with high levels of social capital, transacted these ‘non-material’ assets through collective practices of voluntary engagement (social altruism) which in turn served to reinforce group cohesion (2000: 116-133). Moreover, the high levels of financial giving noted in chapter 6 are not an anomaly within this research context; rather they are the norm (amongst respondents) when consideration is given to evenly matched high levels of time and in-kind/material giving as well. The overall picture that unfolds is therefore one wherein various measures reveal the same image: the prevalence of high levels of significant resource flows which transmit a variety of types of material as well as social capital.³⁹⁰

8.2.2 Surfacing Qualitative Patterns

Having pointed to high levels of social capital transmission, the question is raised as to why? If, as Putnam suggests, levels of social capital generation are waning in other international settings (Putnam 2000: 4-14), what are the dynamics specific to why they are found especially prevalent within particular population bands within our research context? It is at this juncture that the findings of this research diverge rather dramatically from Putnam’s work.

Whilst Putnam suggests that communities which have faced historic material deprivations suffer from low social capital accumulation, the findings amongst South African respondent communities displayed a marked digression from this trajectory. In order to lay out these differences, it is important to note Putnam’s (2009) comments regarding what he considers to be the origins of low social capital accumulation levels amongst African American communities in the North American setting:

It is not an accident that the low social capital is very clearly associated with the depth of slavery in the nineteenth century, and that is because slavery as a system and the post-slavery reconstruction period were institutionally designed to destroy social capital. This is what slavery was about; it was about destroying social capital, because social capital, among Blacks at least, and later in post-slavery, social connection between Blacks and poor Whites, would have threatened the structure of power. I am sure it is not an accident that [within Black communities] there is a strong correlation between past slavery and current [low] levels of social capital.

³⁹⁰ Not only did the survey data substantiate high social capital resource flows, but also Respondent narratives (TS1, MM1, SL1, TM1, SM1, MP1, MM3, NM1, JM1, JB1) confirmed this trend.

Contrary to Putnam's assumptions noted on the previous page, this research found the opposite: precisely because restrictions were put on black communities during Apartheid which constricted their ability to accumulate 'material' capital (property rights, fixed assets, financial shares etc.), as a compensatory device South African respondent communities found ways in which to amass and effectively use social capital to their advantage. This approach, to survival as well as leveraging access to better future prospects, augured well for communities that needed to find ways to actively combat the deleterious effects that migrant labour had on the African family system. Moreover, in response to the economic and political repressions of Apartheid, respondents' communities of origin institutionalised 'norms' of reciprocity that generated high levels of social capital formation and transferral.

8.2.3 Summary

Several themes emerge in this introductory section which serve to pre-figure subsequent investigations which will be more fully interrogated in the remainder of this chapter. By way of a preliminary overview of what is yet to come, reciprocities in the research context were found to pivot on mechanisms of Social Capital exchange which exhibited as follows:

- Social Capital transfer levels were found to be high between respondents and community of origin members insofar as high attributions of in-kind and time provisions were exchanged on a regular basis. These resource flows were formatted as transactional 'activities', which were frequently also twinned with the provision of other forms of capital (financial and otherwise).
- Whilst during Apartheid, for most black communities access was restricted to many forms of material capital (curbing extensive fiscal and property ownership advantages), in the face of these constraints communities were able to leverage considerable amounts of alternative social capital amassments which bolstered their collective power.
- Social Capital accumulation thus became an instrumentality which was endowed with 'strategic' value in the battle against multiple exclusions. This backdrop serves as the background for Social Capital transfer processes which would later produce their yields over time.

8.3 *Across Eras*: The Historical Matrix

*I think in terms of 'Apartheid', people were forced to rely only on the people they surrounded themselves with. There was no other support; there was no government support. So your community becomes, your community becomes your support basis.*³⁹¹

³⁹¹ Interview: ST1, Blackheath, 16 October, 2007.

Reciprocity repertoires do not exist in a vacuum, but rather are the ‘products’ of particular historical circumstances. Insofar as Bourdieu reminds us that social capital in particular, reaps its benefits longitudinally³⁹², it is important for us to grapple with how certain types of social capital transfers came to be ‘norm-alised’ within respondent communities during Apartheid.

James Coleman suggests that when reciprocity ‘norms’ exist and are effective, they comprise a powerful format which tends to entrench social capital transfers within communities. He goes on to extrapolate their collective powers as follows (1988: S104):

A prescriptive norm within a collectivity that constitutes an especially important form of social capital is the norm that *one should forgo self-interest and act in the interests of the collectivity*. A norm of this sort, reinforced by social support, status, honour, and other rewards, is the social capital that builds young nations (and then later dissipates as they grow older).

Numerous variations on the above-mentioned ‘norm’ of social capital investment in collective interests emerged within respondent narratives. The below narratives highlight that ways in which individuals saw their own social capital investments as enmeshed within (1) larger group processes, (2) whose rewards they believed would be reaped in the long run. In this sense social capital transfers were conceived (by default) as repertoires that were not instant, but were rather (as Bourdieu suggests) engagements that were transacted *between* actors and *across* time.

8.3.1 Struggle Solidarity ‘Norms’

MP1 is an experienced NGO leader who has worked for over two decades within high-ranking civic as well as government projects. He carries a seasoned and yet casual air about him. He meets me in the upmarket Fourways area in informal jeans and a T-shirt. He tells me that he still remains very tied-in to community projects in Soweto (he describes his role as a mentor/patron to a crèche in Kliptown and numerous other upliftment programmes that he weekly participates in and contributes to in Pimville). When I inquire about what motivates him to ‘give back’, he talks about the ways that the Struggle solidified within black communities, ‘norms’ of reciprocity:

³⁹² Bourdieu argues that Social Capital “in its objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate” (1986: 242). Moreover, he compares this to ‘economic’ capital which he suggests can change hands instantaneously. Moreover Bourdieu advises against singularly ‘reducing the universe of exchanges to mercantile exchange’ insofar as other forms of capital (social, cultural and symbolic) function according to a different set of rules.

Well you know during 1976, there was, a real spirit of, well we use[d] the slogan, “Each one teach one”. It’s a very interesting slogan, which meant that if I know something I should pass my knowledge to other people. So you’re not paid to do that. But you felt like it was my responsibility to help other people and to teach other people. So basically, even though it was a political education, but that political education also meant that you all swim on the same level in terms of understanding how things were done.

So the slogan about the motto of “Each one teach one” has been one of the things that [has] anchored in my life, that my life has been around, and helping those who don’t know or who cannot afford to have. ... So it can not only be “Each one, teach one” but also “Each one, help one”.

I remember it very clearly that there were a number of people (names a series of disjoined black Struggle leaders) who would go out there and help us to do things. ... These are the people who really played their part in Soweto and actually ensuring that my life also

becomes what it is today. I used to go to the same club with them. Not only them; some of them are in business. They really played a very, very, [important role] and I mean these are the people who you know were really moving us - encouraging us to volunteer. Encouraging us to share our lives with other people, with the poor, with the sick.

I remember going to the hospital visiting some of our friends who were tortured by the police, who were killed by the police, some of them were really seriously hurt by the police and going there just talking to them - it’s giving, you know.³⁹³

In the above narrative MP1 unpacks what he sees as demonstrations of the solidarity motif at work within black communities and how ‘norms’ of social capital investment had great practical utility during the Struggle. Under the banner of “Each one, teach one”, his comments clearly surface the assumption that norms of social capital investment were considered a mandatory part of the overarching political agenda; a self-evident part of the rules of the ‘game’, or in MP1’s words the “terms [for] understanding how things were done”.

Bourdieu speaks about these types of norms as ‘strategies’ of social capital transfer. He suggests that these ‘strategies’ are birthed at the intersection of habitus (internal dispositions) and the social fields (game rules) that people inhabit. Moreover, Bourdieu perceives ‘strategies’ to be less about striving for personal gain and more about adhering to “the sense of investment in the game and its stakes, of interest for the game, of adherence to the presuppositions – doxa – of the game” (1990: 111). In this research context, these pre-suppositional ‘doxa’ motivated practices

³⁹³ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

of social capital transfer and endowed them with a ‘judicious sensibility’ in terms of membership in the larger schema of the Struggle.

MP1 describes the rolling out of this doxic dispensation as following a very particular trajectory: he begins with his recollection of the “spirit” of cooperation (underlying assumptions of the ‘game’), which were then articulated through the mechanism of a “slogan” (propagated through accompanying verbiage), and lastly enacted (through legitimising performances) by senior leaders.

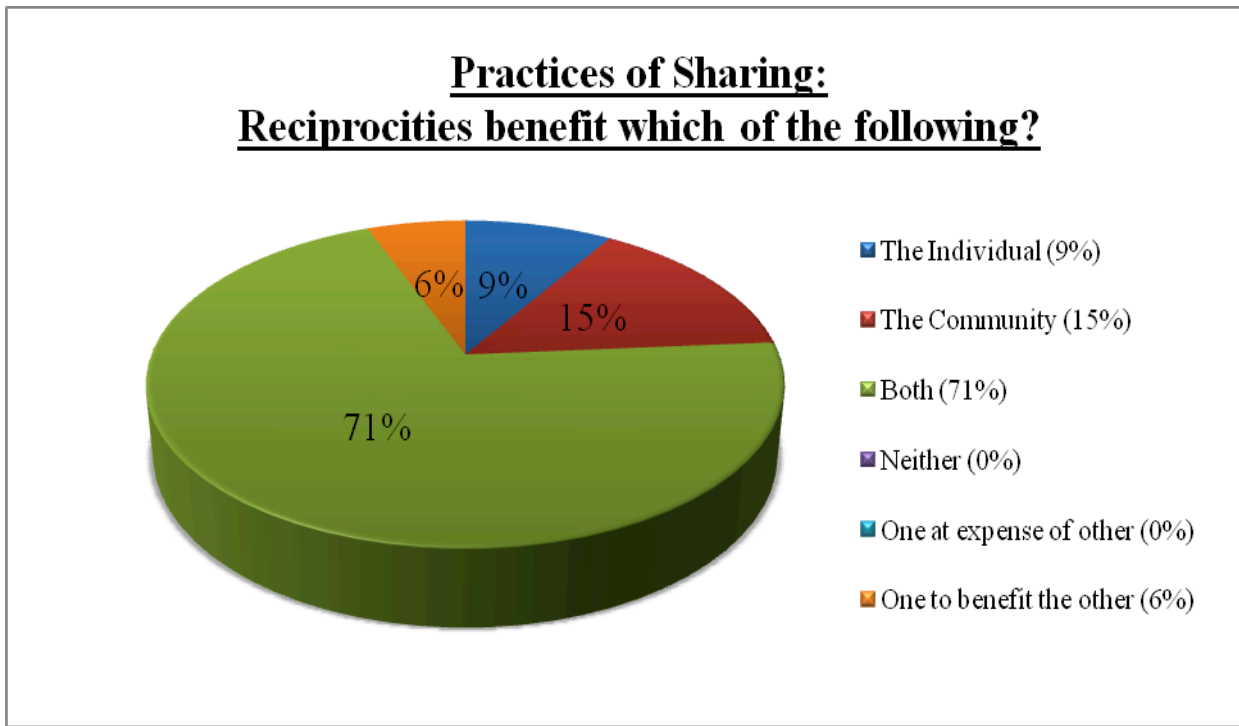
All of the above feed into what Bourdieu suggests are the enmeshing logics of membership in a given social field: “membership in a field implies a feel for the game, the art of practically anticipating the forthcoming [l’a-venir – future] contained in the present, that everything that takes place in it seems sensible, objectively endowed with sense and objectively oriented in a judicious direction” (1990: 111-112). In this regard Bourdieu is proposing that ‘strategies’ of reciprocity are not as much about individual intentionality (rational choice theory) as they are about the consciousness of a collective schema (which presupposes a different approach to maximizing utility).

8.3.2 The ‘Benefits’ of Solidarity

When asked to reflect on the transfers that they were involved in, a significant majority (71% percent) of respondents asserted that their experiences of sharing were such that they perceived them to simultaneously benefit both individuals and the community (not one at the expense of the other). In this regard, reciprocities were not seen as purely individual transactions, but were rather viewed as an inherent part of community affairs, which at the end of the day added value to both the collectivity and its members.

Graphic 8.2 depicts respondents’ perceptions regarding who they feel reciprocities benefit most.

Graphic 8.2



8.3.3 Economic Logics of Solidarity

In the pre-1994 setting, respondents attributed the logics of collective forms of ‘social altruism’ (Putnam) not only to membership in a larger political drama that they were enacting, but also to particular ‘strategies’ (Bourdieu) by which they collectively addressed the Struggle’s economic disparities. As becomes evident in our next narrative, the layering of political motifs of ‘comradeship’ with economic themes of ‘disenfranchisement’, made for a pretty potent and normative schema in the social consciousness of the black communities described.

TM2 is the fancy foot-wear lawyer who I meet in Pretoria. Whilst currently aspiring to a bourgeois life (he tells me he intends to buy a ‘nice’ house in Garsfontein), yet TM2 frames the cohesion that the Struggle bred within black communities, as not only birthed out of a political platform of solidarity, but also as emerging out of the economic equation of poverty. This is a conundrum which he suggests is still relevant today, and just as potent in its power to create normative behaviours.

It's the whole solidarity [thing]. Let's use the example of the solidarity among workers, especially unionised workers in mines, you know. The, that's, it's one thing that you cannot put to words - but they always look after each other. If you fire one, the whole mine shuts down, because workers always support each other.

Yes, collectively South Africans, especially Black South Africans, fought against Apartheid. And that collectiveness and comradeship is busy folding down with the rise of BEE and these other empowerment schemes. But that solidarity and comradeship has always made sharing much more easier and you know, where the word "comrade" has literally been interpreted to mean brother, and has been acted to mean that particular word. So, our Struggle has really, to some extent, put us together.

And you see [that 'comradeship'], it continues within disenfranchised communities. There are people who still don't have houses, who still live in shack communities. That brotherhoodness among them is very strong. When the land owner comes, and he kicks everyone with his bulldozers, you see people helping each other to go and build their shacks in other communities. You are not left by yourself.

You know, men in the community will go and assist every one to build. And when people move into another shack community, they will, you know, dig pit toilets together. Even in homes where there are only women, men would come and assist doing that. So that's the strong sense that you know there's power in unity and there's power in many. That's where we come from. In poor communities in the future you'll still see that.³⁹⁴

The above narrative, whilst providing a rather nostalgic depiction of camaraderie amongst the poor, picks up on two important themes: (1) "there's power in unity", and (2) "there's power in many". Both of these play out as recurring refrains in respondent narratives that explained the 'strategy' element of black solidarities during the Struggle; solidarities which made strategic use of the collective as a power base from whence to wield the Struggle, and which cemented cohesion within this base by means of the creation of 'norms' of tangible (as well as symbolic) social capital transfers.

Moreover, while Putnam suggests that in the North American setting slavery was effective in isolating its subordinates so that they became increasingly disconnected from structures of social capital support, in the South African context the Struggle against subordination was effective insofar as communities themselves were able to leverage significant *amassments* of social capital in the face of a disciplining and separatist state.

³⁹⁴ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27 August, 2007.

One key difference between the North American slavery system and the Apartheid system, however, was that the slavery system isolated *individual slaves/families* from each other, whereas Apartheid separated race and *ethnic groupings* from each other (e.g. Bantustans, townships, mining hostels, political prisoners). In the South African system this yielded the unintended consequence of promoting high levels of social capital transfer within communities, as mechanisms of survival and social reproduction. Moreover, it is important to note that the historic context of these two systems and their ensuing consequences were and are significantly different in scope, and thus they in turn produced divergent outcomes.

8.3.4 Summary

By means of delving into aspects of the historical matrix out of which respondents and their communities were birthed, the ‘strategy’ aspects of social capital transfers emerged as follows:

- The Struggle ‘group schema’ which nurtured respondents and their peers, ‘normalised’ social capital exchanges in ways that prescribed them as a mandatory mantra and necessary prerequisite for membership within the resistance movement. As a predispositional “doxa” (Bourdieu) this ‘group schema’ structured these reciprocity norms in ways that endowed them with a ‘judicious sensibility’ that propagated their use as an accepted strategy for enlisting social capital investments on behalf of a ‘cause’.
- Second to their value as a capital enlistment mechanism, voluntary resource flows also functioned in ways that bolstered not only their *internal* benefits, but also their *external* value as an instrument of resistance. Insofar as group cohesion was not compromised by penetrations from the outside (or fracture from the inside), the narrative of “there’s power in unity” maintained a ‘closed’ system which provided protective benefits. Moreover for this brief period, the spoils of social capital accumulation could therefore be shared materially and symbolically within the ‘collective’, without fear of dissipation by external forces.
- Lastly, respondent narratives showcased the power that Struggle discourses still exert over their current behaviours. These influences, however, primarily manifested in regards to their sense of obligation to yet disenfranchised relations and less towards the public more generally. Yet insofar as social capital transmissions were perceived to benefit all parties involved, this underscored their value as a legitimated form of ‘investment’ capital for both personal and collective advancement.

8.4 *Across Age Cohorts*: Examining the Direction of Change

*I think that the ‘solidarity’ has become less and less. ... The historical and cultural [aspect] is diminishing because of the context that we’re in.*³⁹⁵

³⁹⁵ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

Having made an argument for high levels of social capital transfers amongst respondent communities, and additionally pointing to their emergence out of a particular historical context, we now turn to an exploration of how social capital transactions are changing over time. In order to examine this rubric, it is important to first understand why social capital transfers function as instrumentalities of ‘time’.

Bourdieu describes the process of social capital accumulation as one that is invariably bound up in the ‘time interval’, suggesting that this is one of the distinctives that differentiates *social* capital from *economic* capital (1986: 252).

For example, there are some goods and services to which economic capital gives immediate access, without secondary costs; others can be obtained only by virtue of a social capital of relationships (or social obligations) which cannot act instantaneously ... [They derive] at the cost of an investment in sociality which is necessarily long-term ... In contrast to the cynical but also economical transparency of economic exchange, in which equivalents change hands in the same instant, the essential ambiguity of social exchange ... presupposes a much more subtle economy of time.

In keeping with Bourdieu’s premise above, examined next are social capital transfers that address the ‘change’ dimension. These are investigated in terms of the following queries:

- (1) Whether overall levels of exchange were perceived to be rising or falling over the long term, what factors were identified as spurring on these changes, and what is the relationship between reciprocities pre and post-1994 (reciprocities activated in one era, and repaid in another).
- (2) Secondly, how respondents as an age cohort (born in the three decades between 1952 and 1982) compare to other older or younger age groups in terms of their sense of responsibility to support/not support others.

In addressing the first point above, the research found that respondents’ shared certain conceptions about how Apartheid had impacted on the creation of high levels of social capital accumulation, these levels disproportionately impacting on certain age-cohorts within black communities. We start by establishing common experiences amongst respondent age-cohorts in order to understand how conceptions of reciprocity amongst them contrast to other generational groups; we thus re-wind backwards in order to compare this to a fast-forwarded future.

As was previously mentioned, respondent narratives echoed the belief that during Apartheid the construction of a “common enemy” and the allegiance to a joint script of black resistance

conjoined otherwise disparate groups together in modes of cooperation, which in turn built high levels of intra-group ‘social altruism’ within black communities. Moreover, respondents suggested that these common perceptions emerged out of the space of ‘shared’ local histories. This assertion dovetails with research on the era socialization hypothesis which proposes that exposure to common socio-political and economic environments during one’s formative years exerts awareness of a certain collective consciousness. “Generation Theory”³⁹⁶, is built on this premise and asserts that commonalities emerge from the sharing of ‘defining moments’ that shape age-cohorts in similar ways.

In opting to target respondent’s between the ages of 25 and 55 (born between 1952 and 1982), this study targeted a roughly three decade span of formative life experiences that embody a particular historical socialisation ‘embryo’. Whilst respondents were drawn from multiple Gauteng contexts and cultures, yet they exhibited certain shared perceptions in terms of the ‘historical moments’ that they inhabited together. What I am pointing to is the conjuncture of a specific ‘group schema’ (albeit experienced and narrated diversely) that helped to shape respondents’ attitudes towards reciprocity and their ensuing exchange behaviours.

In the next narrative respondent TM1 builds on the assumption of common ‘Struggle solidarities’, but contrasts these to the post-1994 dispensation, which she characterises as diverging from the ‘social altruism’ trajectory. The following two narratives suggest that whilst the (pre-1994) dispensation of Apartheid generated a “united cause” against which to struggle (a meta-narrative of sorts), the current post-1994 democratic process has significantly fragmented (or reconfigured) these solidarities into cluster-based allegiances and individualised multi-narratives. The following respondent comments give voice to profound changes in the configuration of their social capital transactions over time.

TM1 meets me in her flat in Pretoria. Scattered across nicely appointed leather furnishings are objet d’art that create a colour scheme of black, red and tawny silver. I see various metallic-framed photographs on the mantle, on which are mounted pictures of her son and extended family members who still reside in Kagiso. TM1 was actively involved in the resistance movement on the Westrand during the 1980’s and in her stories and descriptions she still

³⁹⁶ For a further discussion on ‘generation theory’ from a South African perspective, see Graeme Codrington’s work in *Mind the Gap*, 2004.

frequently harks back to her days as a ‘comrade’. TM1 is a statuesque and robust woman; she is the only currently employed ‘professional’ in her household and on a monthly basis she intermittently contributes to the support of eight other extended family members from the income that she brings in. She takes the opportunity to talk to me about the changes she sees between giving practices within black communities during Apartheid, in comparison to reciprocities in the decade post-1994.

I think also Apartheid made people to be more united in a sense that there was a – we were fighting for one cause.

In ‘Democracy’, whoa! We are divided as a society, even those who we used to be united with. There’s more division with Democracy; we’re no longer “United we stand – divided we fall”. No, I think that slogan is now just a stand-around.

It’s kind of like [now] “I can do whatever I want”. But that “Doing what I want” also has a lot of repercussions in a sense that there’s nothing in place for those that do not have the literacy to go up. Maybe that’s why I’m disillusioned...

I think [giving] has changed during the Democracy era. [But] for me, maybe I should offer something (initiate resource transfers); for me that is the essence of the whole thing.³⁹⁷

In the above narrative TM1 directs our attention to how political changes have not only significantly altered perceptions of joint identity, but that current shifts have also sourced emerging bifurcations related to who she feels she is, or isn’t responsible to, and for. Whilst she suggests that previous norms of cohesion rested on being “united” and “fighting for one cause” (concepts contested by some scholars³⁹⁸), now she intimates that there is a vacuum where these larger narratives used to function as an integrative canopy.

Moreover, Wolpe (1988) as well as Bonner and Nieflagodien (2009) comment on this fragmentation process by criticising historic analytic lenses based on racial reductionist theories. Wolpe in particular, articulates well his opposition to viewing black communities during Apartheid as an amalgam of uniformity (1988: 13):

³⁹⁷ Interview: TM1, Arcadia Pretoria, 19 May, 2007.

³⁹⁸ Harrison, Huchzermeyer, & Mayekiso (2003) in *Confronting Fragmentation*, and Mbembe & Nuttall in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, investigate what they consider to be a broader spectrum of allegiances within black urban communities in the current context.

It is, however, of considerable importance to recognise that the information and maintenance of racial groups take place in specific contexts and are subject to both centrifugal and centripetal pressures. These pressures are, in part, bound up with the fact that in South Africa racial groupings were formed, through complex processes, out of categories which occupied vastly different positions in the society and, furthermore, that the internal differentiation of these racial groups has continued uninterrupted, albeit unevenly. ... If we generalize these considerations to the social formation as a whole, what this suggests is that the effect of a race reductionist theory is to insulate from enquiry conditions and processes which may be pertinent to the cohesiveness and fragmentation of racial groups and thus to the possibilities of social change.

In the post-1994 dispensation, TM1 suggests that the profound absence of these Struggle scripts is such that whilst she “can do whatever I want”, yet she is “disillusioned” with a system that puts “nothing in place for those that do not have”. Interestingly, while in a very ‘material’ way, it was during Apartheid that there were no provisions in terms of a national social safety net for black communities, yet respondent TM1 complains that it is now in the *post*-Apartheid era that the gaps are there. TM1’s argument is essentially counter-intuitive, and the question arises as to why?

8.4.1 Collapse of the Canopy

Again here it is Bourdieu who helps us with understanding the ‘gap’ that respondent TM1 identified in the previous narrative. Bourdieu speaks of social capital transfers as relying on the “multiplier effect”. This is a system of social capital credit which appropriates the “accumulated and concentrated” effects of “profits which accrue from membership in a group [and which] are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible” (1986: 249). Essentially, TM1 is suggesting that with the deconstruction of the Struggle meta-narrative has come an unbundling of the ‘group’ schema, and this has been accompanied by profound changes in whole systems of mutual exchange and provision. What has become deeply compromised is what Bourdieu calls a ‘system of reproduction strategies’; with diminishing group cohesion, the ‘multiplier effects’ of social capital accrual are lost.

Our investigation of how social capital transfers have changed over time has yielded fruit: respondents communicated that the Struggle’s community-based ‘system of reproduction

strategies' is being increasingly disbanded on the macro level.³⁹⁹ This has involved huge changes in networks of social reproduction and provision – what respondent LB1 identified earlier as “tectonic shifts”. Moreover, our next respondent, TS1, points our attention to not only political processes that have fragmented previously held reciprocities, but also economic forces that have ruptured earlier-held ‘group’ allegiances. TS1 moves us from the group macro level, to its unravelling on the increasingly individuated micro level, and from the perceptions of one age cohort in contrast to the next.

TS1 is a NGO manager who sports a white cotton shirt (shortened version of the Ghandi style) and a khaki pair of trousers. He sits with knees spread akimbo and looks at me keenly through bespectacled eyes. TS1 currently sends intermittent remittances (“for school fees and such”) from his professional earnings in support of three younger siblings yet ‘at home’. He talks to me about the pre-1994 culture of sharing and describes it as deriving from “common needs” that then evolved into a “common goal”. He suggests, however, that in the post-1994 context, that ‘goal’ is no longer kept in the ‘commons’.

I think there are elements that can be drawn from that (pre-1994) era. The culture of community, the culture of helping each other, the culture of having a common need and goal in addressing the challenges of the day. ... I think in the Apartheid system people gave unselfishly - unselfish, in generosity for a common cause. ... Well maybe in a positive way we can still refer back to say we ha[d] a common challenge and we tackled it together.

And look at what we've got now? I think within the ‘new’ South Africa, I think there's some changes. It's somehow, it's almost as if the positive giving attitudes were okay or were much more prevalent before [19]94. After that, a whole new ball game started.

I think from a negative point of view there is a failure to realise that, or rather to have a common agenda and common enemy, - which would be poverty in this case. Uhm but [now] it's more of “Well, we are now free, lets all rest. Whoever gets to the touchline first, it's his”. There isn't that care, [or] caring. Maybe it's because of capitalism being introduced to [say], “If you can work hard, it's yours, you deserve it”; [that] kind of attitude.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁹ It is important to mention that reference is being made to social support structures that originate at the community level; this is not a reference to the provision (or absence thereof) of support services on a government or national level. Further to this, it is of interest that respondents mourned more the current loss of ‘social networks’ of support than they did the structural deprivations of Apartheid.

⁴⁰⁰ Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

What direction are reciprocities moving longitudinally? In answer to our quest for understanding how reciprocities have changed across time, clearly they were perceived to be diminishing as norms of a structural nature, but were still experienced as normative on a personal level.

Respondents depicted the current direction of change as one which was moving away from the “culture of giving” (TS1), to more individualised (“I can do what I want” TM1) forms of accumulation in the post-1994 environment.

Moreover, whereas inequalities were previously experienced on the macro level between racially tagged communities, now inequalities have trickled down to the micro level as they manifest in economic dis-equilibriums within households. These changes have shifted the locations where reciprocities are now being exhibited, so that transfers are no longer singularly conceived of as instruments to address structural disparities but rather they are perceived to be transactions of a more personal nature – reciprocities enacted to address economic inequalities within households. Black professional respondents feel these economic cleavages especially keenly as they relate to yet-disenfranchised family members. Respondent MP1 explains it to me this way:

For instance there’s one in the family that’s educated, so the rest of us are not. So we are still going to depend on it (the educated ones). And also we also don’t feel very well to be driving in those beautiful cars. They call it the Black Diamond but your mother is struggling somewhere in Soweto. ... I mean, can you just imagine many of us we still, my mother is still there, you know. And you can’t just go out there, and overlooking your mother who’s struggling. ... So, the reason that motivates people (to give) is that even though I have this beautiful things, I still have a family. I still have my mother, I still have my father and my sister.⁴⁰¹

Note that in the above verbiage respondent MP1 mentions nothing about the grand narrative of Apartheid or the Struggle. Rather, he suggests that the reciprocities that he practises in the post-1994 context revolve around bridging the economic gap between himself and his yet destitute relations; in this regard he practises his giving in a much more individualised manner and on the household level.

8.4.2. ‘Border’ Generations and Non-Institutional Giving

When respondent MP1 tells me about his cognitive dissonance with having a “mother who is still there struggling”, he displays his resonance with being part and parcel of a very particular age

⁴⁰¹ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

cohort – one which various literatures refer to as a “border” or boundary generation. In his text entitled *Local Histories/Global Design: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (2000), eminent south American scholar Walter Mignolo develops the idea of border generations, locating what he calls the emergence of southern hemisphere ‘border epistemologies’. Mignolo uses the term ‘border’ in two ways. First he explains ‘border thinking’ as non-colonial or ‘post-occidental reason’. Secondly he explains what border ‘locations’ signify; in physical terms borders symbolise ‘exteriority’ and in symbolic terms they represent alternative (non-institutional) sites of social mobilisation.

I draw from Mignolo’s work in order to characterize 25 to 55 year-old respondents as essentially a boundary or ‘border’ age cohort who activate social capital transfers primarily outside of institutional forums and rather engage them on an individual level. In contrast, South African Struggle activists born before 1950 (for example Martin Thembisile [Chris] Hani born in 1942, and Stephen Bantu [Steve] Biko born in 1946), were the archetypal strategists and leaders of the Struggle movement and were thereby “consecrated” (Bourdieu) with the special powers of embodying the ‘ubuntu’ reciprocity ethos on a collective and socially ‘institutionalised’ level. Bourdieu explains that such leadership archetypes are able to exercise extraordinary amounts of influence precisely because they exercise power to wield the group’s ‘collectively owned social capital’ (1986: 251):

Every group has its more or less institutionalised forms of delegation which enable it to concentrate the totality of the social capital, which is the basis of the existence of the group, in the hands of a single agent or small group of agents and to mandate this plenipotentiary, charged ... to represent the group, to speak and act in its name and so, with the help of collectively owned capital, to exercise a power incommensurate with the agent’s personal contribution.

In the post-1994 context, and with the splintering of resistance solidarities, this “consecrated” power to wield social conscience in favour of the collective is increasingly being rescinded. Respondents aged 25 to 55, are certainly politically aware and many were a part of the Struggle (as certainly much activism was also generated among black students at tertiary and other levels). However, respondents today can no longer appropriate (as their forebears did) the same amassments of social capital for collective Struggle causes, and therefore they opt for interventions on the micro level.

What this research discovered was that 25-55 year-old respondents were a ‘border generation’; an age cohort uniquely sandwiched between two other distinct generational groups:

- 1) Before them come the idealist struggle ‘freedom fighters’ born in the 1930’s, 1940’s and early 1950’s.
- 2) Respondents born primarily in the 1960’s, 1970’s and 1980’s.
- 3) And after them come the ‘new dispensation’ babies – those postmodern 1990’s and year 2000 children who were born into an already existent ‘rainbow nation’.

Moreover, I suggest that respondents are a ‘border’ age cohort for several reasons. Firstly they exist in the liminal space between reciprocity allegiances born out of Struggle metanarratives (GC1⁴⁰²), and a postmodern era of disjoined ‘multi-narratives’ (EM1⁴⁰³). Essentially respondents exist at the cusp of this transition, and whilst still feeling responsible to the ‘sharing ethos’ (“for me, maybe I should [still] offer something”, TM1), yet they have transitioned in that they now practise these norms in new and more individualised household settings.

Respondents reside at a ‘border’, and this has in many ways forced them to find alternate ways to live and let live. The respondent age cohort makes existential sense of their lives no longer singularly in terms of a glorious and grand collective theorisation (TN1⁴⁰⁴), but rather in terms of

⁴⁰² Interview: GC1, Marshalltown, 31 October, 2007.

Respondent GC1, is an AIDS activist who I meet downtown in the lobby of building known for its associations with the resistance movement during the Struggle. He outlines the Struggle ‘meta-narrative’ for me as follows: “In Apartheid time you had to be your brother’s keeper. At all times; you had to watch your neighbours back all the time. You had to be protecting one another at all times. Because at least then there was a common enemy. In schools we used to encourage people not to be walking alone, but [that] they needed to walk in a group – to create, you know [a] safety net for your friends and colleagues.”

⁴⁰³ Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007.

EM1 is a mining Engineer who I meet in one of Johannesburg’s northern suburbs. He explains to me the shift from the Struggle’s meta-narrative, to the rise in the post-1994 context of disjoined multi-narratives. “Because where you got a lot of people who are oppressed in a certain situation in a group of people, they don’t have a choice, they have to pull together for them to survive and be there for each other. ... So maybe in a situation like that [Apartheid] you would have people sort-of knowing each other at a deeper level and then knowing the needs of one another, and sort of finding ways to meet those needs. Whereas in places where people are ‘free’ and they’ve got uh more resources, where there are no ‘needs’ they are independent. And when that happens, then obviously you don’t have those relationships just with the total community.”

⁴⁰⁴ Interview: TN1, Eikenhof, 31 May, 2007.

TN1 is the Pimville Priest who invites me to interview him in his home south of the city. He is a reflective thinker, and one who interrogates the reciprocities equation at a deeper level. He leaves me with these comments: “So, Apartheid, in a disguised way, it helped to produce that [Ubuntu] in us. But now, it’s another era. It’s like you’re afraid that people don’t have that in-built in them. I mean, that’s an interesting question: ‘If we didn’t have Apartheid, would people do this [sharing]?’ It makes me to think (wonder).”

an individual agency for change (TM1⁴⁰⁵). Respondents opt to ditch the ocean liner approach, finding it easier and more effective to reach marginal destinations with their own small boats.

This research found that respondents essentially looked backwards to the previous generation for their social reinvestment *motivation* (multiple forms of ‘Struggle cohesion’), but looked forward and borrowed from the next postmodern generation appropriating its *mechanism* for action (individual agency).

Lastly, in regards to intergenerational dynamics it is important to note the ‘shadow relationships’ that can exist between generations (Codrington 2004). In many senses respondent giving practices were related to their attempt to finally ‘complete’ an unravelling Struggle project that was never fully matured by Struggle forebears (TM1⁴⁰⁶). Secondly, as the mystique around the Struggle’s ‘freedom fighters’ is dissolved (many freedom fighters having abdicated their counter-hegemonic activism to the encroachment of material accumulation), respondents felt that the task of inter-generational justice had now been passed down into their hands, a task which they engaged not structurally, but rather through inter-generational values transfers.⁴⁰⁷

Essentially, the respondent age cohort represents a ‘border’ generations who are the last ones to feel fully ‘responsible’ to account to the Struggle project. As is portrayed in the following narratives, young ‘new dispensation’ post-moderns of the 1990’s and 2000 and beyond, have already disengaged from much of the ‘liberation’ trajectory.

8.4.3 Variations Between Age Cohorts

The increasingly individuated post-1994 shift in the patterning of reciprocities is particularly dramatically featured in respondents’ descriptions of how they work to bridge the gap between the Struggle reciprocity norms they imbibed pre-1994, and the younger generations’ outlooks

⁴⁰⁵ Respondent TM1 referred to today’s approach as one in which: “It’s kind of like now ‘I can do whatever I want’”.

⁴⁰⁶ Respondent TM1 referred to her “disillusionment’ with how things have turned out, citing irregularities and corruption as leading causes of civil dissatisfaction. See Chapter 5 for more on Respondents’ perceptions of the ANC government’s delivery or lack thereof.

⁴⁰⁷ Barbour (1992: 38), asserts that the conjunction of past, present and future is crystallized in concepts of inter-generational justice that resound in many strands of subaltern thinking. Barbour highlights John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice*, suggesting that inter-generational justice in fact *requires* a consideration of the rights and wellbeing of generations past and those yet to come. Environmental issues particularly are in the spotlight in this regard. Barbour points out that ironically enough, many nations in the northern hemisphere ignore the call to inter-generational justice precisely because of a twist in the democratic process that silences the voice of the future—people who aren’t born yet, don’t vote.

towards giving as characterised by their children. In this regard, respondent MP1, the casually attired senior civic official who I meet in Fourways, describes for me the perceptual differences he sees between his generation, and that of his son:

Well I think for me I mean I thought I should do it (sharing) deliberately and firstly by encouraging my children to give and also to think that you remember they are fortunate to have us. But there are a lot of other people who don't have anything and that you always, firstly think about them. ... You don't just go out there, and say, "Go by yourself".

And my son always asks me why don't people have cars. So I have to explain to him why. So I also try to say, every time when I give bread, look at outside, you know, the poor man is struggling, this and this and this. ... They also see, I mean, that I have a car but the car does not belong to them alone. It belongs to us but also other people. As in, sometimes people ask for a lift, you give lift. People ask for this and that... So, you are encouraging them also to do that, to say "Share with other people. It's not about you, but about all of us".

[But now] I think we're going to a situation where people would be thinking more about themselves. Okay now, uhm, more especially youngsters. [This is] for instance, one of the challenges that we have today. ... The now generation ... they are more concerned about themselves, and about sports, than really helping and encouraging [other] people and all that.

So [that] type of giving, also giving up your time for the benefit of the community, is also fading away, you know. Again, that's one of the spirits that I think is really diminishing in our people today.⁴⁰⁸

Echoing the sentiments above, respondent JM1, the middle-aged financial executive who I meet in Greenside, shares similar sentiments about the disconnect between how different age cohorts within black communities, view their social responsibilities. Sitting amidst posh pink couches, her finely boned hands carefully poised as they hold a cup of hot tea, JM1 talks about "reminding" her children that others "died in the Struggle" for the freedoms that they now have.

[For] my children, I think they even have a bigger burden because we're always telling them that people died for all these freedoms that we're having. So we're reminding them all the time. And people come up in public platforms and say [this]. But at the same time, you don't want to begrudge them of all this nice things that they have. But you will [still] remind them all the time!⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁸ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

⁴⁰⁹ Interview: JM1, Greenside, 7 November, 2007.

Juxtaposed against the deeply embedded sharing mores described by the various older respondents narrated above, are the attitudes of the youngest respondents who featured on the edge between the Struggle age cohort and the children born into a new dispensation. One of these younger respondents, JB1, meets me in Parktown North's 'artsy' section, wearing ripped blue jeans and a phly designer sweater. He talks with a 'flat' accent, and epitomises the younger generation's postmodern take on life. JB1 tells me that the sharing ethos is still relevant, only now it is *enacted within new constituencies* and not singularly enclosed within the 'commons' of the Struggle narrative; essentially he suggests that reciprocities are now activated outside of 'old' group loyalties.

I think my parents are more stringent on the "Give to your own people". I think the older generation or my father's generation are more stringent on that. Whereas a lot of us now, my age group - aren't really. I think my 'family' is not really based on colour, you know. Like my friends are White, my friends are Black, my friends are Coloured, and in fact I'm very .. I've got a big interest in like people that I don't know – Chinese, and Japanese and friends that I don't have. I think we're very comfortable to go to a country that we've never grown up in, we don't know anything about and make new friends, and learn new languages. And I think it's a common theme in my age group. I don't know if it's the majority, I can't really say that. But I think that a lot of us are very open now to helping people that we didn't grow up with.

So I think it's difficult for those traditional kind of things, because our generation now understands that tradition adapts, tradition grows, tradition develops. ... And so, I think our families are trying to really hold on to a lot of cultural things that .. I think it's a fight that they're losing, because it's bound to be lost. I think you're bound to lose a fight against that because you can't control your children, and you can't control technology, you can't control time, you don't know what's gonna happen and so, the things and the cultural kind of ideas and rules that will be built today just don't fit sometimes in the next generation. Sometimes they do, certain ones do, but sometimes they just don't.

So for me, I'm all for it (change). I'm like "Hey, if things need to change, let them change". Obviously there's things that are great to keep, you know, but there are some things that just .. they're just a burden, you know. ... I mean the Apartheid culture they had 50 years ago, [it] just won't fit today.⁴¹⁰

Several features stand out in the above-mentioned narratives which provide us with a sense of what JB1 cites as the flow of "changes" that are impacting on reciprocity mores. Firstly, and without exception, respondents suggested that over time the Struggle's 'culture of giving' (the normative power of social capital reciprocities based on resistance solidarities) was diminishing.

⁴¹⁰ Interview: JB1, Parktown North, 14 August, 2007.

In this regard, the perception was that levels of overall giving were going down over time (the long term), and simultaneously that reciprocities post-1994 were now taking on new formats and/or exhibiting in new locations. Whilst respondents suggested that levels of the Struggle's 'social altruism' were declining over time (within the last six decades), yet current levels were still found to be high by international standards. As JB1 suggests, giving modes in this context have just shifted in terms of recipient audiences.

Whilst the "common cause" of Apartheid was cited as a uniting mechanism in the old regime, with the rise of democracy (TM1), and further consolidations of capitalism (TS1), social giving mores were now perceived to be overshadowed by the influences of increasing fragmentation. Respondent SM1 put it this way: "I think we are declining - it's either we are losing [or] we have lost some [of] our social responsibility. I feel like we are not responsible for the poor, we are not responsible for the people who are not as fortunate as us, and we're just simply concerned with ourselves. We think we must just be concerned with those that are close to us, and the other people who are out there (struggling), it's really their fault."⁴¹¹

In the face of these socially splintering processes, one of the key factors identified as addressing these fissures in the decade post-1994, relates to reciprocities functioning as significant repertoires of cohesion used to suture economic inequalities on the household level. These reciprocities frequently exhibited *inter-generationally* within respondent households and therefore (and in tandem with Bourdieu's thinking as cited earlier) an examination of the dynamics of social capital transfers across-generations will next engage our attention.

8.4.4 Summary

Primarily addressed in the preceding sub-section was the issue of how reciprocities were being transformed over time, and the ways that age cohorts perceived social capital transfers through the melding processes of similar experiences that were age-specific. In line with this, the following observations surfaced:

- While overall levels of exchange were perceived to be falling over time, the locations in which distributions were occurring were perceived to be changing. This diversification process, however, did not nullify the hold that communities of origin still wielded in expecting support from respondents. In this regard, even though the post-1994 setting

⁴¹¹ Interview: SM1, Fairland, 23 May, 2007.

offered increased government subsidy for the indigent, yet because respondents were perceived to be at a stage wherein they were ‘mature investments’ in the social capital transfer cycle, high yields were still expected of them from communities of origin.

- Coupled with the above, was a sense that the meta-narrative ‘canopy’ of the Struggle had now collapsed as a conjoining motif of collective solidarity, and in its place the impacts of capitalist lifestyles and growing ‘individualism’ were being felt. This resulted in the sublimation of sharing practices insofar as they now were increasingly being activated less in terms of a national schema and more on the household level.
- The activation of reciprocities primarily on the household level was also frequently accompanied with a ‘border generation’ mindset amongst respondents. This outlook privileged non-institutional giving as a chosen mode of mobilisation, and in a strange twist of the plot, individual agencies were being used to engage with issues that still remain fundamentally structural in nature.
- Lastly, the respondent age cohort still found themselves inhabiting the “provisionary” and/or “pay-it-back” segment of the social capital transfer cycle (which obligated them to communities of origin). It was only the next generation (their children) who were perceived to be the ones who could step out of these provisionary cycles and reap the highest (individual) returns from the new economic dispensation.

8.5. *Across Generations: Impacts of Respondents’ Social Mobilities*

*There needs to come that generation that will say, you know, let’s sacrifice so that [our] ceiling becomes the floor of the next generation.*⁴¹²

One of the significant questions raised in this research relates to how rates of economic mobility between generations have impacted on reciprocities. Indeed there has long been interest amongst sociologists and economists regarding the repercussions of how social mobilities feature longitudinally. Moreover, Behman, Gaviris & Szekely (2001: 2) suggest that Marx and Engels addressed this issue in their argument that in the United States, organised labour failed to take hold across several decades because of the incentives inherent in high social mobility prospects in that context.⁴¹³ Their observation brings to the limelight the importance of inter-generational social mobility shifts.

Moreover, when high inequality is combined with high social mobility, this condition is considered preferable to circumstances in which a high gini coefficient (inequality) is matched with low social mobility prospects (Fernandez 2006). In light of this, in most social systems,

⁴¹² Interview: AK1, Forest Town, 21 September, 2007.

⁴¹³ My qualification to this is that high social mobility prospects, even in the U.S., still disproportionately benefit only certain bands of the population.

poverty and other manifestations of social exclusion are deemed more bearable when people have a reasonable expectation of improvement for their [or their children's] economic prospects (Azevedo & Bouillon 2008).

Whilst one of the key 'blind spots' inherent in most inequality studies is that they only capture conditions at one point in time, economic mobility gauges point to the dynamic of change within households across multiple decades.⁴¹⁴ This study therefore highlights the importance of looking at inter-generational social mobility as an indicator of the direction as well as speed at which economic prospects are expanding or diminishing for households and how these shifts impact on resource flows. The relationship between social mobility and social capital exchanges is of particular interest to this research context because of the advantage that economic mobility measures offer to the investigation of what Bourdieu suggests are the impacts of 'accumulated social capital' across generations.

Engaging with the post-1994 context, this research made specific inquiry into what may be the relationship between high rates of inter-generational inequality (between black professional respondents and their forebears) and ensuing high levels of inter-generational social capital transfers. Insofar as inequality is widely regarded as one of the primary problems that has historically as well currently plagued South Africa, the question was raised as to how growing economic inequalities within extended households may be shaping inter-generational social capital transfers.

We start with the broad view of this issue and then myopically move down with increasing specificity; this progression provides us with a sense of where we have come from and where we are going. On a conceptual level, the South African inequality juggernaut was first variously analysed on the national level in terms of inequalities between race groups which surfaced as a subset of Apartheid's economic and political repressions (Crankshaw 1997; Posel 1991; Worden 1988). Following this, more recent research (Seekings & Nattrass 2005; Borat & Kanbur 2006; Southall et al 2006) investigates the issue of inequality on the 'group' level, looking more closely at economic disparities within racial groups, and citing unequal income distributions amongst

⁴¹⁴ For several complimentary studies of social mobility in other hemisphere contexts, see comparability of Graham & Pettinato (2002) and Birdsall & Graham (2000) to the research cited previously, particularly Szekely et al's "Proportional Intergenerational Schooling Mobility Index".

various economic echelons within black communities. Moving down in further specificity, this chapter's research investigates inequality inside the household level. How have black households within the decade between 1994 and 2004, dealt with rising levels of inter-generational inequalities within extended families?

The salient issue in this regard revolves around the following conundrum: with the marked rise of economic mobility amongst black professionals over the last two decades, how have families of origin contributed to enhancing black professionals' economic escalations, and in response, what do these families of origin expect in return? These dynamics draw our attention to the critical role that social capital transfers have played in this equation. In light of this, this subsection will organise itself around the following areas of investigation:

- Anomalies in the provisionary roles played by different generations
- A look at inter-generational social mobility differentials and their impacts

8.5.1 Provisionary 'Role-Reversals'

First to be explored are the cross-generational dynamics that characterise and are associated with conceptions of provisionary roles. MP1, the T-shirt attired NGO professional who I interview in Fourways, depicts pre-1994 provisionary dynamics as marked by a significant reversal of roles between generations. He intimates that due to the economic restrictions that Apartheid imposed on black working parents, children from black communities could not rely on the economic wealth of their forebears as a launching pad for their (the next generation's) economic opportunities.⁴¹⁵ Instead, parents were relying on their children as the ticket to better future prospects ['vertical' reciprocities (Hyden)]. MP1 describes this phenomenon as follows:

Your parents were sort of spending a lot of money on you hoping that one day you become a doctor or a nurse and a teacher and then you relieve them. I mean, the parents would say that "When my child grows up, she will be a doctor, and then all our sufferings will end". Like I said they don't actually tell you directly. Actually they tell you indirectly that once you become a teacher, "Then my sufferings will be, will be all gone"; those sort of things. ... In the township, people [we]re relying on others to provide for them, [so that] parents [we]re relying on their children for their needs. ... In those cases [it] was: "If my children can go to school, then they will support me".⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁵ The scenario that MP1 describes flies in the face of norms of inter-generational accumulation in more capital-intensive Westernised models of accrual.

⁴¹⁶ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

In this sense, transfers from parents to children were seen as a sort of parental social capital ‘accrual system’ which would yield pay-offs over time (Bourdieu). (This is an idea that is revisited later on, in terms of developing how [in the more recent context] new social mobilities are influencing the direction of giving patterns.) Suffice it to say that respondent MP1 captures well the sense that provisional roles were formatted in ways that overturned ‘classical’ conceptions of capital accumulation across generations.⁴¹⁷ In the next narrative MP1 picks back up with his narrative on how he perceives inter-generational provisional expectations have been structured since 1994, for the next generation – that of his children.

[Now] there’s a shift in terms of thinking. [In the post-1994 set-up], now my children would say “My parents are there. They will do this and this and this *for me*. My parents are there [and] *they’ll support me*.” So my children would say they are fortunate enough to have me who’s being able to provide for them.

So (now) my boy will go to school; after school he doesn’t even think of coming back and support the parent. He’ll always say “My parents are okay, they are lucky enough; they have this and this and this”. And now they’re thinking about themselves much more than about the parents. [Because of this] I think the issue about the level of giving will definitely change altogether.⁴¹⁸

In the post-1994 context, the young ‘prodigies’ that the older generation invested social capital in (today’s black professionals) are expected now to convey benefits and support back to their forebears. This is not only due to the ‘reciprocal’ nature of social capital transfers, but in light of very real economic constraints that many of the older generation did, and still do, face. Respondent SL1, talks to me about the inter-generational ‘gaps’ that black professionals are now expected to fill, in return for the ‘investment’ made in them.

SL1 meets me in Douglasdale where we sit together next to a nicely bevelled glass-top table overlooking a spacious garden and pool. SL1 is an engineer by training (BSc[Eng], Wits) who travels across the continent but is based primarily out of Johannesburg. He is married and has two children. SL1 explains to me what he sees as the origination point of the current inter-generational support rubric: during Apartheid the lack of government provisions for the aged

⁴¹⁷ In this regard MP1 is reversing these notions in ways more congruent with ‘emergent’ (and postmodern) economic contexts which offer growing opportunities for *younger* generations.

⁴¹⁸ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

black population necessitated resource flows from the young to the old: at markedly early stages in life, and at higher than usual levels.

I think it [Apartheid] basically widened the need. ...Look at the pension fund in the old system of Blacks and Whites: the gap was too wide such that if my parents would not expect us to help them at all, the pension fund they received and still receiving is not enough to care for their needs. And therefore the expectations became high in the context of helping them when they cannot help themselves.⁴¹⁹

Several observations can be drawn from the two above-mentioned respondent narratives in relation to inter-generational exchange patterns:

- (1) The first pertains to *pre-1994* economic (and political) circumstances which put inordinate expectations on offspring at young ages, to play key provisionary roles ('vertical' [Hyden] reciprocities) in support of parents.
- (2) The second relates to *post-1994* social mobilities which have exacerbated current economic disparities between professional respondents and their parents' generation, thereby leveraging added care and support burdens on respondents in regards to indigent elderly forebears.

It is here that we now turn our focus (to #2 above), and look more closely at the issue of how social mobilities amongst black professional respondents have impacted on social (and other) capital transfers.

8.5.2 Gauges of Social Mobility

In some senses, within the last two decades black professionals in South Africa could be characterised as inhabiting a balloon-shaped social mobility trajectory, finding themselves midway up the ascent, with their children facing yet better prospects (though not indefinitely) until they are eventually captured by the glass ceiling of a capitalist equation that only allows the few to extort the highest levels of surplus value from the majority. Researching South African social mobility levels within race groupings, Louw, van der Berg and Yu (2006) demonstrate that the mobility prospects of certain bands within black communities have in fact risen exponentially, whilst for the majority social mobility prospects remain markedly compromised.

⁴¹⁹ Interview: SL1, Douglasdale, 16 May, 2007.

While the previously mentioned section gives us a sense of the larger macro picture, on a more micro level this sub-section is introduced with a look at the ‘instrument’ that will be used to investigate the inequality rubric on the household level, namely a ‘social mobility’ indicator. Provided below is a brief explanation that Azevedo & Bouillon (2008: 2) put forward that outlines the contours of social mobility more generally:

Social mobility is usually defined as the way individuals or groups move upward or downwards from one status or class position to another within the social hierarchy. Sociologists generally view social mobility as terms of movements between classes or occupational groups.

As a baseline by which to explore this phenomenon, levels of inter-generational social mobility (between respondents and their forebears) were measured in terms of the following factor:

- Differences⁴²⁰ in levels of educational attainment

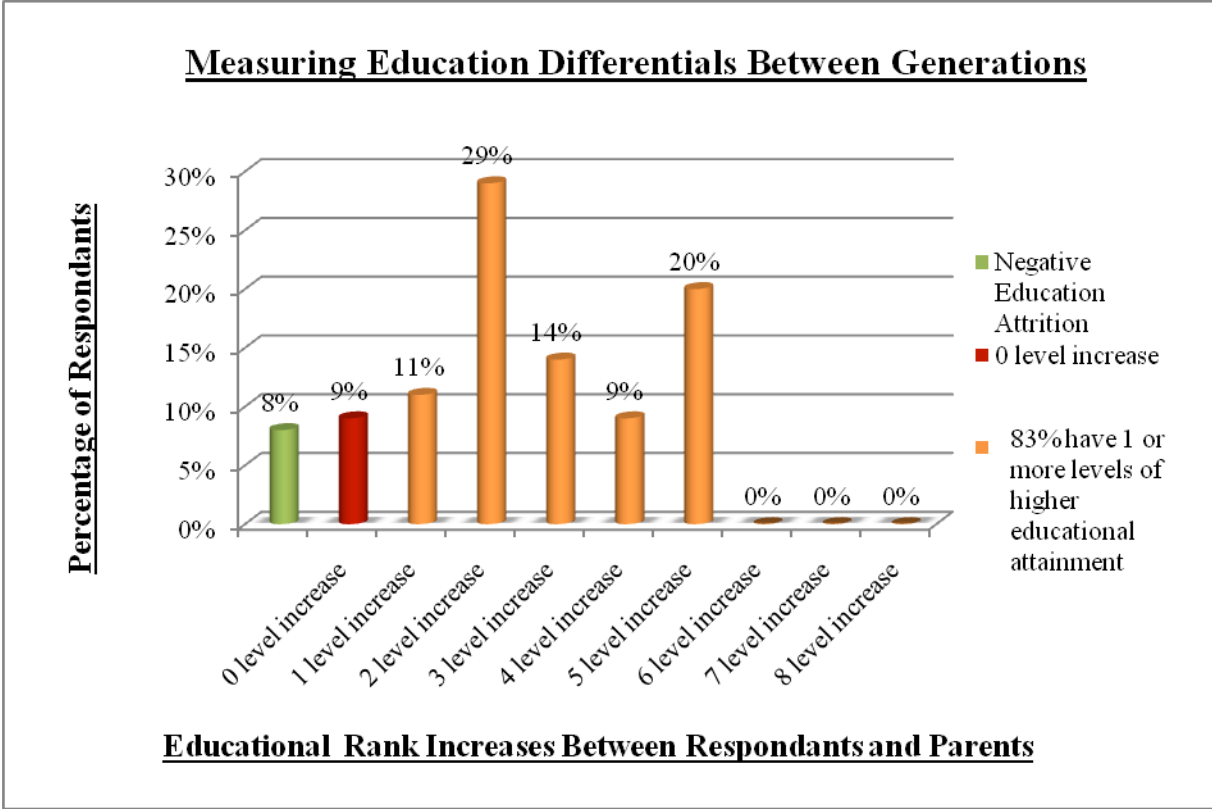
Azevedo and Bouillon (2008: 5) point to the widespread use of cross-generational educational attainment instruments in measuring social mobility as follows: “Even though educational mobility is only one of the channels through which earnings mobility is transmitted across generations, it is one of the main determinants of social mobility”. Variances in educational levels were therefore used in this study to indicate degrees of economic elasticity and reach within households, and also across generations. Survey questions related to educational qualifications were structured such that eight educational levels were provided as answer options: (1) Non-formal (2) Primary (3) High School (4) Technical (5) Tertiary (6) Honours (7) Masters (8) PhD/Doctoral.

Inquiry was made into the educational attainments of respondents, in addition to each of their parents. Male respondents were measured against paternal education levels and female respondents against maternal qualifications; (this being a means by which to guard against the bias of sexism in learning domains). Variance between parent and offspring education levels was then calibrated in terms of eight levels of possible difference. Findings in this regard revealed that 83% percent of respondents were one or more educational levels higher than their

⁴²⁰ It is important to note that whilst some research on inter-generational social mobility still measures variability rates in terms of differentials between fathers and sons, this research additionally features female respondents in relation to their parents. This inclusion was intentional and furthermore necessary in order to be representative of the respondent group as a whole.

parents, with nearly half (49% percent) having attained either twice their forbears' educational levels or up to five times their parents' educational levels.

Graphic 8.3



Certainly the ‘new’ dispensation in post-1994 South Africa should be credited for some of the high levels of inter-generational social mobility indicated above; moreover political changes have in many ways opened the door for previously disavowed educational opportunities which have in turn spiked social mobility ratings particularly amongst black professionals in comparison to previous generations. However, in terms of the broader global picture, how does South Africa fair more generally in comparison to, for instance, other southern hemisphere countries? It is here that the figures begin to shape into an interesting pattern.

Azevedo & Bouillon (2008: 4) tell us that in the Latin American setting (more specifically for Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Guatemala), high levels of inequality are twinned with low levels of social mobility. In contrast, in the South African context high levels of inequality are twinned

(for respondent communities) with high levels of inter-generational social mobility. As our narrative material revealed, this makes for a dynamic whereby extended family forebears feel that they have some stake in existing social arrangements if they can leverage the social capital ‘investments’ they have made in their children in the interests of heightening prospects for the next generations’ increased social mobility. Bourdieu (1986: 253) describes this type of strategic ‘investment’ in inter-generational social capital transfers as follows:

From a narrowly economic standpoint, this effort (social capital ‘investment’) is bound to be seen as pure wastage, but in terms of the logic of social exchanges, it is a solid investment, the profits of which will appear in the long run, in monetary or other forms.

8.5.3 The Interaction Between Various Types of Capital

Of particular significance within the research setting, has been the interaction between various *types* of capital. It is here that James Coleman’s distinction between ‘human’ and ‘social’ capital is helpful in specifically understanding the various experiences of black communities in South Africa. Coleman suggests that ‘human’ capital resides within the agent⁴²¹ and can be measured (in most instances) in a linear fashion. He uses, for example, levels of parents’ education as an indicator of the ‘human’ capital available within a given family system.

Juxtaposed to this is Coleman’s definition of ‘social’ capital which he posits as not residing *within* people, but rather *between* them. Accordingly, Coleman (1988: S98) asserts that: “Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors. It is not lodged either in the actors themselves or in physical implements of production.” In terms of measures of ‘social’ capital within households, Coleman uses the indicator of time and attention given to children by ‘parents’^{422, 423}. The following example

⁴²¹ In his (1988) article, Coleman describes ‘human’ capital as “being embodied in the skills and knowledge acquired by an individual” (p. S100).

⁴²² It is important to note that Coleman does qualify the term ‘parent’ to also include adult guardians or other household mentor figures such as those present within ‘composite’ family structures.

⁴²³ Coleman’s research (1988) then goes on to explain why social capital resources available to children can be compromised both within very indigent as well as very affluent (2 or more income) households, as in both cases parental attention to children can be minimal. Coleman found, for instance, that children’s school performance amongst eclectic (non- religiously/ethnically cohesive) private elite schools suffered in similar ways to schools in disadvantaged areas, due to lack of parental social capital investment in their children’s’ education. (This is not to suggest that affluent parents don’t create alternative supports to augment their children’s education [which their children may or may not fully take advantage of], but rather to point to differences [and similarities] between ‘human’ and ‘social’ capital equations within households across the economic spectrum.)

illustrates his point regarding how levels of ‘human’ and ‘social’ capital can manifest simultaneously, but very differently within households (1988: S110):

In one public school district in the United States where texts for school use were purchased by children’s families, school authorities were puzzled to discover that a number of Asian immigrant families purchased *two* copies of each textbook needed by the child. Investigation revealed that the family purchased the second copy for the mother to study in order to help her child do well in school. Here is a case in which the *human* capital of the parents, at least as measured traditionally by years of schooling, is low, but the *social* capital in the family available for the child’s education is extremely high.

I cite Coleman’s example above because of its cogence to how reciprocities patterned themselves within South African respondent communities: whilst levels of human capital (low levels of education amongst parents) were generally depressed amongst respondents’ families of origin due to the structural repressions of Apartheid, yet these same communities used extended family and community networks for the transmission of significant levels of social⁴²⁴ capital.⁴²⁵ This is key to understanding why social capital exchanges between respondents and communities of origin exhibit at such high levels, as these resource flows were activated through ‘time’ and ‘in-kind’ offerings that bypassed the formal repressions of the Apartheid system, and which still today bypass institutional auspice.

8.5.4 Summary

This sub-section examined how high rates of social mobility amongst black professional respondents have exacerbated inequality dynamics inter-generationally. The outgrowths of this equation have particularly hit home on respondents who experience the economic ‘gaps’ between themselves and the generation that preceded them. Cited below are findings which explore how these dynamics impact on reciprocity mores:

- The findings of this research substantiate that indeed a majority (83% percent) of respondents found themselves in circumstances characterised by marked conditions of inter-generational economic inequality (as indicated by wide educational differentials⁴²⁶).

⁴²⁴ Bourdieu (1986: 244) preempts Coleman’s comments by several years, but essentially comes to the same conclusions: “Moreover, the economic and social yield of the educational qualification depends on the social capital, again inherited, which can be used to back it up.”

⁴²⁵ See for example, respondents’ comments on the major roles that close relations took in household social reproduction in chapter 6, under the section entitled “Your uncle becomes someone you must rely on”.

⁴²⁶ The use of educational qualifications as a measure of economic prowess and opportunity does not negate the possibility that there are circumstances wherein high educational qualifications are paired with conditions of unemployment. However, as all respondents involved in this study were employed, this scenario did not arise.

Moreover, whilst it is clear that these differences have roots that derive from the previous political dispensations' repressions, yet these disparities also have fruit that manifest in the current environment: high rates of inter-generational disparity are matched with elevated rates of inter-generational social capital transfers. In this regard, whilst this research was not able to establish which direction causative factors moved, it rather suggested that there existed a co-dependent relationship between high disparities and high transfers.

- Moreover, what this research did interrogate were the symbiotic dynamics of this equation. Essentially, reciprocities initiated by older community of origin members, and bequeathed on emerging black professionals along the way, could be seen as 'strategic investments' from which social mobility yields were expected to flow over time. In this regard, whilst 'human' (parents' educational levels) capital inputs may have been low during the formative periods of respondents' lives, 'social' capital investments were high, and these now required repayment yields.
- On the other hand, on the part of black professional respondents, social (and other) capital flows become necessary compensatory devices not only to cover for the spurious long-term effects that the deprivations of Apartheid unleashed on their parents' generation, but also due to respondents' marked social mobility that has heightened inequalities experienced on the intra-household level. In this context, 'repayment yields' were transacted not only as very practical material bequeathments, but were also enacted as conciliatory and symbolic offerings in the face of rising lifestyle disparities.

8.6 *Across Networks*: Social Capital Formation as a By-product of Network Investment

*The truth is, behind the 'Black Diamond' there's a very strong support system.*⁴²⁷

Respondent MP1 is a senior ranking NGO official who has worked for the private sector as well as with high level government contracts. He frequently consults throughout the country, and will soon be completing his PhD studies. MP1 wears his partially balding hair close-cut and carries a casual but engaged air about him. MP1's nephew stays with MP1 and his family on their residential premises, and additionally MP1 regularly supports his sister's two children (in the absence of their father). MP1 tells me that reciprocities are not only about financial, in-kind, or even time investments – they are also about 'social supports'. In the next narrative he describes for me the 'reconnection' pilgrimages that black professionals regularly make on weekends back into the townships.

So I think there it's mostly on the level of the family, the close family. So basically we see them (black professionals) with these beautiful cars, but Friday evening, or Friday

⁴²⁷ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

morning or Saturday morning, they go home. You know, they have their own need [of] support, they need a shoulder to cry on. The mother is there, the sister is there you know.

I can tell you right now [that] if you go to most of the black townships, just stand next to the main road that goes into the city, into the township, Saturday morning or Sunday morning, [and] you'll see how many beautiful cars that goes there in the morning. Then go back [out] after 06 o'clock in the afternoons. See how many of those beautiful cars move out of the townships, go back to where they're going which is the suburbs.

And can I tell you again why this happens? You realise that even though I live in this posh suburb, you know, but my roots are still there in Soweto, or in Mamelodi, or in Daveyton. In a way, you still want to 'see'.... And it may not actually be seen as you're going to, it may appear as you're going to give. But the truth is you're also getting something out of that.⁴²⁸

8.6.1. Network Interaction Densities

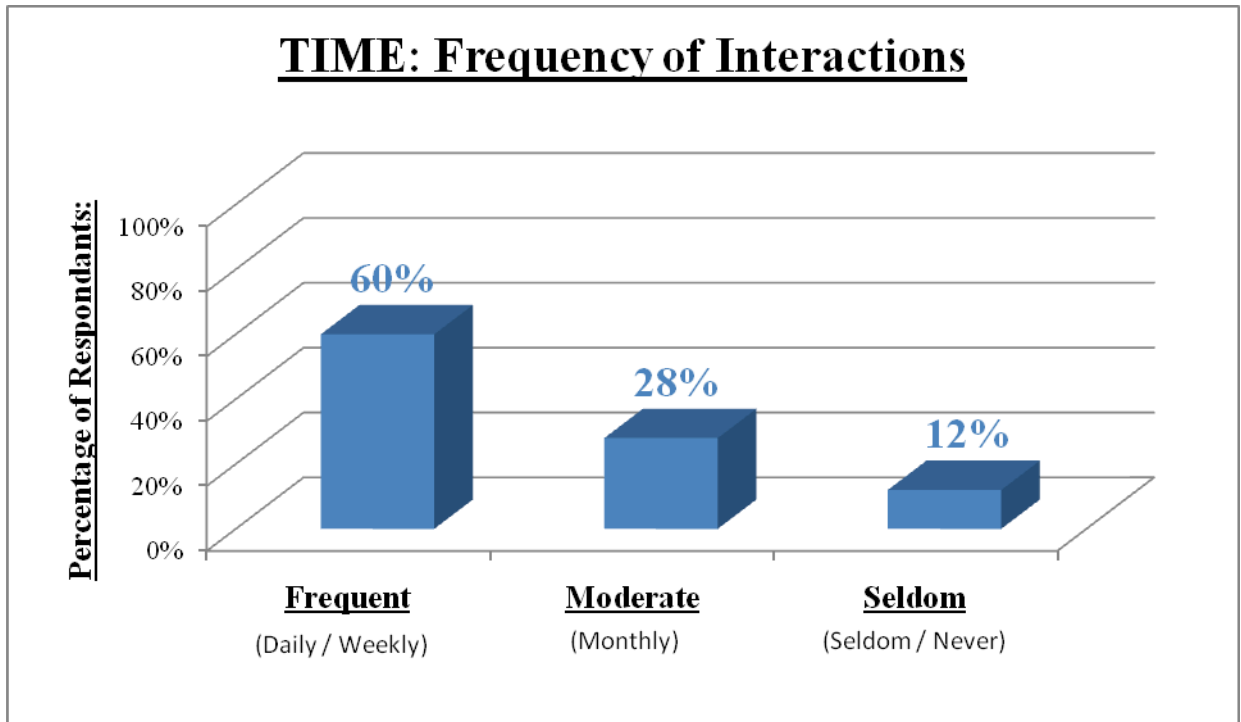
Networks comprise of two-way interactions and that is why they are so key to understanding the dynamics behind reciprocities. In the previous sections of this chapter, not only were overall levels of social capital exchanges found to be high but here an additional dimension surfaces in terms of the *density* of social interactions. Moreover in regards to the frequency of relational contact between respondents and community of origin members⁴²⁹, the research findings indicated elevated levels of association. As depicted in Graphic 8.4 on the following page, when presented with the response options of: never/seldom/monthly/weekly/daily, just under half (42.5% percent) of respondents indicated that they engaged on a weekly basis with communities of origin, thus pointing to unusually high voluntary contact densities.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

⁴²⁹ In order to enhance the survey questions' internal validity, survey Questions 42 through 46 specified several different recipient audiences. Thus respondents were asked to categorise their giving (financial, time and goods) in terms of provision for: (1) those known to them (designated as having a minimum of 3 contacts with recipients), (2) those unknown to them (e.g. beggars, random car-guards etc.), and (3) charitable giving (including religious tithes and such). In this way we could isolate provision done for known community of origin associates out of a larger pool of giving behaviours which respondents engaged in.

⁴³⁰ For a comparison to substantially declining rates in North America, see Putnam's work (2000: 93-115).

Graphic 8.4

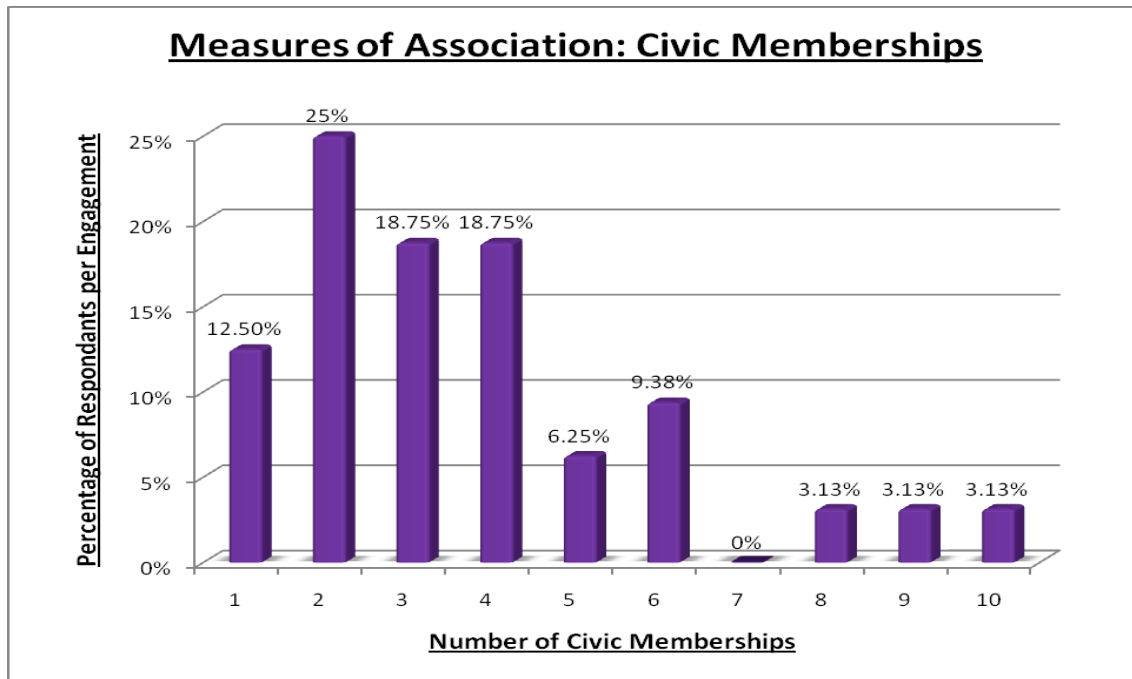


8.6.2. Levels of Civic Association

Whilst the previous data relates to high densities of personal interaction, how do respondents score more broadly on measures of civic association? Here a move is made from the individual level to that of the larger arena of civic membership. In his work on social capital indexes, Robert Putnam characterises the presence of social capital accumulation as co-resident with attributes such as accessible and co-operative community networks, high levels of participation in these, considerable allegiance to local identity, expanded mutual help and support amongst community members, and high levels of trust (Putnam 1993; Campbell 2001). He ‘measures’ these notions by charting the growth or decline of things such as levels of membership in civic associations, in terms of perceptions of social trust, practices of collective altruism, and by monitoring levels of volunteerism.

Picking up on the above theme, this research included questions used to gauge densities of not just personal sociality but also collective associational activity. In the Survey, levels of civic

engagement were measured in terms of current membership (or regular participation) in community groups such as: burials societies, book clubs, neighbourhood associations, cultural organizations, civic or sports groups, political, professional, religious or student groups, trade union or traditional structures or stokvel/savings clubs. Respondents were found to be members of between 1 and 10 of these community structures, with a majority, 76% percent, clustering around 1 to 4 memberships per respondent.



Whilst Putnam (2000: 93-115) found that within the North American setting, within the past two decades levels of ‘association’ had dropped by more than 50% percent (as measured by frequency of association at club and voluntary civic groups), rates within South African respondent communities were still relatively high. Again it is Bourdieu who sheds light on this dynamic. Bourdieu characterises the ‘logics’ behind these types of associational linkages as ones, which foster reciprocal ‘investment strategies’ which yield ‘durable obligations’ across time. He describes this as follows (1986: 250):

In other words, the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term ... into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations.

Bourdieu understood that socialities in and of themselves were not peripheral, but rather that they intrinsically carried ‘capital yield’ valuations. In so doing, Bourdieu significantly augmented not only notions of ‘capital’, but he also brought to light the critical significance of the role that ‘networks’ play in social capital replication processes. These shifts comfortably accompany the postmodern turn, which emphasises the importance of networks as instruments of ‘strategy’ (Castells, 1996).

8.6.3 Networks: ‘Strong Tie’ Enclaves & ‘Weak Tie’ Bridges

Next an investigation is made of the self-replicating dynamic of social networks, and their ability to appropriate the advantages of various types of capital simultaneously. In *The Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu points specifically to this dynamic and the power that associational networks wield in terms of their ‘reproduction’ potential (1986: 249).

The *volume* of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the *network connections* he can effectively mobilise and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected.

The keys to determining whether a social capital multiplication process will in fact reproduce exponentially pivot on: (1) degrees of group cohesion (which manifest directly in levels of trust) and, (2) whether social systems are ‘open’ or ‘closed’. Coleman (1988: S103) characterises high-trust environments as ideal breeding grounds for social capital reproduction, pointing to the example of rotating credit schemes (or what respondents’ called ‘stokvels’ in the South African context):

...these associations serve as institutions for amassing savings from small capital expenditures, an important aid to economic development. But without a high degree of trustworthiness among the members of the group, the institution could not exist – for a person who receives a payout early in the sequence of meetings could abscond and leave the others with a loss. For example, one could not imagine a rotating-credit association operating successfully in urban areas marked by a high degree of social disorganisation – or, in other words, by a lack of social capital.

Certainly the historic presence of the stokvel system within black communities in South Africa exemplifies the high levels of trust that Coleman identifies above. But even today, high levels of trust still persist ‘within’ group. In answer to the survey question “People in your community

will take advantage of you if given the opportunity”⁴³¹, a majority of respondents answered “false”. Moreover in regards to the first social capital “multiplication” ingredient, the research context rated well in terms of the trust factor.

Second to this, the effective replication of social capital systems is also dependent upon the particular structure of social networks, or what Coleman calls levels of membership “closure” (1988: S106). These comprise of a high degree of ‘density’ in the relations between the various age cohorts of a given social field, and their resistance to outside penetration.⁴³² Coleman (1988: S107) suggests that degrees of ‘trust’ and levels of ‘closure’ are in many ways co-dependent within the system of reproduction strategies that is used in social capital replication.

Closure of the social structure is important not only for the existence of effective norms but also for another form of social capital: the trustworthiness of social structures that allows the proliferation of obligations and expectations.

What is of note within the South African setting, (and herewith is implied one of the few similarities with Putnam’s findings), is that levels of respondent cohesion with ‘closed’ community of origin social systems, was declining over time (TM2⁴³³). This was accompanied by levels of civic engagement which were also found to be declining over time. Information on the changing direction of civic memberships was surfaced by means of an examination of civic membership levels as cross referenced with the age of respondents; with declines in age came also lower levels of membership in ‘traditional’ civic associational bodies. Moreover, this does not negate the fact that other ‘locations’ of sociality (for example sites dedicated to cyber social networking) were not identified and frequented by the younger generation, as our postmodern spokesperson (respondent JB1) so aptly reminded us.

⁴³¹ This data emanating from survey Question # 39(u).

⁴³² Coleman (1988: S99) uses the example of ‘intergenerational closure’ within the Jewish diamond market in New York as follows: “The wholesale diamond market in New York City, for example, is Jewish, with a high degree of intermarriage, living in the same community in Brooklyn, and going to the same synagogues. It is essentially a closed community. Observation of the wholesale diamond market indicates that these close ties, through family, community, and religious affiliation, provide the insurance that is necessary to facilitate the transactions in the market.”

⁴³³ Interview: TM2, Sunnyside Pretoria, 27, August 2007.

Respondent TM1, the fancy-footwear lawyer who I interview in Pretoria, describes it to me this way: “You know we’re living in a McDonald society, and of course my kids would probably love McDonalds. It’s from a young age when you take them to McDonalds, to that play house thing, and they go and they [now] graduate to Play Station 3, and they graduating to MTV ... I don’t know what these things are called – but it is that. It’s because of the world we live in. It will be difficult to say that they’ll probably give more than I gave, because I think I give less than my forebears gave. And I think I live less as a community. I share less than they shared.”

Moreover, it became clear that the direction that social capital transmission networks were taking over time was a product of their move away from the “close ties” of historical solidarity to now the “weak ties” of increasing social diffusion.⁴³⁴ However, whilst the ‘strong tie’ power of respondents’ linkages may be decreasing through time, their ‘weak tie’ *reach* is moving in the opposite direction and is increasing in breadth.

In his landmark article on the topic of *The Strength of Weak Ties*, Mark Granovetter develops the hypothesis that social diffusion processes are always greatest in scenarios wherein social networks are structured such that ‘weak ties’ predominate: two people otherwise unknown to each other are connected by a third person who functions as a relational (weak tie) “bridge” between the other two (1973: 1364).⁴³⁵ Granovetter’s findings go on to indicate two things of relevance to this study, the one relates to the relationship between ‘weak ties’ and social mobility, and the other emerges out of the extrapolation of his findings to conditions inherent in *Enclave Economies*.

Firstly, Granovetter found that job mobility was inversely related to the reach of diffuse ‘weak tie’ relationships; most frequently people got connected to new job opportunities not through ‘close tie’ relationships (the number of which was limited), but rather through more random ‘weak tie’ acquaintances (whose reach was much more diffuse and broad). Thus networks that incorporated both strong and weak ties into their modes of association were best able to appropriate social capital networks to their advantage. This was particularly the case in terms of the utility of networks in widening social mobility access points.⁴³⁶ Bourdieu (1986: 249) described this phenomenon as a social capital accrual process whereby, whilst various types of social capital might not be strictly substitutable for each other, yet when used simultaneously and in concert, they bred new capital.

Further to the above, particularly in contexts wherein social systems have historically been what Coleman refers to as “closed” systems, people (black professional respondents in our case)

⁴³⁴ The credit for the idea of analysing this research context in terms of the constructs of “strong and weak ties” is given to Erik Olin Wright, who raised this point in a Question & Answer session following the presentation of this research at the University of Johannesburg’s *Comprehending Class* conference, 23-26 June, 2009.

⁴³⁵ Granovetter (1973: 1364) puts it very simply this way: “the concept of a ‘bridge’; this is a line in a network which provides the only path between two points”.

⁴³⁶ Gladwell, in his ‘Tipping Point’ theory (2000) gives significant credence to the use of both strong and weak network ties in affecting major social change.

operating as ‘weak tie’ links *between* social fields, are imbued⁴³⁷ with special transactional functions that they are then tasked to activate as ‘bridges’ between enclave divides. Social capital ‘investments’⁴³⁸ made into respondents, thus become ‘yield strategies’ used by both sides (enclaves both above and below them). This is not to deny the active ‘yields’ that respondents themselves gain from their combined ‘weak’ and ‘strong tie’ networks, but rather to again reinforce their ‘strategic’ role at the nexus of multiple enclaves.

8.6.4 Summary

The crux of this chapter has centred on examining the roles that both ‘strategy’ and ‘time’ play in patterns of reciprocities. These concepts have drawn on Bourdieu’s work, and additionally on more recent literatures that examine social capital resource flows in other settings as well. In this final segment of the chapter, specifically explored has been the role that *networks* play in social capital transmission processes, surfacing the following:

- Interaction frequencies between respondents and communities of origin remained elevated, pointing to high levels of relational density albeit even in circumstances wherein there was a distance in residential proximities. Respondents explained that strong ties were maintained between themselves and communities that had made substantial contributions (social capital ‘investments’) towards their current positions. These buttresses functioned as the “support network” undergirding ‘Black Diamonds’.
- Second to the above, memberships in civic groups were relatively high, although not marked insofar as age patterns emerged which highlighted older respondents as more prone towards ‘traditional’ associational involvements. Regardless, however, both personal and corporate social capital associational ‘expenditures’ were seen as outlays that would yield “durable obligations” over time.
- Most associational networks cited were characterised by what Coleman describes as high ‘trust’ levels twinned with somewhat historically ‘closed’, but now increasingly ‘open’ and more diffuse social structures. Whilst the ‘strength’ of traditional ties was seen to be declining over time, the breadth of ‘weak ties’ was seen to be expanding.
- As black professional respondents interfaced between various echelons, they indicated that they used both ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ tie associational networks, thus multiplying their power to reproduce various kinds of capital simultaneously. The ability to access the self-replicating interaction between these various forms of capital, positioned respondents as ‘strategic’ points of leverage whose yields were coveted by multiple constituencies.

⁴³⁷ Bourdieu (1986: 250) referred to this function of being ‘imbued’ with the task of cross-echelon transactional functions (the bridge-spanners of the community) as one which was symbolically “consecrated” on behalf of the group.

⁴³⁸ Interview: AK1, Forest Town, 21 September, 2007.

Respondent AK1 describes these ‘investments’ as follows: “And it is that thing that is deposited in you now that you know that somebody else did it then... I need to give back because it helped me .. and that people don’t just help you and you disappear; but you also give back because you have experienced the benefits of that kind of assistance.”

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Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1 Research Overview: Black Professional Respondents at the ‘Border Crossing’

This research began as an exercise in ‘social cartography’ whose intent it was to map out the borders and boundaries that structure social reciprocities amongst a purposive sample of black professionals in Gauteng. Now coming full circle, the thesis ends with a discussion of how respondents embody the ‘border crossing’ motif in the rationalities of their giving behaviours. This is done by highlighting how respondents bisect several significant ‘boundary lines’. The study found that through their exchanges with indigent community of origin members, respondents were regularly engaging themselves in ‘border crossings’ as follows:

Graphic 9.1

<u>Border Crossings:</u>	<u>Traversing Boundaries</u>
<u>Border Crossing 1:</u>	<u>Kinship</u> + Between nuclear and extended family structures + Between institutional and non- institutional social support structures
<u>Border Crossing 2:</u>	<u>Class</u> + Between lower and upper class echelons + Between formal and informal exchange systems
<u>Border Crossing 3:</u>	<u>Generations</u> + Between younger and older age-cohorts + Between those with more or less social mobility elasticity

Respondents resided at the nexus of the above dialectics, traversing these boundaries as follows:

Border Crossing 1: The research findings indicate that reciprocity patterns amongst respondents resist typification singularly in terms of traditional ‘nuclear’ family set-ups, and instead reciprocities span across extended family and community support networks. Moreover, *Economy of Affection* rationales shape how respondent transfers are enacted within the specific dynamics of four ‘Circles of Solidarity’, of which provisioning patterns across composite family structures feature as the first priority.

In tandem with the above, respondents suggested that they regularly compensate for the gaps between institutional and non-institutional social support systems. Insofar as state and ‘institutional’ supports renege on provident functions (both historically and currently), informal support networks become key mechanisms used to offset these cleavages. In a context wherein conditions related to entrenched poverty, high unemployment rates, growing inequalities and the HIV/AIDS pandemic are prominent, many such ‘gaps’ exhibit within the ‘lived experiences’ of communities of origin. In light of this, black professional respondents indicated that they are frequently called on to function as resource vectors by which these communities of origin can augment provisionary capabilities.

Border Crossing 2: Traditional divides between classes are also traversed by the giving behaviours of respondents as ‘Struggle’ rationalities and ‘shared experiences of marginalisation’ frame respondents’ class consciousness in ways that uniquely breach it beyond just the interests congruent with their current class locations. In line with this, *Moral Economy* logics dictate the obligatory aspects of ‘giving-back’ practices enacted between respondents and indigent community of origin members through the creation of ‘rituals of reciprocity’⁴³⁹ that format exchanges.

Respondents are found to occupy ‘contradictory class locations’ and to frequently traverse the boundary lines between various class interests. They do this, however, not in terms of conventional class action, but rather through the agency of one-on-one informal exchanges. In this regard whilst respondents are part of the formal market system, yet their reciprocities

⁴³⁹ For example, the regular ‘weekend trips into the townships’ that many respondents recounted.

function through parallel and non-formal⁴⁴⁰ systems of exchange. These types of exchanges create recursive feedback loops that create existential security for respondents by meeting their ontological needs for identity and community, particularly as they experience the uncertainty that accompanies their own class metamorphoses.

Border Crossing 3: The third boundary that respondents regularly engage relates to their intermediary function as a ‘border’ age-cohort. Here the research found that respondents uniquely bridge the otherwise disparate economic trajectories of different generations. The crux of this equation lies in three key dynamics in this context. The first relates to the types of transfers respondents have received; namely they have been the recipients of amassments of social capital bequeathed upon them by older family and community members in the face of previous structural constrictions which limited material transfers. Secondly, respondents communicated how these progenitors viewed these ‘investments’ in younger generations as a type of capital accumulation strategy. Thirdly, respondents indicated that they now find themselves in the ‘pay-it-back’ segment of a social capital transfer cycle which relationally indebts them.

Moreover, due to rapid social mobility amongst black professional respondents post-1994, the ‘accrued value’ that they represent makes their current ‘yield’ an attractive source of necessary revenue to older generations. This is particularly the case in this context, as differences in social mobility elasticities across generations are marked. Because of these patterns of transfer, respondents now find themselves traversing across *Economic Enclaves* between generations who have vastly differing economic prospects and who may otherwise have remained less economically co-dependent.

9.2 Review of Research Task

Having provided the above Overview of the research, we now turn to structuring the remainder of this concluding chapter’s summarisation process. Here it is important to re-visit (next) the original matrix laid out in chapter 1 of the thesis and to reflect on how well we have engaged with the research task. In this regard the first chapter’s schematic was created as a type of ‘Road

⁴⁴⁰ For example, respondents’ transfers were informal in comparison to legally sanctioned death wills and bequests which in more Westernised systems govern intra-family transfers through more formalised channels.

Map' which would guide not only the format of the research project, but also its primary task of inquiry.⁴⁴¹

Graphic 9.2 Thesis Road Map Revisited

1) Chapter	6	7	8
2) Research Rubric	Affinity-based Reciprocities	Position-based Reciprocities	Strategy-based Reciprocities
3) Research Question	'Who'	'Why'	'How'
4) Focus	Kinship Solidarities	Class Solidarities	Enclave Solidarities
5) Theory Framework	<i>'Economy of Affection'</i>	<i>'Moral Economy'</i>	<i>'Enclave Economy'</i>
6) Probe	State Penetration	Market Penetration	Penetration of Globalisation
7) Finding	Non-Institutional Allegiances	'Contradictory Class' Locations	Trans-Generational Social Capital Flows

In light of this, the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to highlighting the research learnings on the following levels:

- (1) Macro Level – (A brief look at the research probes [# 6 above])
- (2) Micro Level – (Specific findings related to the key research questions [# 3 above])
- (3) Theory Level – (An analysis of the utility of the theory frameworks used [#7 above])

⁴⁴¹ The analysis and findings related to this investigation process were provided primarily in chapters 6, 7 and 8 as indicated in the Thesis Road Map chart.

First addressed are the various conceptual ‘probes’ that are listed. These ‘probes’ (#6) draw our attention to the macro-level context which respondents identified as the birthing point for their current reciprocity practices.

9.3 Macro Level Analysis: Inhabiting a Landscape of ‘Risk and Trust’

Three macro level factors dominate the larger scene, these being the penetrations of *state*, *market* and *globalisation* processes. These macro factors construct a research backdrop that extends beyond just the local context, and which generates a landscape of both ‘risk and trust’.

In their work on the subjects of the ‘Risk Society’ and ‘Social Trust’, Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck suggest that the hidden externalities of global processes frequently take on a life of their own, unleashing local experiences of uncertainty and profound discontinuity. Likewise, Karl Polanyi highlighted these dis-equilibriums, not as outgrowths of globalisation per se, but rather as by-products of capitalist market processes left unchecked. More recently yet, Mahmood Mamdani points to the hazards of colonial state legacies, suggesting that factors of ‘decentralised despotism’ in fact frame the conditions of indeterminacy experienced in most post-colonial settings.

In reviewing the historical record, the conditions which have framed the reciprocity experiences of respondents in Gauteng have indeed been symbiotically intertwined with the effects of the penetrations of the state, the market and processes of globalisation. But whilst respondent reciprocities have been impacted and shaped by their interaction with these larger macro-level phenomena, practices of exchange have also exhibited their own marked agency in the face of these incursions. In line with this, the following discussion presents an overview of how the interactions between macro penetrations and local reciprocity practices have resulted in both conditions of ‘risk’, as well as the growth of repertoires of ‘trust’.

9.3.1 Probe # 1: The State – A Porous Penetration

The first line of inquiry as regards recent history relates to the influences that the Apartheid State exerted in shaping giving and sharing mores amongst black communities. More specifically the research highlights the power that the Apartheid State wielded in structuring the parameters (and

boundaries) that defined material conditions within black communities. Insofar as the Apartheid State's repressive powers instituted conditions of hazard and 'high-risk' within black communities, these conditions were also twinned with the unanticipated outcomes of creating reciprocity 'trust' bonds within the subaltern womb of oppressed groups.⁴⁴²

Moreover, respondents suggested that in order to combat the deleterious effects of structural violence unleashed by Apartheid during the 20th century, black communities throughout Gauteng developed and refined sophisticated survival strategies which pivoted on mechanisms of mutual sharing and reciprocity. These practices of exchange constituted collective responses to conditions of insecurity and indeterminacy and served the purpose of consolidating various types of significant social capital.

Due to the need to ameliorate the 'risk' associated with a blatant lack of governmentally mediated support services, these structurally marginalised communities developed reciprocities of 'trust' and obligation for the purposes of continuance and sustainability. In light of this, the findings of this research demonstrate that mores of reciprocity became a backbone and key 'social contract' used in the formation as well as reproduction of resources flows. This was particularly the case as regards the use of *cultural capital* in aid of ameliorating levels of 'risk'.

9.3.1.1 The Appropriation of 'Cultural' Capital

Respondents spoke of the fact that within their communities of origin practices of reciprocity have long been ritualised in culturally mediated communal events. Occasions such as funerals, weddings, rites of passage, and circumstances of crisis were all accompanied by rites which defined how resource transfers were to be mobilised and dispensed during these circumstances.

⁴⁴² It is important to note that this premise does not suggest that the presence of a 'social democracy' in contemporary South Africa will unequivocally level the playing field for the masses, nor currently make economic distributions any more provident for those at the margins. This sits at the core of respondent narratives which described their marked disillusionment [see section 6.5.7.1] with the current state of affairs in post-1994 South Africa (a national situation which in fact points to a growing gini-coefficient and the ongoing perpetuation of economic divides in the forms of what one respondent called the rise of "Economic Apartheid"). It is this contradiction which creates the economic conditions which respondents experience as a 'contradictory class location'; a conundrum which they choose to negotiate not through advocacy for structural change necessarily but rather through the 'hidden' and more interior realms of their own one-on-one redistributive giving regimes.

Moreover, cultural capital in the form of the ‘ubuntu ethos’ dictated and ritualised etiquettes of hospitality related especially to voyages and to those travelling. This is highlighted here insofar as it has relevance to how local communities responded to the state-backed migrant labour system.

With the onslaught of Apartheid’s Pass Laws, locational restrictions were imposed on black communities which regulated critical aspects of their work and domicile arrangements. Influx-control legislations pre-determined rural and urban migratory flows in ways that consolidated the reach of the state even into the intimate arenas of domesticity and the realms of social reproduction. In this regard the ebb and flow of travel dynamics associated with the migrant labour system in many ways entrenched reciprocity exchanges within black communities. Particularly reciprocities relating to long-distance remittances and hospitality for those travelling became necessary survival mechanisms.

Respondents communicated that even up and into the current decade, whole networks of relationship within black communities relied on these reciprocity mores as a means by which to appropriate community resources for travel and/or in the process of finding work or gaining skills or education in new locations. In this way ‘cultural’ forms of capital were appropriated to the ends of bolstering sustainability.

In these instances what is evident is an appropriation of cultural capital as a medium by which to build reciprocities of trust in the face of high levels of risk. Moreover, in this regard both the state and resident communities, engaged in a ‘porous’ penetration one of the other, each extracting value from cultural sharing mores, but in different ways and towards divergent ends.

9.3.2 Probe # 2: The Market – Multiple Penetrations

In many regards the deleterious impacts of the capitalist ‘market’ system have been unduly cruel to black South African communities precisely because of the institutionalisation of the system of ‘racialised capitalism’ – this format representing the double helix of ‘super-exploitation’. What this research examines is respondents’ perceptions regarding how this macro-level economic system modified and/or reconfigured how reciprocity exchanges were conducted; particularly in light of constrictions placed on black communities which limited their ability to amass significant amounts of ‘material’ capital.

9.3.2.1 The Appropriation of ‘Material’ Capital

The dual exploitations of both ‘land and labour’ have long been known to represent primary ingredients from which South Africa’s capitalist market system extracted huge amassments of surplus value from local populations. More especially this equation caused indigent black individuals, households, and communities to come under increasing threat due not only to occasional circumstances related to disaster or tragedy (as traditionally was the case), but rather and increasingly so, to ongoing structural conditions related to continuous states of emergency.

This is relevant to this study insofar as this macro-level equation aided and abetted the development of particular historic reciprocity mores associated with the market constrictions that black communities faced. Respondents recounted how reciprocal exchanges featured heavily in the development of stokvels, various forms of saving schemes and burial societies which developed as an outgrowth of the need to amass material capital resources outside of the formal monetary system of the day. These social (and yet also irrepressively economic) ‘pockets’ of activity, simultaneously represented a side-stepping of the formal market, and yet also a viable entrepreneurial alternative through which to pool resources and garner both individual and collective benefits.

In this way, respondents recounted how black communities offset their ‘risk’ environment and the external regulation of exchange by creating ‘parallel systems’ which leveraged power over the distribution of available resources. In so doing, communities were able to exert control over material resources in ways that subverted them from external appropriation. These types of ‘material’ reciprocities thus became key trust-enhancing mechanisms used by communities in order to exercise agency in the face of the market’s double-helix of multiple penetrations.

9.3.3 Probe # 3: Globalisation – A Pervasive Penetration

Following close on the heels of the state and market’s incursions have been permutations induced by the role of both of these in collusion with processes of globalisation. Here we point to the impacts of resource flows (or constrictions) that derive from macro-level extroversion and introversion processes whereby resources procured or produced locally are predominately

expropriated for consumption elsewhere. Bayart (1993) calls this the exploitation of ‘Africa utile’ at the expense of the ‘Africa enutile’ majority. In the face of these larger and longer-term phenomena, symbolic capital transmissions in the form of social capital accumulation strategies were utilised by respondent communities as mechanisms to combat structural limitations that spanned across several generations and multiple frames of space and time. Here the unique appropriations of ‘symbolic’ forms of capital are highlighted.

9.3.3.1 The Appropriation of ‘Symbolic’ Capital

Bourdieu suggests that ‘Symbolic Capital’ comprises of two significant ‘non-material’ forms of capital: (1) the formation and institutionalisation of knowledge resources, and (2) the benefits associated with the creation and reproduction of social networks.⁴⁴³ Both of these types of symbolic capital were employed by respondent communities of origin as significant assets to be leveraged in the face of structural marginalisations whose impacts were not only national but frequently regional as well as trans-generational in nature.

In keeping with Bourdieu’s premise above, respondents suggested that knowledge production (specifically in terms of formal educational attainment) was prioritised as a type of ‘capital investment’. Moreover older generations (particularly those still caught in work regimes of past ‘colonial pact’ extroversion) sought to re-introduce some ‘introversionary’ benefits into knowledge production cycles by investing in the next generation. This was done to further the possibility of later garnering the material benefits associated with knowledge production, through remittances from the young who had benefitted from these endowments. In light of larger processes of extraversion that were impacting on them, these ‘investments’ were seen as prudent measures intended to aid the prospects of social mobility across generations and over time.

Second to the above, the other ‘symbolic capital’ aspect that Bourdieu mentions, (comprising the powers inherent in associational networks), was also used as a ‘strategy’ for amassing power during (and since) the Resistance Movement. Multiple respondent narratives highlighted the

⁴⁴³ Bourdieu defined the various forms of ‘capital’ as follows: “capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalised in the forms of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the forms of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the forms of a title of nobility” (1986: 243).

refrain of ‘there is power in numbers’ as a type of mantra that mobilised sharing practices in service of the collective ethos of the Struggle. With the disintegration of that ‘panoptic canopy’, however, fissures which grow out of the pervasive influences of globalisation are breeding what respondents referred to an ‘individual mindset’. Respondents noted, though, that the full impacts (drawbacks and benefits) of this shift will only be fully realised for the generation following them (their children). Moreover, whether through educational ‘investment’ strategies, or through the power inherent in networks, respondent communities ‘institutionalised’ reciprocities associated with these *symbolic capital* transfers, in aid of strategies that would lower overall levels of risk and instead better their life circumstances.

9.4 Micro Level Analysis: Research Findings

Having provided a brief synopsis of the engagement between respondent reciprocities and the more general above-mentioned historical macro and structural factors, our attention now turns to how reciprocities were found to exhibit on the micro level. Here the focus is on the ‘Who’, ‘Why’ and ‘How’ aspects of the research inquiry. Twinned to this, is an investigation of three key research findings: non-institutional allegiances, contradictory class locations, and unusual trans-generational social capital flows.

9.4.1 Findings # 1: Answering the ‘Who’ Question

9.4.1.1 Kinship Solidarities and Non-Institutional Allegiances

An investigation of giving priorities revealed that the answer to the ‘Who’ question orbited (in order of priority) around allegiance to the following:

- (1) Kinship solidarities
- (2) Solidarities with the disadvantaged
- (3) Faith & Political solidarities
- (4) Race & Culture solidarities

9.4.1.2 Giving Priority # 1: Kinship

In terms of kinship solidarities, the first series of findings related to the *Circles of Solidarity* model and pertained to respondents conceptions of family and community as follows:

- Within the Gauteng setting, respondents suggested that their responsibility to provide for ‘family members’ predominantly spanned across ‘composite family’ structures which were inclusive of *lateral*⁴⁴⁴, *vertical*⁴⁴⁵ and *diagonal*⁴⁴⁶ extended family support networks. These ‘composite’ families were found to be more resilient than single-unit nuclear families, because of their breadth and the *reach* of potential returns on reciprocities.
- In terms of contemporary support structures, respondents portrayed the impact of two dynamics that have resulted in networks of support becoming increasingly constricted and narrower in recent times, both as regards their strength and breadth. These factors comprised of the following two twinned and yet opposite dynamics: insofar as extended family support networks have made use of reciprocities as lateral as well as vertical⁴⁴⁷ support formats, this has tended to strengthen their normative hold on shaping the giving behaviours of black professionals.
- On the other hand, the influence of the growing nuclearisation of black middle class families which has resulted in the “miniaturisation of community”⁴⁴⁸, has served to disembed reciprocities from their extended family moorings, weakening their normative power.

9.4.1.3 Giving Priority # 2: Solidarity with the Marginalised

The second *Circle of Solidarity* related to giving which targeted situations/people who experienced some form of disadvantage based either on conditions of economic vulnerability (due to poverty, unemployment or lack of education), or physical disability (ascribed to a serious illness/health condition). Due to the historic legacy of Apartheid in this country, now coupled with the current HIV/AIDS pandemic, respondents communicated that large swathes of the black population have found themselves (or members of their extended families) closely touched by one or several of the above-mentioned conditions of disadvantage. This has influenced their giving and exchange patterns as follows:

- As 41% percent of respondents came from backgrounds in which they had one or both parents who were either ‘non-skilled’ or unemployed, many respondents emerged from family-of-origin households that experienced profound economic marginalisations. In

⁴⁴⁴ Defined as sibling to older sibling dependencies.

⁴⁴⁵ Grandparents as primary caregivers for their grandchildren or uncles/aunts for their nephews/nieces.

⁴⁴⁶ Relationships that spanned customary, polygamous and other types of extended family arrangements.

⁴⁴⁷ Of the recent work done on this topic, the most helpful notions emerge from Hyden’s writings which suggest that in *Economies of Affection* there are particular structural patterns of instrumentation through which reciprocities flow. Hyden’s typology proposes the following reciprocity patterns: horizontal ‘pooling’ systems, vertical [‘clientelist’] formats, ‘self-defence’ modes, and ‘charisma’-based schemes. For more on this see chapter 6, section 6.3.2.

⁴⁴⁸ Interview: TN1, Eikenhof, 31 May, 2007.

light of this, respondents demonstrated high levels of resonance⁴⁴⁹ with those segments of the population that yet existed on the economic fringes. Respondents thus targeted those in ‘high risk’ economic environments as their second giving priority.

- Highlighted next were findings related to respondents’ attempts to ameliorate these conditions of disadvantage. A factor significantly contributing to this equation was the fact that particularly leveraging pressure on black professionals to ‘give back’ to their communities of origin were what respondents referred to as an added ‘care burden’ hoisted upon them by default; moreover by what was perceived to be the state’s (historic and/or present) absence on critical issues and by ineffective systems of public support. This reality exacerbated the demands put on filial networks, causing added strain to already over-burdened family systems.
- In response to these pressures, respondents are reacting in a number of ways. Partnered with respondent narratives of giving, were also increasing levels of vocalisation that highlighted their dissatisfaction with the provisional roles that they were expected to play. Many respondents expressed ambivalence with their obligatory provisioning postures and described the tension between the desire for their own personal advancement, and demands made for contributions towards others. They also explained that reducing or setting ‘boundaries’ to provisioning mores induced substantial levels of interpersonal and community stress.

9.4.1.4 Giving Priority # 3: Faith & Political Solidarities

The third *Circle of Solidarity* priority that ordered respondents’ giving patterns related to Faith and Political solidarities. These organised themselves as follows:

- To start with, it is important to note that 81% percent of respondents stated that their particular religious tradition ‘required’ of them that they give. Giving levels were high in this regard especially because these sharing practices were coupled with generally strong levels of confidence expressed in religious institutions themselves.⁴⁵⁰ Eighty percent of respondents stated that they felt that civic groups (inclusive of religious institutions as well as NGO’s) were ‘effective’ partners in helping to alleviate poverty. Moreover, in comparison to other potential partners in the national ‘upliftment’ agenda (such as government, business, or foreign donors), religious institutions and faith ideations featured as primary influencers that shaped giving habits. Moreover, Faith-based giving levels were found to be high overall, but religious institutions specifically had a strong social gravitational pull because of their value as forums that mimicked social support networks.

⁴⁴⁹ Respondent GM1 described this scenario as “I’m from there”, indicated her understanding of conditions of poverty.

⁴⁵⁰ 55% percent of respondents stated that if asked: ‘Who would you first approach to start a community upliftment programme?’ their first choice would be to approach a religious institution. This information emanates from survey Question #32 which also provided respondents with 12 other options of community, government or business entities to approach when initiating an upliftment project. Particularly striking were how low levels of confidence were in government as a partner in this regard.

- Secondly explored was an investigation of how respondents political associations impacted on giving priorities. In terms of voting patterns, the survey revealed decreasing confidence levels in both the political process as a whole, and in the African National Congress in particular, which fell between 1994 and 2004.⁴⁵¹ When projecting towards the future, 29% percent of respondents said they did not know who they would vote for in the next elections, confirming a possible shift in the wind as regards these black professionals' political allegiances, as well as signalling their growing level of dissatisfaction with the current state of political affairs.⁴⁵²
- Political affiliations were found to be diminishing their hold as a primary identifier amongst respondents, particularly in light of their mistrust of historic governance institutions as well as their current disillusionment with abuses of state institutional powers. The research's analysis revealed however, that whilst respondents found government to be somewhat unresponsive to the needs of the poor, simultaneously respondents indicating that they felt that *they themselves* had an active responsibility to address poverty alleviation in their own circles of influence and allegiance.

9.4.1.5 Giving Priority # 4: Race and Culture Solidarities

The fourth and last *Circle of Solidarity* which reflected respondents' sharing practices related to race and cultural affinities. This section investigated to what extent respondents used the criteria of race and/or culture as selective traits to determine who their recipients would be and more importantly it explored how relevant respondents felt that these categories still were as primary identifiers in their and others' lives in terms of who was 'within' or 'without' of their giving priorities.

- The research found that while the influence of *race* as a primary giving identifier was notably receding over time amongst respondents, the power of *culture* to shape reciprocity behaviours was still very alive and powerful precisely because of its versatile ability to morph and recreate itself into new formats.
- Two sets of survey responses investigated the issue of race-based giving in the study and found that of the eight giving priorities identified, 'race' was found to be the very last motivation given by respondents as to why they would decide to give to others.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ Whilst 61% percent of respondents said they voted for the ANC in 1994, only 55% percent said that they would again vote for the ANC.

⁴⁵² Additionally, when asked what level of confidence they had in the current government's ability to successfully address the nation's most pressing issues (indicated through a 'high', 'medium' or 'low' ranking), 82% percent of respondents communicated 'low' levels of confidence in government, 18% percent stated they had 'medium' levels of confidence and no respondents whatsoever indicated 'high' levels of confidence.

⁴⁵³ Pushing the race issue out further, and adding in the dynamic of sharing with persons not known to the respondent (i.e. 'beggars'), an additional question posed this statement: "I only give to beggars who are of the same race as me". 86% percent of respondents answered in the negative, intimating that race was not a primary consideration when giving to beggars. Moreover, whether the beneficiary was either known or unknown to the respondent, in both instances a vast majority of participants indicated that 'race' in and of itself was not a primary giving motivator.

Moreover, a vast majority (86% percent) of participants indicated that ‘race’ in and of itself was not a primary reason for why, or who, they gave to. Rather, the study found that respondents frequently twinned the ‘race’ construct with the ‘disadvantage’ construct, suggesting that this linkage was the factor that gave ‘race’ its power to shape reciprocities; when racial identity was deconstructed without the presence of disadvantage, it no longer served as nearly as strong a giving motivation.

- In terms of cultural mores that contributed to bolstering the ‘sharing’ ethic, findings revealed that practices that accompanied traditional notions such as ‘ubuntu’ were powerful giving motivators, as were also the larger meta-narratives that framed the Struggle movement. Moreover whilst the cultural trappings of these value bases were viewed as an indispensable part of the historic cultural record, they were also seen as currently under increasing threat due to the encroachments of capitalism, newly fracturing ethnic divides, and more especially the growing influences of Western individualist mindsets.
- Cultural mores of reciprocity were found to still rein supreme, however, because of their fluid ability to reshape themselves within the contemporary setting. Moreover, exemplifying the versatile power of ‘culture’ to morph itself has been the re-appropriation of the traditional motif of ‘ubuntu’, now used in political rhetoric and ‘politico-speak’⁴⁵⁴. The contemporary political use of this customary motif (used to incite giving behaviours) was found to be effective precisely because it derived legitimation from both ‘Struggle solidarities’ and from traditional rituals and culturally embedded practices.

The most salient conclusion drawn regarding each of the four primary *Circles of Solidarity* above is that none of them is structured within a formal institutional framework. Moreover, reciprocities within extended family support networks (thought ritualised) defy a formal institutional auspice, giving solidarities with the marginalised are not conducted through Western-style philanthropic institutional intermediaries, and race and cultural affiliations were found to shape giving practices only insofar as they could tap into traditional mores as opposed to institutional allegiances. The only exception to this observation surfaced in regards to religious giving, but in this case respondents communicated that they engaged with this reciprocity forum because of its value as a relational constellation whose benefits mimicked social support networks. In light of the above, the research concluded that in answering the ‘Who’ question, respondents overwhelmingly favoured reciprocities that were *Affinity-based* and non-institutionally aligned.

⁴⁵⁴ For example, see the prolific use of the ‘ubuntu’ motif and verbiage in the outgoing speech of President Thabo Mbeki given in his closing nation-wide address on television (SABC 3 and e-TV, 7:00 p.m.) on Sunday, 21 September, 2008.

9.4.2 Findings # 2: Answering the ‘Why’ Question

9.4.2.1 Class Solidarities and Contradictory Class Locations

The second question which framed this research investigated ‘Why’ respondents involved themselves in high levels⁴⁵⁵ of giving. Here the lens of ‘class’ was used as a means by which to better understand the giving equation. This was done by investigating how patterns of reciprocity were shaped by the intersection of respondents’ (A) ‘objective’ class locations, and (B) ‘subjective’ aspects of class. Objective⁴⁵⁶ measures of class were gauged by respondents’ standard of living (material conditions) whilst subjective⁴⁵⁷ aspects of class related to their class interests⁴⁵⁸ (class consciousness). Both objective and subjective elements of class were found to have structured the reciprocities of respondents, but particularly in terms of their intersection as follows:

- One of the primary findings of the research was that respondents’ objective material conditions and their subjective class consciousness were incongruous with each other, creating conditions characteristic of contradictory class locations. Moreover the research highlighted the interaction between objective and subjective respondent attributes by demonstrating that respondents were high in both material class location and in perceived ‘grassroots’ class consciousness. This finding is an aberration to Wright’s⁴⁵⁹ assertion that in classical conceptions ‘class consciousness’ features primarily amongst the lower classes and diminishes with rises in standards of living. In this regard research results confirmed that respondents inhabited contradictory class locations insofar as they scored high on factors of both class *location* and class *consciousness* concurrently.
- The primary schematic in that section (Graphic 7.1) demonstrated that respondents simultaneously embraced a professional standard of living as well as an unusual level of

⁴⁵⁵ In terms of financial giving, on average, respondents spent 13.5% percent of their reported income on the support of non-nuclear others. These are exceptional findings in comparison with first-world countries around the globe. For instance, in the U.K. in 2004/5 the average percentage of personal salary (income) given to non-nuclear others was .8% percent.

⁴⁵⁶ Respondents’ Objective class locations were measured according to the four indicators of: (1) education levels, (2) occupational status, (3) an income index, and (4) the LSM (Living Standards Measure) gauge.

⁴⁵⁷ Subjective class consciousness elements on the other hand, were indicated by survey results relating to respondents’ levels of allegiance to particular class interests. For more on this see the below footnote.

⁴⁵⁸ In the formation of these survey questions consideration was given to Schlozman’s (1978) research which identified the following key class consciousness factors: (1) Personal identification with the working class, (2) Affirmation that workers were denied a fair share of society’s rewards, (3) Assertion that the interests of workers and owners were at odds, (4) Support for workers sticking together so as to amass collective power.

⁴⁵⁹ Erik Olin Wright’s work (1985: 278) offers the reader the argument that class consciousness is *strongest* amongst lower and working class members, and that it *diminishes* with progression towards upper class proclivities. In this regard, subjective *class consciousness* is defined in the classical sense of a feature present in the proletariat that is used as an instrument of insurrection in forays of class struggle.

affinity with lower class interests.⁴⁶⁰ In light of the paradoxical nature of these findings, the question was raised as to why black professional respondents enacted these class consciousness performances even in the face of their own material accomplishments and mid to upper class locations.

- It is here that the role of *Moral Economy* reciprocities surfaced with an immutable persistence. Moreover, the research found that precisely because respondents inhabited contradictory class locations, they were extraordinarily amenable to using their exchanges with indigent community of origin members as mechanisms by which to mediate class divides. Explored next is how contradictory class locations amongst respondents played out, and also more specifically at the way they motivated class intermediation functions.

9.4.2.2 Dynamics of Contradictory Class Location

Respondents' narratives revealed a number of significant factors related to the dissonance they experienced whilst inhabiting contradictory class locations.

- Firstly, respondents were remarkably reflexive and self-conscious about their own class locations. They communicated a discomfort (“being caught between two worlds”⁴⁶¹) with the way that their class awareness and class consciousness were frequently at odds with each other and suggested that they had ambivalent feelings about a strictly capitalist (neo-liberal) national trajectory. Respondents tended to deviate from the ‘working class script’ generally only over issues (such as taxes) that they felt exacerbated the incommensurate part of the ‘care and share’ burden that they carried.
- Secondly, respondents described themselves as frequently being in “limbo”⁴⁶² and in the anomic space of competing normative systems. Because of this, respondents’ class locations were depicted as ‘dissonant’ on a number of levels; cognitively (ideologically in terms of the dissonance between the Struggle narrative and current accumulation propensities), materially (in terms of the fiscal constraints respondents experienced due to sharing with poor family and community members whilst simultaneously attempting to pursue their own class advancement), and also socially (in terms of the pressures of both ‘professional’ and ‘customary’ demands on their time).
- Thirdly, affluence was not yet fully ‘normalised’ in the experiences of most respondents. As a result, while respondents tended to talk of communities of origin in ways that reflected on them as cohesive and consolidated entities, they did not refer to their own ‘professional class’ as an already fully established or totally fused identity.⁴⁶³ Because of this, the role (and power) of affiliates yet on the margins was not underestimated by

⁴⁶⁰ What is of particular note in Graphic 7.1 is the interaction between objective and subjective respondent attributes. Moreover Graphic 7.1 depicts the marked clustering of respondents in Quadrant IV, which indicated that respondents were high in both material class location as well as perceived class consciousness.

⁴⁶¹ Interview: RS1, Emmarentia, 12 October, 2007.

⁴⁶² Interview: MM2, Braamfontein, 28 August, 2007

⁴⁶³ This is not to say that the very *rapid consolidation* of black professional identity is not an imminent prospect in the very near future.

respondents; rather the inequality equation was highlighted as an issue central to the wellbeing of both respondents personally and the nation as a whole.

- Lastly, respondents' contradictory class locations were enacted in ways that confirmed that they were "not fitting"⁴⁶⁴ into traditional class schemas. The motivations for giving, whilst mixed, were frequently focused on addressing growing inequalities and what one respondent referred to as the threat of "Economic Apartheid"⁴⁶⁵. In light of this, conceptions surrounding 'guilt' as well as statuses related to 'privilege' were highlighted as part of the mixed package of contradictory locations.

A review of the survey as well as interview material indicated that respondents resided concurrently in what would traditionally be thought of as 'contradictory' class locations. And precisely because of the discordant nature of these class spaces, black professional respondents in the post-1994 context chose to engage the issues of poverty and inequality not so much explicitly and structurally, but rather implicitly and through the medium of one-to-one transfers, with these forums representing their chosen approach to inter-class intermediation.

9.4.3 Findings # 3: Answering the 'How' Question

9.4.3.1 Traversing Enclaves and Cross-Generational Social Capital Transfers

The third angle used to interrogate the research topic focused on answering the 'How' question. Here emphasis was put on two aspects, the first of which related to the types of resources that were being exchanged, namely Social Capital transfers. Second to this, the 'How' question was also explored as regards the impacts of Social Mobilities on inter-generational reciprocity patterns.

9.4.3.2 The Impacts of Social Mobility

Social Capital transfer levels were found to be high between respondents and community of origin members insofar as high attributions of in-kind and time provisions were exchanged on a regular⁴⁶⁶ basis. These resource flows were formatted as transactional 'activities', which were

⁴⁶⁴ Interview: TT1, Parktown North, 6 November, 2007.

⁴⁶⁵ Interview: MM3, Pretoria Central, 17 October, 2007.

⁴⁶⁶ In regards to the *frequency* of relational contact between respondents and community of origin members, the research findings indicated elevated levels of association; when presented with the response options of: never/seldom/monthly/weekly/daily, just under half (42.5% percent) indicated that they engaged on a *weekly* basis thus pointing to unusually high densities of voluntary contact. For more discussion on this, see chapter 8, Graphics 8.4 and section 8.6.1.

frequently also twinned with the provision of other forms of capital (financial and otherwise) as follows:

- While overall levels of exchange were perceived to be falling over time, the locations in which distributions were occurring were perceived to be changing. Moreover whilst previously many reciprocities were perceived to have some link to the larger Struggle schema, now respondents suggested that exchanges were becoming increasingly individuated. In the post-1994 setting respondents suggested that reciprocities were increasingly being activated less in terms of a national schema and more on the inter and intra household levels.
- The above diversification process, however, did not nullify the hold that communities of origin still wielded in expecting support from respondents. This was particularly the case as respondents noted provisionary ‘role-reversals’ between themselves and parents/older community care-givers. Respondents recounted that pre-1994 provisionary dynamics were marked by a significant reversal of roles between generations. Due to the economic restrictions that Apartheid imposed on black working parents, respondents noted that many children could not readily rely on the economic wealth of their forebears as a launching pad for their (the next generation’s) economic opportunities.⁴⁶⁷ Instead, black parents were relying on their children as the ticket to better future prospects, and were thus expecting ‘vertical’ reciprocities whose directional flow was reversed.
- The above observation introduces the next set of findings which relate to an examination of how high rates of social mobility amongst respondents have exacerbated inter-generational inequality dynamics. The outgrowths of this equation were found to particularly hit home on respondents who experienced the largest economic ‘gaps’ between themselves and the generations that preceded them. The findings of the research substantiated that indeed a majority (83% percent) of respondents found themselves in circumstances characterised by marked levels of inter-generational economic variance (as indicated by wide educational differentials).
- Moreover, whilst it was clear that these differences had roots that derived from the previous dispensations’ (Apartheid’s) repressions, yet these disparities were also found to have fruit in the current environment: high rates of inter-generational disparity were twinned with elevated rates of inter-generational social capital investments. What the research suggests is that among respondents there existed a co-dependent⁴⁶⁸ relationship between high disparities and high transfers; moreover respondents who had received the highest levels of social capital ‘investments/endorsements’⁴⁶⁹ had the most social capital

⁴⁶⁷ These norms fly in the face of inter-generational accumulation processes in more capital-intensive Westernised models of accrual.

⁴⁶⁸ It is important to note that the research does not claim a *causative* relationship between these two factors, but rather a *co-resident* one.

⁴⁶⁹ Interview: MP1, Fourways, 25 May, 2007.

For example, respondents explained that strong ties were still maintained between themselves and communities that had made substantial contributions (social capital ‘investments’) towards their current positions, these buttresses functioning as a “support network undergirding ‘Black Diamonds’”.

resources at their disposal to propel them to excel professionally and thereby broaden the economic gap between themselves and communities of origin. These shifts functioned in exacerbating the economic differentials between generations, which like a self-perpetuating cycle then ‘required’ of respondents that they return the value of these ‘investments’,⁴⁷⁰ to communities of origin by ‘giving back’ in the current context.

In summary, findings related to the ‘How’ question indicate that reciprocity patterns frequently coalesce around patterns of inter-generational social capital flows. These flows mediate growing economic cleavages between age groups and between *Economic Enclaves* with vastly different economic prospects and trajectories. As social mobility elasticities grow for black professional respondents, so too do the pressures leveraged on them to enact provisionary roles. Moreover, in light of growing disparities between generations and within communities, social (and other) capital flows become necessary compensatory devices. Respondents suggested that these reciprocity devices symbolically diffuse not only the spurious long-term disadvantages that the deprivations of Apartheid unleashed particularly on the economic prospects of older generations, but they also mediate the gaps created by respondents marked social mobility that has heightened current inequalities now experienced on the intra-household level. In this context, ‘giving back’ (repayment yields) are transacted not only as very practical material bequeathments, but are also enacted as conciliatory and symbolic offerings in the face of rising lifestyle disparities.

9.5 Theory Level Analysis: Theoretical Constructs

The fourth and final section of this chapter evaluates the cogence of the three theory constructs that were chosen as tools to investigate the research context, namely *Economies of Affection*, *Moral Economies*, and *Enclave Economies*. These three notions were chosen as lenses to assist in understanding how reciprocities have been conceptualised and enacted, and as a means of analysing the pertinence of these notions to this setting. In light of this, the following section is tasked with providing some critique of these notions more generally, followed by some discussion of their correlation and applicability to this research.

⁴⁷⁰ In this regard, whilst ‘*human*’ (parents’ educational levels) capital inputs may have been low during the formative periods of respondents’ lives, ‘*social*’ capital investments (time and attention given to children’s development by significant adults) were generally high because of the role of surrogate care-givers, and these now required repayment yields.

9.5.1 Analysing Outcomes: # 1 – ‘Economies of Affection’

We start with some reflection on the relevance of the *Economy of Affection* notion. Identified below are several aspects of this construct which stand out, and that help to shed light on the dynamics involved in this research context:

- The interaction between formal and informal social structures
- The interaction between compliance and agency at the local level
- The interaction between horizontal and vertical reciprocity formats

In my own estimation the most important contribution that Goran Hyden’s notion of ‘*Economies of Affection*’ makes, relates to the way it surfaces the interaction between formal and informal social structures. This nexus is highlighted in Hyden’s work (1980, 1983, 2006) and remains central to this discussion insofar as it engages the issue of how preexisting social structures (in our case kinship configurations based on *Economies of Affection*) interface with more formalised institutions (for instance the state). This interface also begs the question of how preexisting kinship structures may reconfigure⁴⁷¹ themselves in light of these newer institutions as well as how they may either bolster and/or sabotage the sustainability of newer and more ‘formalised’ institutions.

This formal/informal social structures conundrum is of particular relevance to this research contexts as respondents consistently chose non-institutional⁴⁷² formats for their giving behaviours, and additionally communicated low levels of confidence in government and institutions per se. The conclusions drawn from these findings, however, must be qualified. Whereas Hyden’s notion of *Economies of Affection* was birthed primarily out of the African ‘village’ context, black professional respondents in Gauteng are moving about in predominately high-modernity contexts. This does not negate their non-institutional allegiances, but rather instead frames them within the post-modern context of conceptions of the “networked society” (Castells 1996) instead of Hyden’s pre-capitalist environments.

⁴⁷¹ Lemarchand highlights this interplay as follows: “Equally important is the need to assess the impact of the economic and fiscal crises of colonial capitalism on indigenous African institutions” (1989: 37).

⁴⁷² The one exception to this was as regards religious giving, a discussion of which takes place in chapter 6, section 6.5.

In fact the biggest criticisms leveled against Hyden's original work on *Economies of Affection* pivot on claims that the notion carried with it static, pre-modern and "un-captured" preconceptions about African village life, and secondly that it ignores increasing socio-economic stratifications and the tensions that these engender (Isichei 2002: 248). In this vein the paramount critique of Hyden's work is undertaken by Rene Lemarchand who asserts that to suggest the "autonomy" of black African communities from outside intrusions is naïve, and under the best of circumstances more broadly incorrect. He puts forward that criticisms of the Hyden argument tend to zero in on two major areas of vulnerability: the assumed capacity of African communities "to evade the reach of the state, and where such a capacity exists, their motives behind it" (Lemarchand, 1989: 34).

Moreover in response to the above claims, several observations evidence themselves within this study's research. Firstly I would suggest that *Economies of Affection* in this context should not be conceptualised as juxtaposed and separate from the state, but rather as co-resident along side of it. Understood in this way, *Economies of Affection* whilst differentiated from the state, can yet be co-opted by it (the state⁴⁷³) and its interests. In similar vein, *Economies of Affection* can, and also do, make use of state apparatus to further their own filial logics.

As Mahmood Mamdani so aptly reminds us, this opportunistic (and sometimes even draconian) state-community symbiosis is not to be underestimated in terms of its power to further consolidate the "decentralised despotism" of bourgeois rule (1996: 37). In so doing, reciprocal relations between states and various communities are understood to firmly situate themselves *within* and not outside of the historical and socio-political environments that have created them. Further to this, the inherent mistrust that inevitably resides within this co-dependency lies at the core of why the assertion is made in this research that *Economies of Affection* (as reflected by the black professional sample group), reside at the heart of a state-community relationship that represents a 'porous', and yet critically symbiotic, penetration one of the other.

Moreover the findings of this research suggest that the reach of formalised institutions such as the state, into the domain of *Economies of Affection*, has been checkered by responses of both

⁴⁷³ An interesting example of this dynamic on a national scale can be found in the Tanzania context. Isichei (2002: 248) cites the following case: "Very often, the Economy of Affection has been part of official ideology. It was at the heart of Nyerere's – transparently sincere – ideal of Ujamaa [in] his programme of compulsory villagisation".

acquiescence and resistance on the part of local communities. Whilst historically and particularly during Apartheid local communities certainly did not evade the reach of the state and remain ‘uncaptured’⁴⁷⁴ as Hyden suggests, yet neither were they fully subsumed either. In this regard it is important to make some comment on how post-colonial community-state relations have devolved elsewhere, followed by comment on how respondent communities in this context were shown to make use of *Economies of Affection* in ways that showcased relations of agency within this equation.

Certainly in other international settings, communities have found ways to use reciprocities as instruments through which to further their own agendas on the macro level. Roy Willis (1981: 169) provides the following intriguing vignette regarding how villagers in colonial Tanzania (Ufipa plateau) used mechanisms such as “destroying rank” as instruments of insurgency by which to unbundle the power of patron’s in their context.

The villager’s power to ‘destroy rank’ was an institutionalised expression of the continuing obligation owed by the privileged householders to the poorer householders, including their own kin, with whom they were linked in an imbalanced exchange, and obligation that could affect the privileged householder’s own imbalanced exchange with the king. If this high-order exchange was generally disapproved, the ordinary villagers could act to change its terms by *having the offender removed from office*.

In similar manner to the above, not only historically, but even today we see grass-roots communities in South Africa exerting their power on the stage of electoral politics in ways that also ‘destroy rank’ with leaders whom they feel no longer sufficiently represent their interests. The ousting of President Thabo Mbeki is certainly a case in point. Moreover I address the above issue insofar as it is important to point out that though Hyden presents the notion of *Economies of Affection* as representing a constituency that is somehow “uncaptured” by more formal institutions, this research instead suggests that it important to take cognisance of both how reciprocities have been ‘shaped’ by macro systems⁴⁷⁵, and yet still recognise how they exert their own agencies in return; certainly the reciprocities practices by respondents in this study should be viewed in that light.

⁴⁷⁴ In defense of Hyden, it is important to note that his work (as does also James C Scott’s), pivots on ‘peasants’ and this in and of itself distinguishes it quite considerable from exchanges within our Gauteng research context. Thus, exchanges between urban and rural populations here can not necessarily be associated with the ‘peasant’ and ‘patron’ activations noted by Hyden and Scott.

⁴⁷⁵ See section 9.3 earlier in this chapter for more on this topic.

The third aspect that will be touched on here as regards *Economies of Affection* relates to Hyden's typology which depicts the variety of ways in which reciprocities of affinity can be structured, more especially as horizontal ('pooling') or vertical ('clientelist') exchanges. Moreover in his article which 'reconsiders' the notion of *Economies of Affection*, Lemarchand points to the increasing move in many contexts from 'pooling' patterns of exchange to 'clientelist' formats (1989: 33-67).

I note the above assertion because it moves the discussion from a singular focus on filial affinities to the added and important dimension of class-based reciprocities which tend to exhibit in terms of 'clientelist' or patronage relationships. In the Gauteng context this additional dimension is critically important in light of growing class segmentations within black communities. Moreover whilst these class issues are not explicitly addressed through the notion of *Economies of Affection*, they are more frontally addressed through the *Moral Economy* lens. In light of this, we turn next to an analysis of the *Moral Economy* construct and its cogence to this research context.

9.5.2 Analysing Outcomes: # 2 – 'Moral Economies'

Moral Economy notions were found relevant to this context's reciprocity equation insofar as they specifically informed the kinds of reciprocities that existed between economic classes. In this regard the overarching *Moral Economy* interplay between respondents and their beneficiaries in our context coalesced with the original observations of E. P. Thompson in terms of several key types of interactions. Moreover, whilst the 'working class' dynamics that Thompson explored in late 18th century England⁴⁷⁶ were certainly time and place specific, yet some of the principles that Thompson investigated have interpretive value also in terms of their applicability within other contexts such as ours. Below are three of his observations which will be interrogated more fully in that regard.

Essentially, Thompson's (1971) assertion regarding 18th century England was that inter-class relations exhibited in such a way that there developed a 'popular consensus' regarding:

⁴⁷⁶ Thompson's work (1963) focused primarily on the growth of English "working class" consciousness within the Luddite movement of the 1780's through the 1830's.

- (1) What were deemed legitimate and illegitimate procedures for regulating exchange
- (2) Broadly disseminated norms regarding ‘just price’ regulation
- (3) The notion that when justly and effectively used, ‘just price’ repertoires served the interests of potentially stabilising class inter-relations; when abused, they led to protest and revolt

In our research setting the three *Moral Economy* dynamics mentioned above played out in interesting ways. Firstly, in the Gauteng context exchanges were regulated according to a schema that ‘legitimated’ and ensured that communities of origin could expect (and summarily obligate) respondents to enact provisioning roles on their behalf. Communities of origin regulated exchanges in ways that safeguarded adherence to reciprocity norms; reciprocity non-compliance was treated as a transgressive violation such that sanctions of ‘disassociation’ (renunciation of ties) were enacted against those who did not abide by exchange expectations. Respondents communicated that the prospects of possible ‘disconnection’ between themselves and their communities of origin were anxiety-inducing and were frequently met with resistance from both sides (but for different reasons). Whilst these practices of exclusion were informal in nature, yet they exerted significant power as surveillance and compliance mechanisms that enforced conformity.

While Thompson’s work focused on legitimate and illegitimate procedures for regulating exchange, the point made repeatedly by respondents in this context was that there were indeed particular ‘procedures’ in the form of cultural repertoires which governed how transfers occurred. These cultural mores did not shift attention away from the fact that these were inter-class interactions, but rather they served to legitimise these exchanges from within a deeply embedded cultural framework. Both the notions of ‘ubuntu’ as well as the ‘Struggle’ meta-narrative exemplify the power that such schemas exerted in both motivating and structuring reciprocities.

Secondly, Thompson’s next observation relates to the development of norms regarding ‘*just price*’ regulation. He suggested that there were preconceived norms and unwritten expectations of justice within the larger customary social sphere which presided over inter-class relations in

significant ways. In line with these, certain behavioural repertoires were enacted between classes on order to regulate a 'just price'.

In our context, a number of mediating devices were used in order to regulate 'just price' exchanges. Firstly, respondents articulated that 'just exchanges' exhibited in terms of the different types of 'commodities' that were being transferred. In this context a unique significance and worth was placed on non-financial transfers. Respondents suggested that in response to their own financial and expertise outlays, they in turn obtained appropriate 'value' from communities of origin by accessing from them existential and social support. This came in the forms of child care, ongoing comradeship and most importantly regular and re-integrative rituals (such as weddings and funerals) which built and reinforced community identification.

More so even than current benefits, however, respondents noted the importance of 'paying back' previous bequeathments which community of origin members had endowed them with, as forms of investment particularly in relation to areas that spurred on their education and employment opportunities. Moreover, with "one foot is in the suburbs, the other is in the townships", respondents' narratives indicated that a symbiotic and mutual co-dependence existed between themselves and communities of origin, with each exerting negotiating power over the other so as to exact a 'just price' for previous as well as current reciprocal 'investments'.

Lemarchand (1989: 48 *emphasis mine*) describes this pattern as follows:

Where the exchange relationship is highly institutionalised [entrenched] i.e. rooted in a cultural code that helps validate the norm of reciprocity, the social pressures militating in favour of a fair exchange are difficult to resist. *Fair exchange* in this case does not exclude unequal exchange; what it means in essence, is that there are *consensual limits as to how much inequality is allowed to intrude into the exchange relationship*.

In our case, insofar as growing levels of inequality evidenced themselves, particularly within communities and across generations (and possibly that is the key point) reciprocities in themselves were viewed as mechanisms by which to lessen these dis-equilibriums.

Thirdly, many historians and social theorists⁴⁷⁷ have focused primarily on the breach of *Moral Economy* protocols as reasons for the instigation of insurrections amongst lower classes, and Thompson himself suggested that when abused, ‘just price’ repertoires often led to protest and revolt. Here our research focused on the inverse of this principle: insofar as *Moral Economy* repertoires are effectively used, they legitimise a type of ‘negotiating power’ between classes that serves the interests of potentially stabilising class inter-relations.

In this regard this research found that *Moral Economy* repertoires were used by respondents as placating mechanisms within the ambit of inter-class relations. In response, *Moral Economy* practices were used by communities of origin as a means by which to re-entrench traditionally-sanctioned entitlements to a ‘subsistence ethic’ for yet-impoorished extended family members. In this regard reciprocities were being used by multiple classes; essentially as a type of inter-class ‘transactional language’ between respondents and indigent community of origin members and as a powerful tool of appeasement in the complex dynamics associated with growing inter-class disparities.

9.5.3 Analysing Outcomes: # 3 – ‘Enclave Economies’

The previous two sections analysed *Economies of Affection* and *Moral Economies* and the roles that each of these in turn have performed on the research stage. The final part of the exchange rubric that this research addresses relates to respondents’ particular role as transactors; links between the centre and peripheries and as critical vectors of connection in the context of *Enclave Economies*. Here attention is given to processes that have in fact heightened and perpetuated already-existing *Enclave Economies*, entrenching inequalities⁴⁷⁸ on the one hand, whilst simultaneously multiplying and decentring enclaves so as to spawn them in new locations⁴⁷⁹.

⁴⁷⁷ For instance, the work of James C. Scott in Southeast Asia, Harvard’s Barrington Moore, London School of Economics’ Richard Titmuss as well as John Lonsdale’s research in eastern Africa are cases in point.

⁴⁷⁸ Note for example the popularised work of Joseph Stiglitz (*Globalization and its Discontents* [and the anti-globalisation movement more generally]) as a case in point of renewed articulation around how processes of ‘economic globalisation’ have manifested in the reinforcement of negative externalities and structural disparities.

⁴⁷⁹ For example, this research noted that class disparities within black communities, though previously somewhat squelched by the structures of Apartheid, have in the post-1994 setting now risen to the forefront in the national agenda (see Seekings and Nattrass’ data on this subject). In this regard, whilst these fissures are not new (they were certainly existent pre-1994; see Brendal-Syrier’s work in *Reeftown Elite*), yet they have surfaced in the contemporary scenario with a gale force, and in locations wherein they previously were not allowed to manifest. This in fact is the post-liberation ‘vulnerability threat’ that most post-colonial settings face as new political players and allegiances tend to cloak entrenched and ongoing class fissures.

Anthony Giddens' text *Runaway World* highlights the dangers of enclivity and sheds light on key social structures that have been significantly impacted in its wake. In fact he is the one that brings us full circle back to the observation made at the beginning of this chapter: Giddens points to heightened levels of "risk" and uncertainty as products of this era, and to the influence that these conditions have had on both the macro and micro "intimate and personal" realms (2000: 20 & 30).

Moreover Giddens suggests that the nature of 'risks' has shifted in the modern era from the arena of 'externally' created hazards (predetermined by nature or the 'gods'), now to 'manufactured' risks which are a result of the globalisation process itself (2000: 44). These newer types of 'manufactured' risks embody the unintended negative externalities that frequently perpetuate inequalities by *disproportionately* affecting the powerless and the poor.⁴⁸⁰ This was found to be true both historically and currently in terms of ongoing conditions of enclivity in South Africa.

In light of the above, this research found that the social capital transfers that respondents offered to community of origin members were structured around the intermediary roles that respondents enacted between *Economic Enclaves*; intermediation between those in the *interior* realms of economic power and wealth, and community of origin affiliates yet located on the *perimeters*. These reciprocity enactments housed a spectrum of tasks and responsibilities in which respondents described themselves as 'channels', 'conduits', 'points of connection', 'referral systems', and 'links in the chain' under the overall banner of the bridge-spanning functions that black professional respondents took on.⁴⁸¹

As channels for both resource procurement and conveyance, respondents articulated that they used their professional auspices as mechanisms through which to benefit their community of origin affiliates. This they did informally as well as through more formal routes; in fact respondents suggested that many times they conducted themselves informally within the jurisdictions of more formalised institutions. In both cases respondents repeatedly described

⁴⁸⁰ For instance, an example of a 'manufactured' risk would be the hazards associated with sweat-shop working conditions which disproportionately affect the poor.

⁴⁸¹ Respondent FN1 described himself as "It's like I'm working like an 'information centre' for the community." (Interview: FN1, Braamfontein, 16 November). Another respondent, EM1, put it this way: "Ja, it's like I am a hosepipe you know, as it waters I get wet in the process, but it's going somewhere; like a warehouse or something." (Interview: EM1, Douglasdale, 10 November, 2007).

instances in which they played a ‘referral function’, at the behest of their less economically empowered affiliates, towards the aim of bettering the economic prospects of these community and family members.

In this regard, respondents played a key “facilitating role”⁴⁸² and found themselves used as strategic points of interface and as pathways of access through which their affiliates could gain leverage to move themselves from the perimeters and closer in towards the interior circles of economic opportunity. As respondents interfaced between various echelons, they indicated that they used both ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ tie associational networks⁴⁸³, which multiplied their power to procure various kinds of capital simultaneously. The ability to access the self-replicating interaction between these various types of networks, positioned respondents as ‘strategic’ points of leverage between enclaves.

Moreover, respondents were effective in these bridge-spanning functions precisely because the ‘logics’ behind these roles blended together economic⁴⁸⁴ and social⁴⁸⁵ rationalities.⁴⁸⁶ In Hyden (2006), individuals become rational in the sense of pursuing strategies [Bourdieu] that are embedded [Polanyi] in local social contexts. This research found that it was precisely this significant melding together of economic and social rationalities which served to reinforce and buttress the enduring strength of reciprocities between respondents and community of origin members.

⁴⁸² Interview: TS1, Douglasdale, 9 May, 2007.

⁴⁸³ Granovetter (1973: 1360-1380) develops the hypothesis that social diffusion processes are always greatest in scenarios wherein social networks are structured such that ‘weak ties’ predominate: two people otherwise unknown to each other are connected by a third person who functions as a relational (weak tie) “bridge” between the other two. Granovetter found that job mobility was inversely related to the reach of diffuse ‘weak tie’ relationships; most frequently people got connected to new job opportunities not through ‘close tie’ relationships (the number of which was limited), but rather through more random ‘weak tie’ acquaintances (whose reach was much more diffuse and broad). Thus networks that incorporated both strong and weak ties into their modes of association were best able to appropriate social capital transfers to their advantage.

⁴⁸⁴ In his 2006 article Hyden defines the concept of ‘homo economicus’ as “the autonomous individual capable of making rational choices to maximize his self-interest”.

⁴⁸⁵ Here I refer to ‘social rationality’ as the maximisation of social networks (Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam) to the ends of adding value to both the individual *and* collective.

⁴⁸⁶ Lemarchand (1989: 41) describes these two bifurcated ideological traditions as follows: this “calls to mind two distinct intellectual traditions in exchange theory. One traceable to Durkheim, Mauss and Malinowski, stresses the normative underpinnings of reciprocity; the other, associated with the names of Easton, Barth, Sahlins and Blau, puts primary emphasis on the self-interested, utilitarian interests involved in social exchange.”

9.6 Alternative Crossings

This research suggests that respondents could best be characterised as acting out “alternative crossings”⁴⁸⁷ to those regularly enacted by global economic systems, acting out their own definitions of identity, solidarity and agency.⁴⁸⁸ Insofar as respondents cooperated in regimes of giving behaviours which bridged traditional dualist divides, this ‘border’ experience opened the door for respondents to see and think from within as well as outside of modernist social imaginaries.

In his classic *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha (1994) speaks of the postcolonial identity as birthing mindsets that embody ‘hybridity’, echoing what the black American forefather W.E.B. Du Bois once called ‘double consciousness’ (1994 [1904]). This ability to think and act outside and beyond traditional binary and dualistic thinking amounts to a very particularist skill-set that many of Gauteng’s respondents are regularly employing. In fact these ‘double consciousness’ enactments serve as an antidote and even ‘counterculture’ to the harshly structured industrial paradigms of modernity, and represent one of the pivotal qualities commending black professional respondents to a significant place in a post-colonial and post-modern world.

In her writings, Ann El Khoury (2005) suggests that a shift is being heralded from ‘protest agencies’ to ‘constructionist agencies’ which embody alternatives-in-action rather than protest movements per se. Accordingly she asserts that these changes are “signalling and catalysing a shift from *oppositional* to *propositional* mindsets and practices” (2005: 22). The black professionals sampled in this research are caught at the nexus of the convergence of these two discourses of opposition and proposition, and in ‘vulindlela’ style are opening up the door for a propositional and provocative futureview.

⁴⁸⁷ Brydon used conceptions of “alternative crossings” in her provocative address entitled “Border Thinking: Cracking Global Imaginaries” at the *Szeged Partnership Conference* (15 June, 2007).

⁴⁸⁸ This is of course notwithstanding the admission that respondents communicated ambivalent feelings about the pressures put upon them to embody these various types of dissonant and competing identities that spanned multiple ‘worlds’.

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4. Are you a citizen or permanent resident of South Africa? Yes No

5. Do you reside within Gauteng Province Yes No

6. Do you live in one of Johannesburg's townships? Yes No

Do you live in the downtown city centre of Johannesburg? Yes No

Do you live in one of Johannesburg's suburbs? Yes No

Other residential arrangement: (Please designate) _____

7. Which **one** of the following do you consider your first language?

Tswana	Venda	Zulu	Xhosa	Ndebele	English
Tsonga	N. Sotho	S. Sotho	SiSwati	Afrikaans	Other

8. In which Province/ 'Homeland' did you spend a majority of your growing-up years?

(Please designate) _____

9. Put an 'x' next to your race

African (black) Indian Coloured White Asian

Other: (please designate) _____

10. Highest level of education that you have completed:

Non-formal	Primary	High School	Technical	Tertiary
Honours	Masters	PhD/Doctoral		

11. Designate highest level of education completed by your parents:

Father/ male guardian:

Non-formal	Primary	High School	Technical	Tertiary
Honours	Masters	PhD/Doctoral	Don't Know	

12. Mother/female guardian:

Non-formal	Primary	High School	Technical	Tertiary
Honours	Masters	PhD/Doctoral	Don't Know	

13. Household information:

Number of persons in your household (including yourself) living under one roof _____

14. Number of persons living with you who are not in your nuclear family* _____

* ('Nuclear family' is defined as: you, your spouse and your children.)

*15. Number of persons *outside* your nuclear family that you regularly support _____

*16. Respondent (your) employment status:

Unemployed	Student
Employed - Full Time	Housewife
Employed – Part Time	Retired
Self employed	Other: (designate) _____

17. Respondent’s job description: Please write out your job title: _____

*18. Please put an ‘x’ next to the box below that best describes your work type:

Government	Business (For Profit Org)	Non-Government Org. (NGO)	Community- Based Org. (CBO)
Faith-Based Org. (FBO)	Academia	Informal sector	Other designate: _____

19. Respondent’s Parents’ work descriptions*

* If parents are not currently unemployed or are deceased, designate what type of work they did for a majority of their lives.

Mother/female guardian: Please write out work title: _____

20. Please put an ‘x’ next to the box below that best describes mother’s occupation:

Professional (Formal degree required for this occupation)	Semi-Skilled (Some apprenticeship required for this occupation)	Non-Skilled (No formal schooling required for this occupation)	Unemployed
---	--	---	------------

21. Father/male guardian: Please write out work title: _____

22. Please put an ‘x’ next to the box below that best describes father’s occupation:

Professional (Formal degree required for this occupation)	Semi-Skilled (Some apprenticeship required for this occupation)	Non-Skilled (No formal schooling required for this occupation)	Unemployed
---	--	---	------------

23. Number of People in your Household (over 18 years of age) earning an income:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 +

24. Monthly earnings of respondent:

R 0 - 3,999	R 16,000-19,999
R 4,000-6,999	R 20,000-24,999
R 7,000-9,999	R 25,000-29,999
R 10,000-12,999	R 30,000-37,999
R 13,000-15,999	R 38,000 +

25. Monthly Household Income (total wages from all earners in household):

R 1,000-3,999	R 16,000-19,999
R 4,000-6,999	R 20,000-24,999
R 7,000-9,999	R 25,000-29,999
R 10,000-12,999	R 30,000-37,999
R 13,000-15,999	R 38,000 +

Section II: Habits, Attitudes & Affiliations

*26. What political party did you vote for in the last national election?

AMP	AZAPO	FF	MF	UDM
ACDP	CP	ID	NNP	'Do not know'
ANC	DA	IFP	PAC	'Did not vote'

*27. What political party do you plan to vote for in the next general election?

AMP	AZAPO	FF	MF	UDM
ACDP	CP	ID	NNP	'Do not know'
ANC	DA	IFP	PAC	'Do not vote'

28. Designate with an 'x' which category below best describes you:

I am formally a part of a particular religion

I am not formally affiliated with any religion

29. Designate with an 'x' which category below best describes you:

No religion	Christian: - Catholic - Protestant -African Independent	African Traditional Religion
Islam	Hinduism	Jehovah's Witness
New Age	Buddhism	Baha'i
Judaism	Wicca	Other (which?):_____

30. If you are affiliated with a particular religion, please indicate the frequency of your gathering (for religious purposes) with other members of your faith tradition:

every day	2-3 times a month	once a year
2-3 times a week	once a month	seldom / irregularly
once a week	several times a year	never

*31. Please put an 'x' next to any of the following in which you are currently a member or regular participant:

- _____ member of burial society
- _____ member of book club
- _____ member of civic association
- _____ member of community policing forum/ neighbourhood watch/residents' assoc.

- _____ member of cultural organisation
- _____ member of environmental organization
- _____ member of political organisation
- _____ member of professional organisation
- _____ member of religious organisation
- _____ member of sport club
- _____ member of stokvel/savings club
- _____ member of student organisation
- _____ member of trade union
- _____ member of gender (women's/men's) group/ or age (youth/elder's) group
- _____ regularly participate in religious group
- _____ participate in choir
- _____ participate in Hospice volunteer care
- _____ participate as care-giving/ counseling volunteer
- _____ participate in traditional structure

*32. Number your top three options, (with 1 being most likely and 3 being the less likely) of your first three choices below:

Who would you first approach to start a community upliftment project?

- _____ Religious Org
- _____ Local Business
- _____ Big Corporation
- _____ Local Community Leader / Organisation
- _____ Donor Organisation
- _____ Bank/Financial Institution
- _____ Money Lender
- _____ Friend/Family
- _____ Local Government
- _____ National/Provincial Government
- _____ Relevant NGO
- _____ Other: please designate _____

33. Please rank with numbers (1 to 10) what you feel are the biggest to the smallest problems currently facing South Africa (10 is the smallest problem and 1 representing the biggest problem):

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| unemployment | crime/ security |
| troubles in services/infrastructure provision | psychological / spiritual problems |
| child abuse/ domestic violence/ rape | HIV/AIDS / health concerns |
| Lack of quality educational opportunities | lack of housing |
| corrupt local/national leaders | poverty |

Other problems: please specify _____

34. Do you feel that the current government has done a good job of addressing the problems that the nation faces?

Category:	Yes	Somewhat	No
unemployment			
services and infrastructure			
child abuse/ domestic violence/ rape			
Lack of quality educational opportunities			
corrupt local/national leaders			
crime/ security			
trauma/ psychological/ spiritual problems			
HIV/AIDS / health concerns			
Lack of housing			
poverty			

35. Please rank with numbers (1 to 8) the responsibility level of the following in the alleviation of poverty (**8** is lowest responsibility and **1** representing the strongest responsibility):

Whose primary responsibility should it be to help the poor?

international donors	charitable individuals
religious organisations	local businesses
government	community/family affected by the problem
big business	the individual poor person

Other problems: please specify _____

36. Within the context of the 'new' South Africa, do you consider there to be a strong pull for you to be part of a particular 'class'?

Yes No

37. What particular 'class' would you consider yourself a part of?

lower class	upper-middle class	none
lower-middle class	upper class	Other: _____
middle class	elite	

38. Rank these items from 1 to 4, with 1 being the strongest and 4 being the lowest:

Do you feel that definitions of 'class' in the new South Africa are primarily based on:

economic/ income level	influence/power
race/ethnicity	educational level/status of profession

Other Factors: please specify _____

*39. Please indicate with an 'x' mark which of the following statements you believe to be True or False.

- a) Politics is a waste of time & ineffective to bring true change True False
- b) No one cares about and gives to people like me True False
- c) The government is most concerned about rich people True False
- d) Helping poor is an effective way to build the new SA True False
- e) Most religious / civic/ NGO groups effectively help poor True False
- f) Black people are as poor now as they were in Apartheid True False
- g) If poor people worked harder they would not be poor True False
- h) Big businesses should pay more taxes to help poor True False
- i) Giving charity to the poor only makes them more dependent True False
- j) People like me influence development in my community True False
- k) South Africa has poor mostly because of global economics True False
- l) Community initiated projects for poor are most effective True False
- m) Current government is prioritizing the needs of the poor True False
- n) My faith motivates/ requires me to give to poor True False
- o) I only help poor people who are trying to help themselves True False
- p) If you give to others, they will also help you when you need True False
- q) Buying a Lotto ticket is a way of helping the poor True False
- r) Rich people should be responsible to share & help the poor True False
- s) I only give to beggars who are of the same race as me True False
- t) It is government's responsibility to help poor, not mine True False
- u) People in your community will take advantage of you if given the opportunity True False
- v) Sharing practices are much the same now as in my parents' day True False
- w) In Gauteng people do not share as much as in other parts of the country True False

40. Are there any sayings/slogans/proverbs that come to your mind from your own first language that describe traditional practices of reciprocity/sharing/giving? Please write down the saying/slogan/proverb in your first language and then briefly explain it.

Slogan/proverb/saying in your first language: (please print clearly): _____

Translation and Explanation: _____

41. Does the notion of 'Ubuntu' have relevance to your understanding of sharing/giving? If so, how? _____

Section III: Experiences of Giving and Reciprocity

Through answering the following questions you will share with us more specifically about your experiences of giving and reciprocity.

Here we will look at what **types** of giving you may have been involved in over the past month. The various types are:

- a) Giving **Money**
- b) Giving your **Time** (voluntary)
- c) Giving **Goods** (any of the following in-kind gifts/donations: housing, transport, food, clothes, recyclable materials, stationary, blankets, piece work, books/ educational materials, toys, medicine, tools, building supplies)

42. Please answer the following questions **outside of** (excluding) your religious giving and (excluding) your provision for nuclear family members:

True ___ False ___ Last month I gave money to support people in need

True ___ False ___ Last month I gave time (voluntarily) to support people in need

True ___ False ___ Last month I gave goods (donated materials) to people in need

In this next part of the survey we will also look at your giving to **people you know** (extended family members/relatives, neighbors, colleagues, community members) as compared to your giving to **people you do not know personally** (e.g. street beggars, vendors, car security guards, religious or institutional giving, international causes etc.)

*43. The Previous month's Rand value of my money giving:

R _____ to individuals I know (co-workers, extended family members, community members etc.)

R _____ to individuals I don't know (car/security guards, beggars, street kids etc.)

R _____ to charities/religious/civic organisations

44. (**Outside** of my nuclear family & religious involvements) I give my **time** for individuals I know:

every day	once a week	seldom/ not really
few times a week	few times a month	never

45. (Outside of my nuclear family) I volunteer my **time** for people I don't know and/or for civic groups/ religious groups/ charities:

every day	once a week	seldom/ not really
few times a week	few times a month	never

*46. (Outside of my nuclear family) I give **goods** (donate materials) to people I know:

every day	once a week	seldom/ not really
few times a week	few times a month	never

47. (Outside my nuclear family) I give goods (donate materials) to people I don't know or to my religious /civic organisation:

every day	once a week	seldom/ not really
few times a week	few times a month	never

*48. Are you a part of any religious/faith group that requires you to regularly give?

yes no

49. Do you more frequently give to individuals who need help, or to organisations that dispense charity?

_____ More frequently give to individuals
_____ More frequently give to charity/religious institutions
_____ Frequently give to both individuals and organisations
_____ Do not give to either individuals or to organisations on a regular basis

50. Please rank with numbers (1 to 8) the importance of the following factors in motivating you to give (**8** is lowest motivation and **1** representing your strongest reason to give):

_____ recipient was a member of your family/extended family
_____ recipient had low or little education
_____ recipient had little or no income / is poor
_____ recipient was unemployed or very irregularly employed
_____ recipient was a member of the same religious group as you
_____ recipient was of a particular race group
_____ recipient was of a particular ethnic/ language/ community group
_____ recipient displayed a serious health condition
_____ other reasons? Specify

51. In terms of your own experiences, do you feel that practices of sharing/reciprocity help to sustain:

the individual	one at the expense of the other
the community	one to benefit the other
both	neither

52*. Please designate with an 'x' which statement you feel is a 'duty' (an obligation and responsibility you are required to fill), **OR** which you feel is 'giving' (a freewill offering that is not mandatory):

Caring/ paying for own children is a:	duty _____	giving _____
Caring/ paying for relatives/extended family is a:	duty _____	giving _____
Caring/ paying for neighbours/people in my community is:	duty _____	giving _____
Caring/ paying for other (unknown) people is a:	duty _____	giving _____
Caring/ paying for others by giving to a church/charity is:	duty _____	giving _____

53. Indicate (by means of 1 through 8, 1 being most effective, and 8 being least effective) which of the following entities you feel would **most effectively** use your **charitable contribution**:

international donors	charitable community leaders
religious organisations	local businesses
government	the community or family affected by the problem
big business	the individual poor person

*54. Duration of Giving: Put an 'x' next to the category that you most usually support

support short term causes	support long& short term causes
support long term causes	do not support either long or short causes

A BIG 'THANK YOU' FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY !

My sincere appreciation for the time you have given this project.
~ Carolyn Stauffer

Your answers will advance our knowledge of 'Reciprocity' in the New South Africa.

Appendix 2 : Interview Instrument

In this interview we will explore your experiences of sharing and reciprocity. The interview itself is divided into 6 main sections, each of which deals with one primary area of investigation; the who, what, how, where, when and why of this study. The interview should take approximately 1 hour. With your permission, it will be audio recorded.

Thank you so much for your participation - it will provide us with a significant contribution to this area of research.

Section 1: WHO Questions

Beneficiary Characteristics

Outside of your nuclear family, do you regularly support anyone else (with your voluntary time, money or resources) ?

Who do you feel is your 'responsibility' to support and why?

Are most of the people that you regularly support within your extended family or outside of it?

How do you choose who you will or will not support?

Benefactor Roles

Within black communities have you found that there are particular people who are more specifically 'expected' to support others? If so, who are they and why?

Who would you say are the biggest 'givers' in your community?

Are the people who give the most 'support' usually of a particular gender, age, economic status, language group, political affiliation or educational level?

Section 2: WHAT Questions

Types of Support

From your experience, what are the kinds of resources which 'givers' most often provide for others?

If you regularly support others, what type of resource do you most often share: your money, time/expertise or resources (in-kind materials)? Why?

Is your support of others usually quite regular and structured, or is it irregular and spontaneous?

Reciprocity Factors

Do you feel that you more frequently support others, or that others more often support you? Why?

Do you expect anything in return for what you share with others? If so, what?

Are there particular 'outputs' that you expect from others when you have shared with them?

How do you *feel* about others relying on you to support them?

How do you feel about you relying on others for support?

Section 3: HOW Questions

Cultural Practices

Is supporting others part of your traditional culture? Why and how?

Relational Norms

For the people that you support, how did this relationship start?

Describe an experience in which you chose to 'end' a support relationship.

Who decides how long a support relationship will last?

How was it decided what 'types' of support (money/time/resources) will be given?

Institutional vs. Individual Giving

Do you support others mostly on an individual basis or through giving to charity/religious/government organisations? Please explain why. If through institutions, which ones, and why?

Section 4: WHERE Questions

Location

From your experience, is 'supporting' others/ sharing in the city of Johannesburg different depending on where one stays? If so, how and why?

Urban vs. Rural Dynamics

Is 'supporting' others/ giving in Johannesburg different than in other parts of the country? Is there a difference between how it is practiced in rural or urban settings? If so, what and why?

Economic Environment

Have you found that giving/sharing is effective in actual poverty relief? Why or why not?

Are there other important reasons why you give? If so, what?

South Africa is one of the most inequitable societies in the world, (both between races as well as within them). Whose responsibility do you think it is to address the needs of the poor? Please explain.

Section 5: WHEN Question

Historical Context

Has your experience of Apartheid affected your (or your community's) attitudes towards giving? If so, how?

Political Perspective

With the current government of majority rule do you feel more, or less, responsible now to support others than you did during Apartheid?

Are the ways in which you give now different than the ways you gave then? If so, how?

Generational Shifts

Are your practices of giving different from those of your parents? Is there a difference between your giving experience and your children's'? If so, what or how?

Do you support the same people over time, or does who you support change? Based on what circumstances are these changes made?

Section 6: WHY Questions

Religion

If you belong to a particular faith/religion does this influence your giving? How?

Allegiance to ‘Solidarity’ Meta-Narratives

Do you feel a sense of ‘obligation’ to support others? If so, where do you think this pressure comes from? If there are *multiple* sources of pressure, please identify and explain them.

Perceived Outcomes

In what ways do you feel that supporting others may benefit or negatively impact *you*?

How do you feel it benefits or negatively impacts the *recipient*?

In what ways do you feel that supporting others may benefit or negatively impact the *community*?

Effectiveness Gauges

What has been your *worst* giving experience? Why?

Now tell me about your most *successful* experience of providing support. What made that experience especially successful in your eyes?

Thank you very much for sharing your time and wisdom with me!

I will be happy to share my findings with you.

Appendix 3: Interview Instrument Development

The interview instrument was developed in two phases. Within the first phase the instrument focused on investigating 5 Reciprocity Dimensions. Each of these Reciprocity Dimensions (1 – 5) were then broken down into three subheadings (a – c) whose purpose it was to interrogate aspects of each Dimension.

- 6) Social dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Conceptions of Community
 - b) Authority Structures
 - c) Support Networks
- 7) Customary dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Traditional Practices
 - b) Role of Religion
 - c) Push & Pull Factors
- 8) Material dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Norms of Exchange
 - b) Impact Gauges
 - c) ‘Class’ Relations
- 9) Structural dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Responsibility for Poverty Alleviation
 - b) Global Market Effects
- 10) Symbolic dimensions of reciprocity
 - a) Inter-Generational Shifts
 - b) Impact of History
 - c) Significance of Location

Conclusion: Narration of stories of ‘Best’ and ‘Worst’ giving experiences.

Interview Questions were then molded around each of the subheadings (a – c) associated with the 5 primary Dimensions, and augmented with optional prompts as follows:

1.) Social dimensions of reciprocity

c) Conceptions of Community

(Explanation – How do particular understandings of allegiance, and responsibility shape reciprocities)

Interview Question # 1 :

Outside of your nuclear family (spouse and/or children) do you regularly support anyone else? If so, who do you regularly support and why? Who do you feel is your responsibility to support? Explain.

Prompt: With a limited amount of resources, how do you prioritise who (and how) you should support others?

Prompt: What are your feelings about supporting others? Do you feel that supporting others positively or negatively impacts you? Explain how or why.

d) Authority Structures

(Explanation – What patterns of power and decision-making surface in how reciprocities are instigated and negotiated)

Interview Question # 2 :

In your experience, how and by whom are reciprocities *solicited* or *initiated*, and who decides when they begin or end. Also how and who determines the types of reciprocities that will be engaged in (e.g. money/time /material resources)?

Prompt: Do you perceive any of the following: gender, age, family relations, status, or wealth, to be factors in how these decisions are made?

Prompt: What is your experience of how you disengage from reciprocity obligations that you do not want to continue?

e) Variable: Support Networks

(Explanation – What is the nature and role of Support Networks in mediating conditions of risk and indeterminacy)

Interview Question # 3 :

Introduction: Some people have linked the phenomenon of reciprocity with the notion of formal or informal ‘support networks’.

How do you determine who is within your ‘support network’, i.e. who helps you and who you help? Do the same persons stay within your support network or do they change?

Prompt: From your experience, do these ‘support networks’ function to increase your sense of security, or to decrease it, (or both)? How would these support networks benefit you or else detract from your well-being? Can you give me an example of this from your experience?

2.) Customary dimensions of reciprocity

a. Traditional Practices

(Explanation – How do diverse ethnic traditions manifest in reciprocities)

Interview Question # 4 :

Can you recount for me an incident/story of how reciprocities of exchange and sharing are uniquely practiced amongst *your* particular ethnic group?

Prompt: Explain to me the *norms* at play in that incident.

b. Role of Religion

(Explanation – How do particular religious traditions motivate and/or structure reciprocities)

Interview Question # 5 :

If you belong to a particular faith tradition, explain to me how that influences why you give, how you give and to whom you give.

Prompt: Is your racial identity, religious identity, political identity, gender identity or economic identity most important in shaping your giving practices?

c. Push & Pull Factors

(Explanation: Surfacing factors that *negatively* ‘obligate’ giving and alternately factors that *positively* ‘inspire’ giving.

Interview Question # 6 :

Introduction: In many scenarios of reciprocity there are factors or pressures that make one feel negatively forced, obliged or ‘Pushed’ to give. The opposite can also be true; there may be factors that positively ‘Pull’ one and motivationally inspire one to give. In this study we are calling these the ‘negative push factors’ and conversely the ‘positive pull factors’.

Can you recount for me a significant/memorable incident in which you felt obliged or pressured to give against your will?

Can you recount for me an incident in which you felt deeply moved or positively motivated to give of your own charitable goodwill?

3.) Material dimensions of reciprocity

a) Norms of Exchange

(Explanation – What norms of reciprocal expectation govern processes of *exchange*)

Interview Question # 7 :

Do you expect anything in return for what you give/share with others? If so, what? (Think of a particular example & explain that situation to me.)

When others have given/shared with you, what do they expect from you in return? (Think of a particular example & explain that situation to me.)

b) Impact Gauges

(Explanation – What values determine perceptions of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of reciprocities)

Interview Question # 8 :

Do you believe sharing/giving/charity is effective in real-time (actual) poverty alleviation? Tell me a story from your experience of when it did or did not serve this purpose.

Prompt: Are reciprocities important for other reasons? In your mind what other purposes or goals do they achieve? What indicates to you that an experience of reciprocity has been successful?

c) 'Class' Relations

(Explanation – How do reciprocities mediate inter-class relations)

Interview Question # 9 :

Within black communities do you feel that some sectors, strata or groups of people are expected to give/share more, or less, than others? If so, who, and why?

Prompt: What is your experience of who has the most power, status or influence within black communities in Gauteng?

Prompt: Do you believe there are distinct 'classes' within your community? How would you determine who belongs to a particular 'class' group?

4.) Structural dimensions of reciprocity

f) Roles of government, civil society, business and the individual in poverty alleviation

(Explanation: What are perceptions regarding who should take responsibility in addressing the needs of the destitute)

Interview Question # 10 :

Introduction: Traditionally the ‘3 pillars’ of society have been described as: civil society (including NGO’s and religious institutions), government, (all national authority structures) and commerce (the business sector and market).

With these three ‘pillars’ in mind, describe for me what is your experience of which of these sectors has been most effective in addressing the needs of the poor and which has been least effective? Do you feel that these ‘institutions’ are best equipped to handle such issues, or rather do individuals and families address the needs of the poor better? Why or why not?

g) Effects of global market forces on local reciprocities

(Explanation: How do market regulation and global economic pressures impact expectations of reciprocity)

Interview Question # 11 :

Do you feel that global market forces play any role in shaping reciprocity expectations or perceptions in your community? If so, how?

5.) Symbolic dimensions of reciprocity

a. Inter-Generational Shifts

(Explanation - Changes in reciprocities over time: past vs. present)

Interview Question # 12 :

Do you feel that reciprocity practices have shifted over time, e.g. changed from one generation to the next? If so, how or why?

Prompt: Give examples and explain any similarities or differences between your parent’s generation and yours, or between this and previous eras in how reciprocities were/are expressed.

b. Impact of History

(Explanation – How does historical context shape reciprocities)

Interview Question # 13 :

Do you think black communities in South Africa have a unique historical background (events or circumstances) that may, or may not, impact how they express or experience reciprocities in this context? Please explain.

c. **Significance of Location**

(Explanation – How has the character of the *Johannesburg/Gauteng* metropolis specifically influenced reciprocities)

Interview Question # 14 :

Recount for me a story that you can remember about sharing or giving as practiced in another setting (e.g. in another Province, or in a different rural or peri-urban context outside of Gauteng.)

Prompt: Are there particular features of Gauteng life that make reciprocities here different from those practiced elsewhere? What is either generic, or else unique, about reciprocities as practiced amongst black populations in ‘Jozi’?

Conclusion: I’d like to end by asking you to describe for me the stories of what were your *‘Best-ever’* and *‘Worst-ever’* giving experiences.

I will be more than happy to circulate research findings to any respondents who so request. Thank you for your time!

Appendix 4: Correspondence Between Survey & Interview Instruments

The purpose of this appendix is to speak to the way in which the survey and interview instruments are designed with in mind the integration of the information from these two sources. While the two instruments are different in format and possibly even in the types of data they solicit, yet they are devised so that they coalesce around the 5 Reciprocity Dimensions of the interview questions. More specifically, each of the interview questions has one or more survey questions that measure the same variable.

In light of the need to demonstrate how the survey and interview instruments comprise two pieces of one whole, I will lay this out more fully in terms of the specific questions that mirror the same variables in both instruments. Below find in outline form the interview instrument variables, and the corresponding variable survey questions.

Social dimensions of reciprocity

Interview Question # 1: Survey Questions:
Conceptions of Community – 5, 17, 39-b, 39-p, 39-s, 39-t, 43, 47,
48, 54, 56 – 63.

Interview Question # 2: Survey Questions:
Authority/Decision-making Structures – 31, 41, 39-j.

Interview Question # 3: Survey Questions:
Support Networks – 39-e, 50, 51, 52, 53.

Customary dimensions of reciprocity

Interview Question # 4: Survey Question:
Traditional Practices – 40

Interview Question # 5: Survey Questions:
Role of Religion – 28, 29, 30, 39-n, 49.

Interview Question # 6: Survey Questions:
Push & Pull Factors – 42, 44.

Material dimensions of reciprocity

Interview Question # 7: Survey Questions:
Norms of Exchange – 39-u, 46.

Interview Question # 8: Survey Questions:
Impact Gauges – 33, 39-d, 39-I, 39-l, 45.

Interview Question # 9: Survey Questions:
'Class' Relations – 36, 37, 38.

Structural dimensions of reciprocity

Interview Question # 10: Survey Questions:
Responsibility for Poverty Alleviation – 26, 27, 32, 34, 35,
39-a, 39-c, 39-g, 39-h,
39-m, 39-o, 39-q, 39-r.

Interview Question # 11: Survey Question:
Global Market Effects – 39-k.

Symbolic dimensions of reciprocity

Interview Question # 12: Survey Question:
Inter-Generational Shifts – 39-v.

Interview Question # 13: Survey Question:
Impact of History – 39-f.

Interview Question # 14: Survey Question:
Significance of Location – 39-w.

The above overlap between the survey and interview information is by no means a perfect science, but it does demonstrate the way that they can run on parallel tracks feeding into each other. Once the respondent data (elicited from both tools) is fed into the system qualitatively, a much more comprehensive picture will emerge to address the goals of surfacing the experiences, values, and rationalities that frame the primary research question, e.g. the patterning of reciprocities.

Appendix 5: Interview List

<u>Research Acronym</u>	<u>Interview Location</u>	<u>Interview Date</u>	<u>Completion of Survey</u>
TS1	Douglasdale	9 May 07	✓
MM1	Parktown	15 May 07	✓
SL1	Douglasdale	16 May 07	✓
TM1	Arcadia, Pretoria	19 May 07	✓
SM1	Fairland	23 May 07	✓
MP1	Fourways	25 May 07	✓
VM1	Ruimsig	25 May 07	✓
TN1	Eikenhof	31 May 07	✓
SM2	Hartebeesfontein	22 June 07	✓
MN1	Braampark	6 July 07	✓
JB1	Parktown North	14 Aug 07	✓
GM1	Soweto	22 Aug 07	✓
TM2	Sunnyside, Pretoria	27 Aug 07	✓
MM2	Braamfontein	28 Aug 07	✓
LB1	Soweto	31 Aug 07	✓
LN1	Sunninghill	17 Sept 07	✓
AK1	Forest Town	21 Sept 07	✓
KJ1	Eikenhof	3 Oct 07	✓
SM3	Midrand	5 Oct 07	✓
JT1	Hartebeesfontein	10 Oct 07	✓
RS1	Emmarentia	12 Oct 07	✓
ST1	Blackheath	16 Oct 07	✓
MM3	Pretoria, Central	17 Oct 07	✓
NM1	Braamfontein	23 Oct 07	✓
JL1	Roodepoort	31 Oct 07	✓
GC1	Marshalltown	31 Oct 07	✓
TT1	Parktown North	6 Nov 07	✓
JM1	Greenside	7 Nov 07	✓
FM1	Braamfontein	8 Nov 07	✓
BT1	Pretoria	9 Nov 07	✓
EM1	Douglasdale	10 Nov 07	✓
MM4	Hillbrow	12 Nov 07	✓
VN1	Fourways	15 Nov 07	x
FN1	Braamfontein	16 Nov 07	✓
SS1	Braampark	19 Nov 07	✓
EM1	Roodepoort	19 Nov 07	x
JR1	Soweto	28 Nov 07	✓

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