DOGS FIGHTING LIONS

LABOUR'S TROUBLED ATTEMPT TO PURSUE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

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The Department of International Environment and Development Studies - Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB). It has eight departments, associated research institutions and the Norwegian College of Veterinary Medicine in Oslo. Established in 1986, Noragric's contribution to international development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes) and assignments.

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To the working class of South Africa

Declaration

I, Silje Kristine Rygland, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature………………………………..
Date……………………………

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the trade union movement in South Africa, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and their access to power and ability to represent the working class. At the end of Apartheid, in 1994 when the African National Congress (ANC) won the first democratic election in South Africa, the expectations of the black population towards the government was high. Millions of people were to be lifted out of poverty through employment, housing and dismantling of the racial barriers that discriminated the black population. As COSATU entered into a Tripartite Alliance with ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP), it took on responsibilities for national development. Today nineteen years have passed and the inequality in South Africa is rising, but at the same time COSATU is facing a fragmentation within its affiliates. The study attempts to first explore the historical and institutional conditions for the position and power COSATU holds today. Then I analyse COSATU's political dynamics in three ways; upwards in relation to ANC, inwards towards its members and sideways in aligning with other social movements. Whether COSATU earns the label social movement unionism is discussed throughout the study. In the light of classical theory on power and Gramscian theory on hegemony I discuss whether corporatism has limited COSATU's use of labour power, hence their ability represent the interests of their members. The research claims that as member stratification changes within a union, the priorities of organised labour changes accordingly.

"How many times has the liberation movement worked together with the workers, and at the moment of victory betrayed the workers? There are many examples of that in the world. It is only if the workers strengthen their organisation before and after liberation…if you relax your vigilance, you will find that your sacrifices have been in vain. You must support the African National Congress only so far as it delivers the goods, if the ANC does not deliver the goods, you must do to it what you have done to the apartheid regime."

- Nelson Mandela, September 1993

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
BEE	Black economic empowerment
BIG	Basic income grant
CBO	Community based organisation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA	Democratic Alliance
DPRU	Development Policy Research Unit (Cape Town University)
FEDUSA	Federation of Unions South Africa
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISP	Industrial Strategy Project
LO	Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MDM	Mass Democratic Movements
MERG	Macro Economic Research Group
MIC	Mineworkers investment company
MIT	Mineworkers Investment Trust
NACTU	National Council of Trade Unions
NALEDI	National Labour and Economic Development Institute
NCA	Norwegian Council for Africa
NDP	National Development Plan
NEDLAC	National Economic and Development Council
NP	National Party
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NUMSA	National Union of Metal Workers South Africa
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
POPCRU	Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union
QLFS	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAAWU	South African Allied Workers Union
SABC	South African Broadcasting Company
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTWU	South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers Union
SMU	Social Movement Union
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle
SSA	Statistics South Africa
UDF	United Democratic Front
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the trade union movement in South Africa, its access to power and its ability to represent the working class. In 1994 the African National Congress (ANC) won the first democratic election in South Africa and formed the Tripartite Alliance (hereafter "Alliance") together with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Expectations towards the new government were very high. The black majority, which had suffered under the Apartheid regime, needed housing, education and above all a steady income from employment. Many would say that COSATU faced a great opportunity to fulfil its agenda through the participation in the Alliance. Others have been more critical claiming that the Alliance put COSATU in a subordinate position playing the role as a legitimizer of the ANC led government.

Eighteen years later approximately 40% of all South African households are situated in townships. The majority live in shacks with restricted access to electricity and clean water and 36.3% of the total population are unemployed. Above all, the inequality level is very high and continues to rise. At the same time, in August 2012 a massacre of striking mineworkers employed in the Lonmin mines in Marikana shocked the international community. The frustrated mineworkers initiated a wildcat strike with the demand for wage increases. The formal representatives of the mineworkers and the shop stewards appointed by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) resisted calls for strike. They took instructions from NUM leaders who had adhered to agreements made in the bargaining councils. As tensions culminated, the police interfered and 47 people were killed.

In this context I attempt to examine what lies beneath the surface of a trade union movement which has undergone a transition period and today still remains in an Alliance with the governing party, ANC. The main time period concerned is from 1994 until present time. The thesis asks *whether COSATU has achieved key development objectives through its alliance with ANC, and explores the larger political dynamics which may account for the outcomes.*

My motivation stems from a general interest in the potential power that lies within organised labour. Recognizing that capitalism today enjoys the hegemonic power in a global context,

organised labour's unique organisational ability and potentiality to align with broader social movements constitutes an exciting opposition to the current hegemony. The potential for development lies at the heart of my interest within the academic field of international development. In my view development can not be understood only through the eradication of poverty, but has to be continuously addressed since inequality seems to be the obstacle to societal development, not poverty alone. I look upon access to decent work as the key tool for people to live a free and meaningful life. In my opinion trade unions can inhabit the potential to both secure a safe and evolving labour regime and initiate further job creation.

Acknowledging that there are numerous governments that consist of an alliance between labour and political parties, COSATU is by scholars emphasised as one of the most famous and powerful trade union movements in the world. COSATU participates in a very progressive labour relations system which secure labour a seat at the table of power. On the other side, there is scholarly attention to the difficulties of labour. Some of the shortfalls being the fragmentation of unions and the development of new unions not affiliated to COSATU which challenges the policy "one industry, one union". A clear example of challenges to labour is the recent crisis in the mining sector as described above.

I have employed the case study approach in order to explore the tensions within COSATU and between its stakeholders. To build a fundament for my argument I have used a combination of data collected through fieldwork in addition to a thorough examination of existing literature. Although the literature on issues like the role of the Alliance, challenges to organised work and contestation from below is substantial, I considered fieldwork to be relevant especially because incidents like Marikana and the COSATU took place during the process of this thesis. In an attempt to capture the underlying tensions a presence in the field was considered necessary. The concept of *development* is throughout the thesis understood as the strive to achieve equity through job creation, systems for social security, redistribution through the tax system, state control of basic services and natural resources which in all shall facilitate equal opportunities for the people of South Africa.

In comprehending the current power relations between the state, labour and business I needed to look back in history. Therefore the first research question is; *what were the circumstances driving, the premises involved in, and institutional results of, the formation of the ANC-COSATU alliance?* This is followed by an empirical review of the promises made in the

transitional period when the Alliance took power. Moreover, I present the leverages and responses which led to the composition of power within South Africa and consequently within the Alliance. Then I introduce the achievements of the Alliance, namely the level of development in South Africa today.

In order to better understand the scope of a trade union movement three main theoretical concepts have been applied; *business unionism*, *political unionism* and *social movement unionism*. The latter have been used to characterize COSATU. In fact it is historically been used as the most famous example of social movement unionism. During the anti-Apartheid struggle COSATU was in the forefront of the resistance against the government. As the Apartheid regime supressed the black population in an extensive manor, social needs and rights were increasingly incorporated into the agenda of COSATU. They became a social movement union (SMU) which is conceptualized as a community-oriented strategy where definition of working people is broad. A SMU breaks down the oppositions between workplace and community, economic and political struggles and formal sector workers and the working poor (Stokke, 2007b). Considering the relevance of social movment unionism within COSATU the second research question is; *to what extent can the label social movement unionism apply to COSATU today?*

The purpose of this thesis is to enter into the game of power where COSATU is the case study. I attempt to illuminate the tensions and challenges of COSATU by approaching it from three angles. First, COSATU is assessed *upwards* towards its relation to the Alliance and ANC in particular. Is the loyalty to the Alliance in a possible conflict with the loyalty to the constituents of COSATU? Here I am attempting to map which choices ANC has taken in the post-Apartheid era which impacted COSATU's ability to pursue issues like unemployment and poverty within its political relation to ANC. Secondly, I will examine what kind of discussions is ongoing within COSATU, and how COSATU relates to internal crisis like Marikana. This makes up the *inwards* approach. The third balancing act is labour's *sideways* alignment. In analysing the relation between civil society and the trade union movement in the years after the transition to democracy I seek to uncover COSATU's mobilising potential and thereby its real power. Finally, the threads of the three-way analysis are connected in the chapter; *Falling off the tightrope?* On this fundament my final research question is; *what can a three-way balancing act tell us about labour's ability to represent its members and pursue their interests as well as an extended social agenda?* Here I discuss

whether COSATU suffer from contradiction. Further I address the changing composition of COSATU members and what consequences the type of members can have for the priorities of the federation. Then, the claim that labour is subordinated within the Alliance is discussed in relation to why this may be the reality and what are the chances of COSATU remaining that position. Finally, COSATU's own recognition of a possible future crisis is presented.

In the final chapter I discuss whether COSATU is a social movement union in relation to the theoretical prerequisites. The case study show that although COSATU themselves claim that they are a social movement union, their alignment with broader social movements is limited. On one side COSATU has defined that they wish to align with certain moderate movements while it is claimed that the broader social movements don't wish to unite with COSATU as they regard them as a representative of the privileged. Consequently, COSATU will not be able to mobilise as broadly as they probably claim they are in capacity of. As the theory on social movement unionism states that labour is able to reach out far beyond the factory gates, the limitations in alignment could point in the direction that COSATU's level of social movement unionism is decreasing.

Summing up, my research and analysis rely on the presumption that COSATU's participation in the Alliance has had implications for the strength of labour and the profile of the organised worker within COSATU. It is not the purpose of this study to judge whether COSATU should remain in or leave the Alliance because that is requires a far more extensive political analysis which lies beyond the purpose of this study. However, this thesis might contribute as fundament for a further assessment of labour's alliances in South Africa.

2. METHOD

1.1 Methodology and research design

According to Yin (2003) there are three different research designs to choose from as a researcher in social sciences: descriptive, explorative and causal. In an explorative research design the problem is often not accurately defined, yet the purpose is to explore a certain topic in order to provide broader knowledge and understanding of the chosen field of study. Moreover it does not intend to provide conclusive evidence, in fact, it opens up for the researcher to change the direction of the study if findings require the researcher to do so.

Here I chose to apply the explorative direction where I, as a detective tried to investigate a subject in this case COSATU. My point of departure is not a predefined assumption of the reality, which I aim to prove or disprove. I preferred an explorative design in my study since I aimed at exploring the relationship between organised labour, political power and the objective of development.

My approach to the problem can be categorized as heuristic, which means experienced based techniques in order to solve or explore a problem. This approach regards dialogue as a specific form of dialectic (Kleining and Witt, 2000). As a researcher I try to interpret the data available to me. Recognizing my heuristic approach I must be sensitive to my own conceptions and worldviews that I bring into the field as I am studying the problems I address. I am a product of my own experiences and expectations, I am determined to view and interpret the things I see in the light of my previous perceptions. Recognizing that my background reflects my experience from party politics and trade union movements in Norway, this has both consciously and unconsciously shaped my worldview. Moreover, it has also led me to embark upon the problem I want to explore in this thesis. In other words, if I did not carry the background of political engagement and a social democratic mind-set, I probably would not have chosen the approach I selected here. Consequently, my perceptions give meaning to what I experience and observe, however I am simultaneously not in control of the process which creates my opinions (Nyeng, 2007).

Qualitative research is intended to deeply explore, understand and interpret social phenomena within its natural setting. By using qualitative researcher methodology, researchers want to

collect richer information and obtain a more detailed picture of issues, cases or events. They want to explore the *why* and *how* of a situation, not only *what*, *where* and *when* (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). In this case, qualitative research seems appropriate since I want to explore COSATU's own perception of their development potential alongside the perception of relevant observers, affiliates and critics. In this way I aim at building a comprehensive insight into the problem concerned. Due to the nature of the topic I am studying, a qualitative method was a clear choice. I have chosen the case study as a research design and undertaken in- depth interviews and document analysis as my main methods.

1.2 Embarking on a case study

Case study is a preferred method for researchers studying contemporary phenomenon in depth and within a certain context. A case study is often used when the purpose is to explore a certain domain, especially when the border between context and phenomenon is not properly drawn (Yin, 2003: p. 18). In order to obtain knowledge about a certain individual, group, organisational or political phenomenon, a case study is preferred (Yin, 2003). *How* and *why* are regularly used in the research questions and problem.

The decision to embark on South Africa and COSATU as my case study was not straightforward. I think it serves the reader to be acquainted with the explorations and considerations I underwent in order to arrive mentally and physically in South Africa. It is important for the reader to understand my motivation for addressing this specific focus. My motivation for exploring the field of "development studies" has been strong since I started on my academic path. Coming from one of the most developed social democracies in the world and having a political background formed my deep interest in questions related to poverty alleviation, inequality and consequently distribution of wealth in the global South. Pinpointing the specific focus was quite clear to me, whereas deciding on where to study my problem was somewhat more of a challenge. I asked myself the following question (the answer to which led me to ask more questions) - *what measures would bring as many out of poverty as possible?* Employment came up as a clear answer. My firm belief in employment as a development measure is a result of my political background, but also an outcome of having studied the consequences of neo-liberal policy on employment, especially entrenchment. Having a job gives you a stable income for yourself and for those who depend on you, but can also reinforce and give meaning to one's own existence.

So why are so many people in the global South unemployed? I could have chosen to explore the field from this angle, but I was more interested in development and job creation. The trade union movement is to me unique because organised labour increases the value of a worker and the conditions in which they sell their labour. The changing labour relations and internationalization of labour sustain the continuous need for the trade union movement. Employment is an aim in itself for the sake of increased membership potential of trade unions. Members constitute power. Nonetheless, it is not assumed here that trade unions take on the responsibility for job creation. Their main responsibility is, first and foremost, to protect workers' rights, secure employment of their members and in many cases engage in a social dialogue to politically influence matters which have consequences for work. However, many trade union movements extend their agenda outside traditional work place issues. Social protection, welfare delivery and solidarity are pressing issues in many trade union movements today. Therefore, a movement which is both concerned with social principles and rooted in ordinary worker's needs might be equipped to act as a development agent. An important distinction here is that trade union movements in themselves seldom create jobs, but their internal policies and engagement in institutionalized (or informal) dialogues with the corporate and state sector might be regarded as the channel for initiating job creation. When labour decides to extend their agenda from a traditional *workerist approach* towards pursuing a broader social agenda is when the behaviour of the union tends to change. It is here that some unions choose to enter into institutionalized co-operations with power holders while others remain in opposition. In identifying the factors that lead to such change I attempted to understand the fragility of trade unionism.

Then the question was where and which trade union movement to target. I knew I wanted to study a trade union movement on the African continent and searched for direction with my supervisor, in literature and within the Norwegian LO. South Africa came up as a clear choice due to the existing research front. Compared to my other options like Zambia or Ghana, the research front is quite thin. Recognizing that this thesis is on a masters level, I depended on a much-needed research base that I could build upon.

Moreover, the choice of topic might be relevant in a broader context since the employment policy of many African trade unions is non-existent or less concise. Indeed, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has put the Decent Work agenda high on its priorities and my

findings here could be of interest in order to expand the perspectives on what the constraints are to employment creation in a political context like the South African one (ILO, 2013).

1.3 Recognising the politicised field

My data collection took place during a time influenced by two important debates in South Africa. The overall transcending case, which dominated most news, was the Marikana massacre. 44 people lost their lives and 78 were injured. 34 were mineworkers employed at the Marikana platinum mine, operated by *Lonmin* at Nkaneng near Rustenburg. The incident occurred after a conflict between the employers and employees resulted in a strike. The tension between the parties culminated and resulted in a massacre of the strikers by the police. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)- which is one of COSATU's affiliates, was a central component in the run up to the conflict. The aftermath of the incident reflected a tensed political climate in South Africa.

At the same time the COSATU congress was taking place exactly three months ahead of the 53rd National Elective Conference of ANC in Mangaung. The conference takes place every five years and the previous conference was regarded as a turning point leading up to the removal of Thabo Mbeki and the election of Jacob Zuma as President of ANC. The outcome of the leadership election in COSATU normally gives a pinpoint to the forces that will influence the upcoming election at the ANC conference. Therefore the media closely followed the COSATU congress. The different factions within the ANC and the possible outcomes of the election have full attention in the media.

This very point in time was fortunate for the actuality of my thesis. At the same time it required me as a researcher to be even more selective with my sources. It can be challenging to navigate through the overwhelming media focus on Marikana and the trade union link. Moreover, as a foreigner I had to learn to see past the possible political agenda of the media. Consequently, it was important to gather a varied selection of the media coverage.

The Marikana incident issued a debate on COSATU's role and whether it is serving the interests of its members and how it relates to the fragmentation of COSATU affiliates and the emergence of new independent unions. Furthermore, other internal tensions came to surface

like the disappointment of the ANC to deliver on its promises and what role COSATU played in regard to being a part of the Tripartite Alliance. I therefore got easier access to a debate that was not as much in the forefront. Consequently, I must be sensitive to sharpened arguments that are a result of a heated debate.

It was not only the Marikana massacre that made my chosen field study location politicised, but the general tensions between organised labour, government and capital were also apparent. Conflict within COSATU itself and among civil society made the field both interesting and difficult to study as well as making public debate more active and recent. South Africa was challenging because the well-articulated rhetoric is used by many with the purpose of disguising a certain agenda or to score political points.

1.4 Interviewing in the field

The qualitative interview aims at obtaining a description of the topic concerned by the subject interviewed. The interviewee's opinions and subjective descriptions are interesting to the researcher. The main task is to understand what the person interviewed is communicating. A qualitative research interview wants to both capture the factual level and the meaning level; however the latter can prove to be unimpeachable. Interviews are much more personal than other forms of data collection like questionnaires (Kvale, 2007). Interviews are time consuming to the researcher both because it takes time to detect suitable interviewees, organise a meeting, conduct the interview itself and finally transcribe it, which in most cases proves necessary if the interview is recorded.

In the initial phases of this thesis I had to consider who was going to be my source of information. I was faced with different choices. My aim was to investigate how COSATU acted in order to initiate increased employment. This problem could be approached from different angles.

I did consider the possibility to create a reference group representative of both employed and unemployed youth within the garment sector. The garment sector has been exposed to massive downsizing and retrenchment due to the tough international competition. However, the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (SACTWU) has initiated campaigns to promote job advocacy as well as creating employment through ownership of one factory and investments in companies outside and inside the industry[i]. These initiatives could have

been interesting to investigate as a case study in order to better understand how one union copes with entrenchment and unemployment within one specific sector.

On the other hand this approach would not have given me a more general insight in how both COSATU looks upon its own power to influence the unemployment challenge in South Africa and how independent groups or academia view COSATU's influence.

I therefore decided to approach the problem by applying external and internal sources of information that could give me a perspective on COSATU from various angles. The interviewees were selected according to three different categories: (1) *COSATU representatives or affiliates (2) academic staff employed in both Norway and South Africa (3) representatives of the civil society.* Within the latter group it is necessary to distinguish between independent civil society and civil society linked to one or more of the partners in the Alliance. I have interviewed representatives from both spheres.

Firstly, I gathered interview opportunities both from partners of COSATU in Norway (Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions) and Norwegian academics specialising in COSATU and civil society. My two supervisors advised me to several informants which I contacted prior to departure at my desk in Norway. After the first appeal to potential interviewees my further sampling was mainly respondent-driven:

> Snowballing (respondent-driven sampling) is sometimes the best way of locating people with certain attributes or characteristics necessary in the study (…) it involves first identifying several people with relevant characteristics and interviewing them (…) These subjects are then asked for the names (referrals) of other people who possess the same characteristics as they do – in effect, a chain of subject by the referral of one respondent of another Berg (2007: p. 44) p.

The weakness of such a sampling strategy is that I might be captured in a network of representatives who have their own agenda by advising me to certain informants. This threat was difficult to reveal and overcome, however as my selection of interviewees was based on three categories (Academic staff, COSATU representatives and affiliates and civil society representatives), I secured that my informants reflected a broader representation. Further, I mapped the possible potential groups of informants before I conducted the fieldwork. The informants in the different categories had none or weak links between each other. Moreover, the informants supplied me with a sufficient number of potential interviewees that gave me a

possibility to select candidates based on portfolios that could complement my sphere of representation. Some of the informants were conveyed by academics in Norway.

Some of the interviewees whom I approached at the COSATU congress were randomly selected according to union. It is necessary to mention that some of those approached were reluctant to be interviewed due to their lower rank in the union. They advised me to representatives with an 'employment portfolio' or with a leadership position. They often explained this advice by stating they were not sufficiently competent to answer my questions.

Finally, it is important to underline that the interviewees selected constituted a broad representation, mainly from the organisational and political elite. Due to time constraints I was not able to target informants from the lower level of the trade union hierarchy, but rather representatives from the grass root level of the civil society. Nevertheless, my attendance in the COSATU congress gave me a certain insight into the horizontal composition of the affiliates as well as the vertical relation between leadership and members. Although my informants primarily serve as commentators.

A full list of interviewees conducted in Norway and South Africa is provided in Appendix 1. Not all of the interviews are quoted in the thesis; nevertheless, they have all contributed to my research and findings. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews;

> The semi-structured interview involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and special topics. These topics are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order but the interviewers are allowed freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact, expected) to probe far beyond the answers to prepared standardized questions (Berg, 2007) p. 95

The interview guide was formulated at my desk in Norway, but as the interviews proceeded I edited the guide, as some of the questions did not trigger sufficient answers. I had different interview guides to each of the categories of respondents. Adapting the questions to the respondents was efficient in order to obtain as accurate information as possible. Nevertheless, I did not ask all the questions in the interview guide to any of the informants. This was due to time constraints, but also due to the fact that I did ask questions which came to my mind as a result of the answers given throughout the interview. This deviation was necessary in order to clarify information that was given or even dive more deeply into issues raised. The interviews lasted from twenty minutes up to almost three hours. Most of the interviews had an average duration of 90 minutes.

Recognizing that COSATU has been a subject to substantial criticism from both media and academia in the past,, I was careful not to commence the interview too critically. The criticism concerns for instance a possible alignment with the capitalist elite, that the upper layer of the trade union movement has become a so-called labour aristocracy (see p. 70) and that their relevance is diminishing due to union fragmentation. On the other hand COSATU enjoys a great level of trust and is seen by many as the organisation of most potential for social change. After I developed a certain confidence with the interviewee, I allowed myself to ask more pressing questions. I wanted to trigger answers beyond phrases and well-prepared articulation in order to get COSATU's perspective on the criticisms raised.

I could easily see the difference of having access to information being in Norway and being in the field. Surrounded by a strong media focus and talking to random South Africans about the issues above provided me with an extra dimension of insight into the issues as well as ideas on how to approach the discussion in my thesis. Equally important, a field visit contributed to an empirical foundation, which gives my assessment of COSATU an in-depth understanding. Furthermore, I believe that fieldwork triggers enhanced critical thinking since the opinions and behaviour of the actors studied are more apparent. Interacting with the actors studied gave me a better understanding of the terminology used which is an advantage because I can use terms that are more accurate and relevant   to my audience.

At the congress I obtained all of the congress documents produced for the delegates. These have served me with invaluable information on COSATU's policy direction.

1.5 Other sources of data

Existing literature

The amount of research and literature on South Africa is substantial. As South Africa has received international attention due to the anti-Apartheid struggle and the transition to democracy, much of the literature relates to the post-Apartheid challenges. Leaning on such broad research front has been an advantage to the empirical sections and the discussion throughout the thesis.

Documentation

As my interview findings constitute some of the foundation of the data on which this thesis is built, it has been important to fulfil the methodological virtue of data triangulation, as Yin (2003) emphasizes, by applying additional sources of data.

In addition to literature I found it is appropriate to apply information from newspapers published prior to, and during the COSATU congress. I followed the SABC News and debates on television and radio during my stay in the field. Throughout the writing process I followed the electronic media both from Norway and whilst being in South Africa. The amount of focus on COSATU (and the congress), the Alliance and the Marikana incident was substantial. Articles, editorials and letters to the editor were daily concerned with one of the above topics. The main newspapers that I followed were Mail&Guardian, Daily Maverick, The New Age and The Star which are the major newspapers in the country.

Direct observation

The main direct observation was my participation in the 11th National Congress of COSATU that took place 17-20th September 2012 at Gallagher Estate in Midrand. I was present at the congress during the two final days. My presence helped shape my impression of the climate and culture within the confederation. I recognised the challenges of being a foreigner and being relatively alienated to the culture of the congress. However, having taken part in various congresses worldwide within the social democratic family, I was indeed prepared to meet a different organisational culture. Nevertheless, I was surprised by the level of discipline considering the high number of delegates (almost 3000). In fact, the discipline was not limited to organisational efficiency, but also applied to the political sphere. The latter was confirmed by some of my informants during interviews unsolicited.

The congress was one of the main sources of my data collection as I used the opportunity to record speeches held at the congress. I approached delegates from various COSATU affiliates in order to schedule times for interviews.

One of my interviewees invited me to undertake the interview while he was participating in a wedding in Thembisa Township outside Johannesburg. The experience of being in Thembisa with a relatively known COSATU representative gave me an insight into how impoverished people perceive successful and well-off COSATU representatives. During the visit I behaved

like an observer who talked to people on everyday matters without revealing my mission in South Africa.

I will in the following sections review reliability, validity and generalisation within the qualitative method I have used.

1.6 Reliability

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. According to Yin (2003) reliability is one way to test the quality of the research within social sciences. Reliability applies to the procedures undertaken throughout the research i.e. whether the collection of the data can be repeated with the same result (Yin, 2003: p. 45).

I recorded all of my interviews in order to be able to revert back to what was being said by the interviewee and myself as an interviewer. I transcribed the interviews subsequently after my appointments. This made navigation within my data easier. One advantage by recording is to secure the reliability in relation to misinterpretations. Further, it gave me a possibility to assess certain phrases in relation to other informants' wordings. In this aspect it was possible to uncover nuances. Although I took notes during the interviews it proved to be quite useful to be able to return to the accurate words used by the interviewee. One important remark is related to rhetoric. Both ANC and COSATU representatives/affiliates have a recognizable rhetoric. Phrases and the selection of words did not appear by default, it might even seem like a mainstream rhetoric exists that is generally adopted. I will not enter into why this might be the case, but as a researcher it gave me an additional challenge to search beyond the rhetoric to find out what was being said, or even what was being covered in rhetoric. Recording my interviews made it easier to discover this similarity in rhetoric used by certain interviewees. Transcribed interviews can easily become your main source in your empirical selection of data. The disadvantage is the difference between written and oral language. A good speech can appear repetitive and discontinuous in a written format (Kvale, 2007: p. 93). This point proved itself in my data. However, I argue that it did not affect my understanding of the content of what was being said since all my informants spoke clearly and concisely and duly explained their points. Kvale (1997: p. 164) underlines that although reliability is desired in order to avoid subjectivity, a sided focus on the latter can prevent creativity and variation.

1. 7 Validity

Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Kvale, 2007: p. 122). Although the reliability is high, it does not prove that the validity is high (Gripsrud, 2004: p. 72).

As I am approaching the study as a 'detective' the subject that I am studying (COSATU) is the problem. Aiming to have a critical distance to the data and the actors involved. This means being sensitive to the relational and contextual perceptions while I am applying an analytical attitude towards my findings. Although my interviews were in depth and provided me with an insight into the role of COSATU, additional interviews with civil society and COSATU affiliates might have corroborated the understanding of the interrelationship among the actors involved. Nevertheless, as I am using data triangulation, applying interviews, observation and documentation, I feel confident that my basis of data reflects a broad approach to the field. Basing my interpretations and conclusions on theory triangulation might help the reader to see my message more directly. As it is the interpretation of the data that is validated, it is appropriate to raise some points I consider to be of general concern to the data I have presented here. Knowing that I entered a highly politicised field there were certain traps to be aware of. I do believe that my political background gave me an advantage as I manoeuvred in a complicated and tensed political landscape. Knowing how rhetoric might be used as a tool to avoid revealing sensitive truths or political tactics, my experience can have helped me in detecting answers covered in rhetoric.

A key concern during my fieldwork was the time I was in the field. As explained above the political climate was tens due to the upcoming electoral congress of the ANC and the Marikana incident. On one hand these events might have worked as a catalyst in order for my informants to describe the situation clearer. A stressed political climate might also have triggered the informants to 'defend, comment or attack' to a higher extent than in a normal situation. On the other hand I am facing the threat that the issues raised by me are to a certain extent consistently viewed in the light of the political climate. The latter can prevent me from staying on track with the issues discussed during the interviews.

As the media attention was quite coloured by the political climate, the selection of media references must be viewed upon the time it was collected. Being an observing researcher in this politicised field might influence the way I interpret and measure the information

obtained. While I am supposed to measure *COSATU's potential for pursuing development,* the political climate I am orienting in might challenge me to stay in focus related to my research questions. Nevertheless, COSATU is throughout the thesis discussed in relation to its affiliates and counterparts and assessed in both current time and in an historical context. As COSATU's embrace of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) serves as a benchmark, it has been a useful tool to fulfil the validity requirements.

1.8 Approaching the role as researcher

Although I have been sensitive to subjectivity, my perception of reality might have influenced the interpretations in the research process. Being acquainted with the theoretical aspects of qualitative method can have contributed in avoiding methodological mistakes. Taking into consideration that I am a young, female, white researcher from Norway might have influenced the informant on how he or she described the reality to me. One should be aware of the possibility that the sender of information customizes the content to the profile of the receiver. Frequently I experienced that my interviewee compared the South African reality to Norwegian or Scandinavian realities, possibly to make me relate easier or to underline the distance in reality.

1. 9 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations might appear throughout the research process and it might be difficult to make choices. In the process of data collection it is important to consider codes of ethics (King and Horrocks, 2010). Willig (2001) presents five considerations in relation to the informants; (1) informed consent (2) no deception (3) the right to withdraw as an informant (4) debriefing (5) confidentiality (Willig, 2001: p. 18).

All of my interviewees were duly informed of the purpose of my interview and the research problem. Some of my informants requested further detailed information about my method and research questions, which I provided them. Reference consent was gathered from all of my informants. I presented myself as a researcher, but informed them about my political background. It is indeed not unproblematic to let the interviewee know that I have a certain political background. On one hand I could have gained confidence since I might have been considered a "comrade" thus obtaining access to information I otherwise would not have had

access to. Yet, the statements from COSATU representatives can be weighted in order to adjust to the general worldview of the trade union movement, as they might think I expect certain opinions which are in line with the social democratic mind set. On the other hand if I did not reveal my background I might have been perceived more independent. However, it is difficult to predict if I would have got different answers had this been the case. Acknowledging these considerations, I believe that my profile contributed to a certain confidence between the interviewee and myself. Nevertheless, I do consider the criteria drawn up by Willig (2001) to be fulfilled.

3. THEORY

3.1 Conceiving of Power

As labour can hold a great deal of power in a society, it is also under constant pressure of being deprived of that power. Since labour's demands in most cases have implications for access to economic resources, stakeholders of capital exercise power on labour in order to keep and accumulate economic resources. Therefore, in order to understand why the counterparts in this thesis act as they do the concept of power might offer a reason. The ability to understand power and thereby use it to obtain interests will be an important aspect throughout the analysis of this thesis. Before dealing with the discussions around power in the South African political reality, I will here introduce some theoretical skeletons for further understanding of the dimensions of use of power.

A basic starting point in the understanding of power is the theory that A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would otherwise not do (Dahl, 1957). In Lukes (1974) early edition of *Power: a radical view* he defined power as A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests. This definition is very close to Dahl (1957) as seen above. Nevertheless, Lukes later admitted that it was a mistake to use such definition of power since he claims that power is a capacity, not an exercise of that capacity. Lukes (1974)addresses one category of power known as power domination. Here he raises the questions *how do the powerful ensure compliance of those they dominate?* and further, *how are we to know when such power is at work?* His answers look behind the appearances of the hidden, least visible forms of power. This is what leads him to the third dimension of power in his theory of three dimensions of power. The one-dimensional view of power embraces the behaviour in decision making over which there is an observable conflict of subjective interests. This is seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation. The two-dimensional view is a critique of the behavioural focus of the first view. Moreover, it opens up for consideration the ways in which decisions are prevented from being taken on political issues over which there is an observable conflict of interests. Finally, the three-dimensional view of power involves a thorough critique of the behavioural focus of the first two views. They are seen as too individualistic. The three-dimensional view allows for a consideration of the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics.

In the absence of an actual observable conflict which may have been averted, there might remain a reference to a potential conflict. Such a latent conflict is based on the contradiction of the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude. The excluded might not express or be conscious of their interests (Lukes, 1974).

The third dimension of power is to some extent inspired by the thoughts of Tilly (1991) who engages in problems related to domination. He asks - *if ordinary domination so consistently hurts the well-defined interests of subordinate groups, why do subordinates comply? Why don't they rebel continuously, or at least resist all along the way?* In an attempt to answer those questions he applies a checklist. Point number four in the list is formulated as follows - (4) *As a result of mystification, repression, or the sheer unavailability of alternative ideological frames, subordinates remain unaware of their true interests* (Tilly, 1991: p. 594). Lukes (1974) is concerned with the mechanisms that result in compliance to domination. Moreover, this concerns the power that prevents people from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in a way that makes them accept their role in the existing order of things. The finesse about this kind of power might be the covert exercise of it. Power as domination might be easier to grasp in overt forms where the subordinate groups are indisputable, like the black population within the Apartheid regime or the Sahrawis in occupied Western Sahara. The power exercised is openly coercive. On the contrary, within Lukes' third dimension of power, one can raise the question - *who is to say who is dominated?* One way to approach this question is to see domination through the concept of freedom. Those who are under others' power are made less free to live as their nature and judgement dictate, according to Spinoza (Lukes, 1974: p. 114). I will not enter deeper into the theory of Spinoza here, but domination can be understood as a constraint upon the dictates of one's nature, where nature here is interpreted as human nature. Lukes therefore raises the question - *what are the necessary conditions for human beings to flourish?* The answer provided here has elements related to material and social conditions such as: being able to shape one's own life and future, making individual choices and live life with dignity. A way to understand 'dictates of nature' is through Amartya Sen's capability approach which emphasizes substantive freedoms like being able to take part in political activities and become old. In brief, he differs between 'functionings' and 'capabilities' where 'functionings' represent a person's actual achievements in life while capabilities reflects a person's opportunity to freedom, namely one's freedom to choose between different functionings (Sen, 1999).

Returning to the question above - who is to say who is dominated? 'dictates of nature' interpreted through Sen (1999) capability approach can consequently add sense to what counts as domination; *domination occurs where the power of some affects the interests of others by restricting their capabilities for truly human functioning* (Lukes, 1974: p. 118)

Presuming that this kind of power is exercised in South Africa, can the current power relations between the ruling partners and the people governed be understood through Lukes' and Tilly's approach to domination as power? If so, and assuming that Foucault is correct when he claims that power meets resistance, how does this kind of power meet resistance and how does COSATU relate to the resistance while being perceived as one of the power shareholders?

The absence of an alternative opposition to the current ANC led government is made problematic by some of my informants, in particular Adam Habib. In fact, one relevant aspect in Tilly's point number four above is the unavailability of alternative ideological frames. In an attempt to relate power of domination to the political reality of South Africa through Tilly's point, it might contribute to see the massive popular criticism against those in power in South Africa through a logical perspective. A theory relevant and closely linked to Tilly and Lukes is Gramsci's thoughts on hegemony. Below I will introduce his main idea of the power of hegemony.

3.2 Hegemony

Gramsci (1971) conceptualizes political struggle through the symbolism of war. Within 'War of position' revolutionaries and trade unions create an opposing civil society to the state through political agitation. This strategy is necessary alongside the 'War of manoeuvre' which is direct revolution. He argues that the 'war of position' is imperative in order to obtain a successful revolution. Hegemony is interpreted as a historically specific organisation of consent that rests upon, but cannot be reduced to, a practical material base. He sees the civil society as an arena for consent. In explaining the purpose of consent he stresses that formal freedoms and electoral rights exist alongside the class inequalities of the bourgeois state. As a consequence, relations of domination need to be sustained with the consent of the dominated. However, the civil society is not only an arena for consent, but also an arena for resistance as people come together to establish counter-hegemony. The counter-hegemonic conscious occurs through organic intellectuals as leaders and ideologues (Stokke, 2007b).

State and society together constitute a solid structure. Revolution implies development of another structure within it, strong enough to replace the first. This becomes reality only when the first structure has exhausted its full potential. This structure, whether dominant or emergent is the so-called 'historic bloc'(Gramsci, 1971). In short, Gramsci conceptualized how an alliance of actors obtains a hegemonic position, namely how economic and political ideological dominance becomes common and there is consent around a general worldview. Opposed to the latter, groups in society might not act in opposition to the dominant layer of the society with the aim of replacing it , in fact they might be incorporated into the 'historic block'. If the objective to incorporate the disagreeing groups into the existing power structures of the historic bloc is to neutralise resistance, then we deal with the phenomenon of co-optation. Moreover, this means that the political power invites groups of resistance to enjoy some level of influence in exchange for moderation and cooperation in order to reduce the level of conflict (Dahlstedt, 2000).

A minimalist interpretation of democracy would acknowledge that the relation between rulers and citizens in democracies are expected to establish relatively robust lines of accountability than other political systems (Habib, 2012). In contrast to listening to the population as a whole, corporatism selects some groups in society which are given responsibility and partial influence. Whereas the model of pluralism encourages a further proliferation of power. Here power is shared beyond the traditional division of power i.e. between the legislative, adjudicating and executive. Pluralism facilitates sharing of power among public bodies, private groups of power and NGOs (Berg, 2013).

Nevertheless, in engaging with corporatism Tørres (2000) distinguishes between societal corporatism and state corporatism. In general corporatists argue that unions have tied their interests to the state and thereby are not autonomous. In the case of state corporatism the state through coercion and resource distribution has managed to co-opt labour. Contrary to state corporatism, societal corporatism is a pattern of co-existence between the state and organised parties in the labour market. Here the state both consults with, and delegates responsibilities to the union movement in exchange for moderation and responsible actions. The latter form of corporatism grew in Western Europe in the post-war period (Schmitter, 1974).

3.3 Trade unions

What is a union?

As the trade union federation COSATU is the main subject of study here, it is important to have an understanding of what a union is. If the labour market had no effect on the power relations between the employed and the employer, trade unions would probably not be to our interest. As the demand for labour constantly changes and the employers inhabit the economic power in relation to their employees, workers are vulnerable to the priorities of the employer. These priorities can for instance be adjustments in wages, working hours, benefits or work stock. The main purpose of the unions is to uphold or improve the working conditions of the employees in order to secure decent work, predictable employment through contracts and influence at the workplace. The workers organise in unions in order to speak with one stronger voice in the negotiations with employers. Jeffrey Harrod and Robert O'Brien define the principles of workplace organisation as follows;

> A membership or association of workers and employees the structure of which makes a distinction between those with less and those with more authority in the workplace, and which has the stated objective of improving the conditions of, and return to, work (…) The degree to which different workplace organisations do, or do not, represent the true and democratically expressed wishes of the workers is always, and will always be, in dispute for, based as they are on power divisions within the process of production, they are indelibly political (Harrod and O'Brien, 2002: p. 4)

Traditionally organised labour follows a certain general structure based on national borders. The confederation of trade unions gathers the sectorial member unions on a national level. The affiliates are organised due to sectors of production, branch of business or public service and these again can have sub-sectorial divisions. Generally, the workers pay dues to their shop floor branch where they are members. Today, the national borders of production and employment become increasingly irrelevant as transnational and multinational companies invest abroad. While globalization and international division of labour fosters flexibility, the stress and challenges to workers globally has created a need for organised labour to be present on an international level.

A worker's right to formally organise cannot be taken for granted even though this right has been ascertained by many national constitutions and is found within the Core Labour Standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (Harrod and O'Brien, 2002).

Approaching types of unionism

In this section I outline a frame for three different types of unions. They will be described in relation to how they can be distinguished from each other. The types concerned are: *political unionism, social movement unionism* and *business unionism.* First, I will look at the theoretical classification of the types of unions in relation to where they are located in four different dimensions.

Robinson (2000) distinguishes between types of unionism by location of four dimensions. Each of the dimensions can be understood as relationships between unions and others. These relationships are based on the assumption that the unions follow strategies which are related to the goals of the latter relationships. The four dimensions are (1) *Voluntary/Involuntary:* relationship of unions to their members. (2) *Autonomous/Subordinate:* relationship of unions to their chief interlocutors in the political and economic power structure: the state, political par- ties, and employers. (3) *Inclusive/Exclusive:* relationship of unions to workers (national and inter- national), particularly those who are not union members. (4) *Critical/Uncritical:* relationship of unions to existing political and economic organizing principles, institutions, and elites (national and inter- national).

In voluntary unions members remain due to personal commitments in contrast to involuntary unions where coercion by the unions, state or employers enforces the members to stay. However, voluntary unions tend to vary in their level of autonomy. The general attribute of the autonomous unions is that members and union leaders themselves define the objective of the union. Subordinate unions would rather follow the path of a political party, state or the employers. The level of inclusiveness is determined by the range of groups a union aims to organize. Some highly inclusive unions organise beyond workers and reach out to members of other classes who share some feature of common identity like race, religion or nationality. Some labour movements even try to organise beyond national borders. Exclusive unions may use the same criteria as inclusive unions to avoid organising groups of alien identities (Robinson, 2000).

Fulcher (1987) describes *political unionism* and argues that the relationship between the state and labour is not a question of co-option or collaboration, but rather a question of labour strategically using the political loopholes available to advance its own interests. Moreover,

they reject that the state is controlled by capital and claim that labour movements can gain effective control of the state apparatus and use it to benefit labour (Fulcher, 1987).

Pluralist, political and corporatist unionism have generally been used to describe the relationship between labour and the state in the Western world. The concept socio-political unionism or *social movement unionism* applies in a broader extent to unions in developing countries and in authoritarian systems (Tørres, 2000). Some claim that social movement unionism is a form of unionism that addresses the concerns of the dispossessed of the global South. In contrast to the northern forms of unionism which are characterized as economistic or closer to *business unionism* with a narrower focus and less concentrated on a broader liberating agenda (Fairbrother, 2008).

Through commitment to collective action a workplace organisation becomes a social movement. This behaviour by the workplace organisation demands enduring long–term alliances beyond the workplace with other social movements in civil society. Together they aim at challenging the dominant structures of power and reproduction of ideology. Moreover, a social movement is recognised by its issue-based approach and through its ability to attract a wide social spectrum of its citizen to its cause. Furthermore, a movement is born when citizens act collectively to challenge specific issues and roles imposed on them by social institutions or corporations. Finally, social movement unionism (SMU) is a fact when the above characteristics are materialized (Lambert, 2002).

Stokke (2007a) describes the emerging social-movement unionism (SMU) as an active, community-oriented strategy which works with a broad conception of who the working people are. It breaks down the binary oppositions between workplace and community, economic and political struggles, and between formal-sector workers and the working poor (Stokke, 2007a). In brief, the constituents of the social movement unions tend to reach far beyond the factory gate (Tørres, 2000). The social power found within the SMUs has been able to challenge the strong power of corporations and governments like in Britain in the 1980s and in the US in the 1930s. However, this type of unionism is periodically determined, namely at times when social struggle is subject to an upsurge (Fairbrother, 2008).

A stricter definition of social movement unionism is described by Robinson (2000). He defines SMU in relation to the above criteria outlined and claims that SMU is highly critical

of status quo economic and/or political arrangements. The union leaders aim at bringing the economic and political order in line with the ideals of the union towards a more just economic system. As SMU here is characterized as very inclusive, it inhabits a concern for large groups of people who are not, and probably never will be members of the union. Nevertheless, SMU pushes for social change that benefits these under-represented groups. As the gap between the ideals of the SMU and the actual realities tend to be large, the measures of influence might derive from electoral politics and collective bargaining. In extreme situations SMUs might ignore these strategies, resulting in a provocation of the political and economic elite. A support from these elites is therefore not to be expected. In order to achieve commitment by the members to SMU, it is necessary for the members to have a feeling that they take actively part in the definition of the goals and priorities of the SMU and thereby obtain a feeling of ownership to the union. This participatory strategy therefore requires a decentralized structure of an SMU (Hyman 1994 in Robinson, 2000).

It is important to keep in mind that Robinson (2000) described SMU with the reality of the United States in mind. The aspect of SMU being locally focused, undertaking collective action outside the conventional accepted means of influence and agitating transformative visions is in line with Fairbrother (2008), but he stresses some additional aspects which is also mentioned above. He lines up four key aspects to SMU and the point which is not highlighted by Robinson (2000) is the building of alliances and coalitions and extending into community and beyond. Moreover emancipatory politics is regarded as a key aspect of SMU. The latter is certainly relevant to the case of South Africa and the historical heritage of the role of COSATU.

Robinson (2000) emphasises that SMU is concerned with social change and pushing for a more just economic system. Moody (1997a) however, is more detailed in describing who SMU wants to act on behalf of, namely the poor, the unemployed, the casualized workers and the neighbourhood organisations. More interestingly, he claims that SMU brings attention to the issue of class; one SMU tends to ally itself with another SMU creating a stronger coalition often seen in conventional politics.. Finally, the political demands of SMU stand out when mass activation of union members serves as an indication for change? In other words, the active participation of the members of an SMU in combination with the broad alliances strengthens the political demands since the masses are a part of the political and economic leverage in a society (Moody, 1997a).

Meanwhile, Schmitter and O'Donnell (1986) argue that civil society will see a resurrection in the beginning face of democratization, nevertheless, it is expected that the moment of revival actually leads to a decline in civil society activism. The decline consists of (a) the idea that expansion of political society necessarily eats away at civil society; (b) 'movement fatigue' that is, members of social movements choose to disband and live 'normal lives'; (c) the notion that the democratizing state consciously colonizes civil society as a strategy of governance or of cooperation and (d) the loss of external support and/or external pressure to moderate their demands or the kind of tactics they assume. Democratization represents a contraction of opportunities supportive of protest, moreover the introduction of democracy changes the way in which social struggles can be framed. Consequently, the opening of democratization can therefore spell the end of a cycle of contention (Hipsher, 1996). In other words, this tendency can be labelled a normalization of politics as the state reasserts its control over society (Schmitter and O'Donnell, 1986).

Grugel (2002) highlights that actually a number of both liberal and radical theorists agree that the strength of civil society as an indicator of the strength of the democracy itself. Following this condition, actually the evaporation of civil society organizations after a transition is not part of the normal pattern of democratic politics, in fact it implies that the democracy is thin and that the possibilities for a substantive democracy built on rights and citizenship are weak.

Returning to types of unionism, the focus on broader political and economic interests is also found within corporatist and political unionism as well (Tørres, 2000). However, Lambert (2002) argues that there is a distinction between political and social movement unionism related to the party/ union relationship. Both types contain certain characteristics of social movement unionism, but within political unionism the subordination of unions to political parties is recognised.

This third orientation - *business unionism*, is often organised in top down structures and demands low membership rates. Lambert (2002) describes the feature of business unionism to be its adoption of partnership approach with business. This partnership tends to fail to acknowledge and confront labour market inequality. Further it has an uncritical commitment to corporate goals and is characterized by an erosion of independent organisation, ideology and strategy (Lambert, 2002). Some even argue that this type of unionism is limited and self-

defeating (Fantasia and Voss, 2004 in Fairbrother, 2008). According to the criteria lined up by Robinson (2000) the ideal typical business union is very exclusive (members alone account for the union) and largely uncritical. Its leaders and often its members interpret the role of the business union as a business that provides highly specialized services to members in return for fees. These services can be collective bargaining. Furthermore, it is claimed that members play a minimal role within the business union and the internal democracy is at the same level as within a typical business.

3.4 Globalisation and changing configurations of power

During the Cold war developing countries were caught in the ideological battle which played out in the global South. As the war ended, the developing states continued to be of interest to international actors, however this time it was international institutions which exercised pressure on the developing countries, South Africa included. The pressure has taken form through the use of carrot and whip, namely financial institutions offering in many cases much needed loans in exchange for an acceptance of prescriptive policies mainly consisting of neo-liberal policies. The dominance of the financial institutions is, as many would claim, one of the most visible manifestation of globalization. The latter process is characterized by transnational production, freer passage of commodities, the dominance of finance capital, the increasing authority of supra-national organizations and the rapid development and deployment of new labour-saving or labour-replacing technologies. Parallel we see the tendency of 'the shrinking state' and diminishing national sovereignty in some countries to be more and more evident. However, this tendency must be attributed to the ideology of neo-liberalism, first and foremost (Marais, 1998).

Globalization's impact on labour is closely linked to how capital has embraced the processes of globalization. Due to reduced barriers for trade and capital, production is moved beyond borders in order to benefit from reduced labour costs and flexible labour regulations elsewhere. Capital is thereby enabled to operate in a complex spatial differential of labour (Pahle, 2011). As the traditional labour processes and production is being fragmented and reorganised as a result of globalisation's facilitation of the latter, the role of trade unions are being challenged. The role of the trade unions are seriously challenged especially with regards to spatial proliferation and the weakening of the affiliation to the nation state.

Munck (2002) claims that the international labour movement has had a limited impact on the managers of global capitalism and is still on the outside in many cases. One explanation to this can be that the former value-addition chain, which often was to be found within one bounded place, is now due to the 'breaking-up and stretching-out' subject to fragmentation within single value chains. As a result labour is spread across different localities and jurisdiction, the starting point and finalization of the product is seldom to be observed by the workers. Consequently, the value addition related to the producer/worker is less apparent. This special fragmentation reduces labours bargaining strength at a certain work place or even within a sector (Pahle, 2011).

Moreover, as transnational capital outsources production to place bound contractors which are those who cut labour costs, capital sophistically avoid the responsibility for using cheap labour. Further it can play local points of production against other local points of production. In places where labour is organised it might be subject to concession bargaining[1] (Pahle, 2011).

The leverages of trade unions

As globalisation has changed the power relations and structures of the corporate sector, the trade union movements has also undertaken change due to the shift in the structure of work. These changes have also impacted on the manor and channels of influence. Recognizing that workers are both citizens and consumers. Some of the perspectives on the leverage of SMU are related to their ability to mobilise members, the role of leaders, composition of the labour membership, facilitate democracy and organizational structures. Nevertheless, Lier (2007) stresses that labour is strategically placed within capitalism, as part of an uneven, but interdependent power relations to capital (corporates). For instance, labour's proximity to national strategic production where trade unions collectively can paralyze a production through strike, the income of a certain company would be halted. As certain production is globally interdependent, labour can have huge influence on global economic income chains.

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[1] Having to accept deteriorating terms and conditions (Pahle, 2011).

[2] http://www.cosatu.org.za (Read 03.12.12 at 10:15)
[3] The forum which negotiated the making of a new constitution (Southhall and Webster, 2010: p. 140)

Schillinger (2005) argues that despite membership losses within African trade unions in general, the potential power of the trade unions remains. Their power is related to their ability to mobilise on a large scale due to their country-wide structures. In fact, trade union's ability to mobilise is a key factor for the trade union power (Tørres, 2005). As African trade unions' concerns often are extended to social and political matters, their mobilising ability becomes even stronger. In fact, he argues that the trade unions inhabit the power to play an important role in future struggles against authoritarian regimes and in campaigns against deprivation of basic service delivery. In the case when labour engage in corporatism some argue that the working class can benefit from a corporative way of cooperation when labour is strongly organised and the state does not have power to be coercive. Moreover, labour can benefit through corporatism when the interests of the bourgeoisie are divided (Crouch, 1977). However, other scholars argue that corporatist structures restrict unions from using their mobilising power and thus becomes less powerful. Furthermore, another role of trade the unions is to maintain a democratic society. Fick (2009) draws up five attributes of independent trade unions in building democracy; democratic representation, demographic representation, financial independence, breadth of concerns and placement within society for access to both elites and grassroots. As trade unions have access to both elites and grassroots and their way of organising goes beyond demographic and geographical refinements. Therefore, Houeland (2012) argues that trade unions have the capacity for both horizontal and vertical social interaction. In specifying the vertical activity, Lier (2007) emphasises that trade unions scale up by using various localities and spaces within the "world of work". This also applies to international relations and to alignment with wider civil society.

Trade unions organise normally according to industry. Organising workers based on industry enable labour to engage in collective bargaining and reach industry wide agreements. Thus, joint challenges which are recurring at many work places are dealt with commonly which strengthens the power of labour. One of COSATU's principles is "one industry, one union".

Yet, Schillinger (2005) argues that African trade unions are weak, however still feared. His perspective can be related to Lukes (1974) approach to power, namely that power is capacity, not an exercise of that capacity. In this manor, the power of the trade union might sustain.

COSATU and globalisation

In considering globalisation's impact on COSATU, Lehulere's (2003) argument that COSATU's economic strategy has gone through three different phases can serve as a point of departure. The first phase was COSATU as a socialist federation and this lasted from the Second congress of COSATU in 1987 to the beginning of 1990s. Within this period COSATU emphasised the central role of mass mobilisation struggle as the main strategy to realise its programmatic goals. Then the Keynesian phase entailed a shift away from redistribution towards ideas of redistribution compatible with capitalist social relations. This second period started even before the *COSATU Economic Policy Conference* in 1992 and lasted until 1996 when COSATU adopted the *Social Equity and Job Creation* (SEJC) document. This documents was indicative for the turn to the Right-Keynesianism and supply-side economics. In fact, Lehulere's (2003) argues that exactly SEJC failed to understand the dynamics of capitalist development. On this basis I attempt to assess how COSATU engaged with capitalism.

Returning to the global perspective, Marais (1998) asserts that the acknowledgement that countries of the South could chose their own economic systems. In referring to Rob Davies, former MP on SACP ticket and the current Minister of Trade and Industry, the developing countries which had suffered imbalances and inequities had to undertake some special measures and concessions. The countries of the South were subjected to a growing assertiveness and prescriptiveness with neo-liberal policies as these were held out as universally applicable panaceas and the only way to growth and development (Marais, 1998). Here he claims that the countries of the South were pressured to accept the prescriptive policies. At the same Africa's share of world trade dropped from 6 per cent in 1980 to 2, 6 per cent in 1989. In Ghana, which is regarded as an African success story as the GDP increased 25 per cent between 1980 and 1995, the employment fell in the same period.

On the other side, internal decisions within COSATU should also be assessed in understanding how COSATU related to globalisation and the global economy. Returning to the strategy in SEJC of capturing the domestic market, one find that the strategy proposed was opposite of how capitalist industrialization historically has evolved. SEJC wanted South Africa to first become efficient and then capture the domestic market. Within capitalist industrialization large firms first capture the domestic market and then gain from the

investment of other strong economies through large scale investments. For instance, investment in technology that generate economic efficiency. Also, SEJC did not assess import substitution which was a measure introduced in many countries in both Latin-America and Asia in order to build the national economy (Lehulere, 2003).

As we have seen above both internal and external factors can have contributed to COSATU's engagement with globalization and the move towards liberal economic policies.

4. The Making, Promises and Achievements of the Alliance

This section will set the stage for the preconditions for the purpose of the thesis. I will here briefly describe the promises made after the Alliance seized power and the current development level by touching upon unemployment, poverty levels and inequality, and finally the achievements perceived.

4.1 Introducing COSATU

The case in this thesis is The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). They were established in 1985. The trade union federation has grown from less than half a million members in 1985 to approximately two million workers, of whom at least 1.8 million are paid up. These constitute 21 affiliates. They claim to be one of the fastest growing trade union movements in the world. In addition to being committed to the struggle for socialism, COSATU is based on five core principles: (1) non-racialism, (2) worker control (workers control the structures and committees of the federation), (3) paying members in order to be self-sufficient and independent, (4) one industry – one union and (5) international worker solidarity. COSATU is historically known to be one of the most famous social movement unions in the world. In brief, a social movement union acts outside the gates of the workplace and engages with social issues as it aligns with civil society (Tørres, 2000).

COSATU takes part in social dialogue through the National Economic and Development Council (NEDLAC). This consists of representatives from government, organised business, organised labour and organised community groupings on a national level. In addition to COSATU, the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) represent organised labour. The two latter federations claim to be non-affiliated with political parties in contrast to COSATU which is in a Tripartite Alliance with ANC. The three confederations are competing. The council tries to reach consensus on issues of social and economic policy, before it is discussed in Parliament. NEDLAC's aim is to make economic decision-making more inclusive, to promote the goals of economic growth and social equity[2].

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[2] http://www.cosatu.org.za (Read 03.12.12 at 10:15)

The exceptional attributes of an African trade union movement

Without a doubt we can call COSATU the strongest trade union movement on the African continent. But what makes them so exceptional? Webster (25.09.2012) highlights three possible explanations for the strengths COSATU enjoys. COSATU is rooted in the famous 1973 strikes in Durban where both ANC and SACP were banned which gave them the freedom to develop their own political culture, independently from any party. Moreover, they developed strong leaders deriving from a distinctive class. Finally, the trade union movement have their own independent funds. These attributes can place COSATU in the position it holds today within the Alliance. To a certain extent one can claim that they are independent from ANC in government and that they have built their own space of autonomy based on the attributes described above. Placing COSATU in an African context, the above conditions would not exist in post-colonial countries. In most other African states the trade unions would have been a part of the movement in general, disabling them from developing a strong leadership base. Finally, all of the leaders would have joined the government (Webster, 25.09.2012). Webster's argument is in line with Moody (1997b) which claims that the older labour movements associated with national independence led to a an incorporation of the unions into a state-dominated clientele. This trend applied especially to countries in Latin America or sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

A more radical argument following the above logic is to be found already in 1982 within the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU). As ANC is a populist mass movement the Secretary General, Joe Foster, predicted that it would act as other anti-colonial movements in Africa, namely to turn on its own working class supporters. The Secretary General stated the following in his key address at the FOSATU conference in April 1982;

> It is, therefore, essential that workers must strive to build their own powerful and effective organisation even whilst they are part of the wider popular struggle. This organisation is necessary to protect worker interests and to ensure that the popular movement is not hijacked by elements who will in the end have no option but to turn against their worker supporters (Plaut and Holden, 2012: p. 22)

FOSATU might have had a possible hidden agenda of launching itself as a worker's party. Although predicting such a devastating destiny for the movement, the argument of an independent workers movement stands out. According to Payne (1991, in Tørres 2000) the

character of the labour movement defines the strength of the movement, not the strategy chosen;

> A labour movement which is able to build leadership, escape government control, and develop organisational skills, will prove more adept at expanding its base of support and mobilising workers (Payne 1991, in Tørres 2000 p. 232)

4.2 Pre-transition history

Trade unions constituted a substantial part of the resistance against the oppressive Apartheid regime. Together with a range of civil society organisations they formed the organisations which mobilized the black population towards empowerment. COSATU was regarded as a highly political organisation in contrast to various other more *workerist* trade unions. It had an initial membership of 450,000. In fact, COSATU had numerous confrontations with the police one of which resulted in the demolition of its headquarters in May 1987. The United Democratic Front (UDF) grew in response to Prime Minister, P. W Botha's proposal to permanently exclude the entire African population from the central parliamentary structures. The UDF had an affiliated membership of over 2 million which consisted of people from different classes stemming from trade unions, local educational, religious and social groups, as well as sports clubs. Both UDF and the trade unions - in particular the politicised COSATU, played a crucial role in building power bases and promoting the liberation propaganda. UDF and COSATU was often only guided by ANC while ANC was more constrained since they were banned (Davenport and Saunders, 2000).

In the 1970s, with the growth of general unions like South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU), the national democratic tradition re-emerged. Community unions like SAAWU did not separate the struggles of the workers from the community struggles within townships. This view implied that South Africa was faced with a national democratic struggle, rather than a class struggle. The national democratic struggle was not to be understood in simple class terms. This view opened up for a multi-class alliance, which united all sectors of the oppressed black population and sympathetic whites, under the auspices of ANC. Within this unity around a national democratic direction there were diverging views about whether or not it was necessary to pass through a national democratic stage before approaching the socialist stage. Some argued that national and class struggle could grow conterminously (Southall and Webster, 2010).

Meanwhile throughout the 1970s an alternative political tradition within the trade union movement developed. This consisted of shop-floor unions which were sceptical to political engagement outside the workplace. FOSATU became the federation for this tradition. They emphasised building democratic shop- floor interests around the principle of worker control, accountability and the mandating of worker representatives. In fact, some within this tradition supported a creation of a working class party which should serve as an alternative to SACP. This of course led to confrontations between the shop-floor tradition and SACP. As a compromise between the national democratic tradition and the shop-floor tradition COSATU was formed as a 'strategic compromise' in 1985.

The relationship between unionism and politics in South Africa was also dominated by a third political tradition; the *black consciousness*, which was party related to the Africanist ideology and took form under the Pan- Africanist Congress (PAC) broke away from ANC in 1959 (Southall and Webster, 2010). This tradition will not be given much attention in this thesis since it is less relevant to the question of COSATU's position within the Alliance.

In order to build a disciplined power base after the strikes in 1973 the unions avoided mass mobilisation and high profile campaigns. Later one of the strongest unions was formed, like the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). In the 1980s the organisation of the public sector exploded. However, the trade union movement faced some weaknesses, especially related to the transition. A structural change relating to the recession in the early 1990s was the decline in membership within the manufacturing sector. Within the same sector production systems changed due to the adaptation to the international market where competitiveness and productivity dominated. The production switched into hiring more skilled labour and the number of people employed was lower than before. Despite the progressive regulatory system in the new Labour Relations Act, the labour system became more pliable due to the extended use of sub-contracting and casual labour. COSATU was indecisive about whether they should try to organise the new kind of workers. Moreover, a tendency of deviation from the principle of 'worker control', which means a mandated leadership which consults with the shop floor regularly and reports back, grew as union leaders increasingly took part in negotiating forums. In general, policy, decision making and bureaucracy alongside poor vertical communication in the unions created a foundation for distrust and alienation among the rank and file members. Finally, the lack of education of shop stewards, high staff turnover and the fact that COSATU released 23 of its top unionists

to contest in the 1994 election on an ANC ticket has left the staff in COSATU less qualified to tackle challenges to labour on various levels (Marais, 1998).

Returning to the role of COSATU within the national democratic struggle - Southall and Webster (2010) emphasize that formally COSATU joined the tripartite Alliance not as a subordinate partner but as an equal player with independent power base, strategy and leadership. However, the following circumstances gave ANC hegemony within the Alliance. The ban on ANC was lifted in 1990 and it returned from exile and engaged in negotiations with the ruling NP, COSATU was excluded from the Convention for a democratic South Africa[3]. Accordingly, the increasing centrality of the political parties to the transition process put COSATU in a subordinate position (Southall and Webster, 2010).

COSATU's mobilisation in gathering support for ANC's position during the negotiations was critical to ANC; however ANC did have its unique support base within the townships. This was a support base different from what COSATU could mobilise as they were dominating within the sectors of industrial unions. ANC became community oriented especially since they emphasised mass participation in urban warfare after 1979. As a result, a strong identification with the movement grew within the townships. This huge social base in addition to elements of the African middle class accounted for ANC's main source of strength. Consequently, it made the ANC less attuned to the aspirations of the labour movement.

COSATU and the rationale of the Alliance

In order to assess COSATU's ability to promote development within South Africa it is necessary to detect its capacity to implement change in accordance with its own objectives. Since COSATU's main channel to push its policies is through the Tripartite Alliance it makes no sense to analyse COSATU without assessing its role within the Alliance.

The Tripartite Alliance is a strategic alliance between COSATU, the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). In early 1990 when the ban on political parties was lifted, the ANC, SACP and COSATU agreed to work together as a Revolutionary Alliance. The Alliance is centred on short, medium to long terms goals of the

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[3] The forum which negotiated the making of a new constitution (Southhall and Webster, 2010: p. 140)

National Democratic Revolution - the establishment of a democratic and non-racial South Africa, economic transformation and a continued process of political and economic democratisation. COSATU recognizes the difficulties and challenges of the transition including certain differences with ANC over approaches to macro-economic policies. Moreover the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) remains the fundamental policy basis for COSATU[4].

In order to understand the logic behind the Alliance, we must turn to the year of the ANC victory in the 1994 elections. COSATU was seen as the most organised section of the South African working class. It was militant and guided by a socialist programme. COSATU accepted a process of negotiation to access political power led by ANC, thus elite dominated. COSATU urged the workers to remain patient until access to political power was granted through the capture of the state. Then the Alliance would tackle overarching questions regarding the workers such as: ownership of means of production, redistribution of wealth, workers' rights and social security. In fact, COSATU contributed with many senior unionists to the newly formed Alliance government. They took seats as ANC politicians. Moreover, COSATU encouraged its affiliates to join the bureaucracy of the new government as well as members to help build both ANC and SACP. The idea was a strategic buy-in which meant that active participation by the organised working class in the so-called "people's movement" (the Alliance) and "people's government" was the basis for developing a political and socio-economic transformation based on the RDP (McKinley, 2003). The same explanation is to be found in an open letter to COSATU Daily Maverick September 4th 2012 by Jay Naidoo, founding General Secretary of COSATU;

> I was part of the leadership that led COSATU into an alliance with the ANC and SACP. It had a clear objective. We were making a commitment to a profound transformation that struck at the heart of Apartheid – the cheap labour system and its attendant diseases of joblessness, poverty, gender violence and inequality[5].

Not all of the affiliates agreed that COSATU should remain in an alliance after ANC took office. NUMSA (the Metal workers' union) passed a resolution at its 1993 congress demanding that the Alliance should end in its current form (Marais, 1998). Nevertheless, there seemed to be a consensus on the objectives of the Alliance, but the need for more

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[4] http://www.cosatu.org.za/show.php?ID=2051 (Read 03.12.12 at 10:40)
[5] http://dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2012-09-04-an-open-letter-to-cosatu (Read 03.12.12 at 14:16)

influence arose later. The 2015 Plan is the landmark plan adopted by COSATU in the 2003 congress. The plan called upon COSATU members to "swell the ranks of the ANC". This manoeuvre was launched in order to contest the soul of the movement. It is claimed that over half of ANC members are also COSATU members. Despite this increased representation of COSATU within ANC to obtain more influence, the ordinary branch members are not in a position to change policy direction within the party due to the top-down nature of policy processes (COSATU, 2012b). Beckman (2009) compares trade unions and popular representation in Nigeria and South Africa. He observes that COSATU operates both on its own and within the context of the Alliance. As COSATU expresses, he points out that they are disturbed by the inability of the government to effectively respond to growing mass unemployment. Further, he underlines that COSATU is blaming the neo-liberal economic policies of the government. Their response is to push for alternative solutions like greater government expenditure on transfer payments and active policy of economic development. This response to the government by the trade unions proves that COSATU operates primarily as an organisation allied to the government, contrary to Nigeria, it does not take the lead in a coalition of civil society forces in opposition to the state. This claim could question whether COSATU still can be considered as a social movement union (SMU). As this question is central to the discussion in the thesis, this will be returned to later.

4.3 Transition and institutional outcomes

The political transformation took the form of a negotiated settlement based on political compromise. The negotiated peace was admired by all corners of the world. The most important issues of the years preceding the democratic transition were: the dismantling of apartheid in all of its forms, economic justice, negotiating a new constitution, the nature of the future South African State (federal, centralized, etc.), the land issue (possibility of land redistribution), and the future of the South African economy (Feigenblatt, 2008).

However, as many pointed out, the challenges of economic redistribution were feared to be greater than the political challenges.. One of those who warned of this burden was the US Vice-President Al Gore. At the same time, the World Bank stated "Reducing poverty is the central challenge confronting the South African economy" (WB, 1994). The inequality in South Africa is structured in a number of ways where social boundaries of race, class and gender can be traced back 350 years. In the early 1990s the Reconstruction and Development

Programme (RDP) was regarded as the manifesto that would facilitate the challenges of redistribution and poverty. The RDP proposed a state-led, market assisted transformation process. The RDP promised to accommodate capital, but also not to be subordinate to it. Despite COSATU's role as a driving force behind social mobilisation in the anti-Apartheid struggle, they took a back seat in the Tripartite Alliance. The agreement with the ANC was that they would adopt the RDP as the manifesto for the 1994 election (Naidoo, 2003).

The transition took place at a time when the global political context was undergoing a radical change. The world had been divided by the "iron curtain"; most noticeably in Europe where countries were either communist (eastern bloc) or more liberal (western bloc). The political landscape was characterised by antagonism. The sudden implosion of the second world, or the communist bloc, made the support to radical liberation movements more difficult. As a result liberal capitalism seized the political space available and financial institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) launched its mantra of free trade (Fukuyama, 1992). The point to be made here is that the anti-Apartheid struggle started while state-led development and radical liberation movements were generally accepted. However, as the anti-Apartheid movement seized power in South Africa the ideological atmosphere had changed and Marxist ideology was quite unpopular (Feigenblatt, 2008). This might have had implications for the new government and possible international alignments that were related to the availability of and access to, financial resources. Nevertheless, the ANC adopted the neo-liberal policies of global financial institutions and thus left the idea of redistribution and nationalization behind (ibid).

The most extensive task of the new Parliament was to draft a democratic constitution, which came into being on 6 February 1997. The Legislature comprised a dominant National Assembly and a specialized National Council of Provinces (NCOP). Proportional representation was introduced at all levels. Some of the most important rights aimed at dissolving the structures of the Apartheid state were: the right of all to receive education in the official language of their choice where it was practicable. English was made the official language of public record and Afrikaans got the same status as nine other official languages (Davenport and Saunders, 2000). However, overcoming the race barriers was not easy.

The cooperation between COSATU and government was channelled through NEDLAC. As previously mentioned NEDLAC is the council where common issues concerning government, business, labour and community are discussed in order to reach a consensus. This structure can be evidence of COSATU's deliberate choice of entering into a corporate model of cooperation with the government. Corporatism can be defined as - *a political structure within advanced capitalism which integrates organised socio-economic producer groups through a system of representation and co-operative mutual interaction at the leadership level and mobilisation and social control at the mass level* (Panitch, 1981: p. 24).

Here it is meant that the institutionalisation of trade unions works as mechanism of social control and aims at integrating sections of the working class into the capitalist society. On the other side, adherents of the corporatist model argue that the working class can obtain genuine benefits from corporatism if certain conditions are present. These would be that labour is strongly organised, the state lacks power to be coercive and finally that the interests of the upper classes in the society are divided (Crouch, 1977). Nevertheless, NEDLAC institutionalised the relationship between labour, business and government from an adversarial approach towards a co-operative strategy. Moreover, the social contract served as the economic correlate of the negotiated political settlement. The new Labour Relations Act also served to institutionalise e the new co-operative relationship. It encouraged centralised bargaining at the industry level as well as constructing work place forums. However, whether this increased union strength is questionable.

Many claim that COSATU's choice to engage in NEDLAC stems from the idea of 'strategic unionism' which emerged in the early 1990s. This expression is based on the perception that the trade union movement felt lost and tried to adapt to the new era during the transition period. As a result, the social change which took place in South Africa was labour driven. Three prerequisites account for this change. First, there was a need for broader unity within the labour movement, secondly, popular organisations had to be united around a common programme of reform and, third, a durable alliance was needed with the ANC (Marais, 1998). The strategic unionism emerged but not without problems. In the next chapter I will look at the promises which were made as the Alliance took office.

The preconditions for the democratic South Africa found today are in the negotiations between ANC and the Nationalist leadership of de Klerk. For the Apartheid regime, which envisioned a possible total collapse, a political reform seemed most feasible in order for the white elite not to lose the economic power through a redistribution of economic resources. As part of the negotiation process the ANC realised that concessions would have to be made and a compromise reached. Accordingly, the negotiations found that the one-person-one-vote was the only universally accepted condition whereas radical redistribution of economic resources like land was the most contested. Compromising the possibility of controlling the economic power tied the hands of ANC in power and made reform difficult (Grugel, 2002).

Next, we shall see how these concessions impacted on future political decisions made by the government. In the run up to the election in 1994 two different economic policy trajectories were presented by the National Party (NP) and the African National Congress (ANC). The proposal presented by the NP was based on a traditional neo-liberal economic programme, which emphasised deregulation of the financial, and labour markets, privatisation of state owned enterprises and finally, integration of South Africa into the global economy. Contrary to NP, ANC suggested a social democratic economic plan rooted in the *Freedom Charter* emphasising growth through redistribution. Although, this trajectory originally was incoherent with regards to nationalisation *Macro Economic Research Group* (MERG) and *Industrial Strategy Project* (ISP). Think tanks of the congress Alliance developed a ten year plan based on two phases: (1) public-led investment which was to be followed by (2) a private sector dominated phase. Annual growth was foreseen to 5% and job creation should reach 2.5 million at the end of the implementation. The public sector was to be expanded and the state should be interventionist and regulate the market in order to meet the needs of the citizens (Habib, 2012).

After the election, the Reconstruction and Development programme (RDP) was launched. It contained the main principles outlined by MERG. However, in 1996 (only two years after it was launched) RDP was replaced by the neo-liberal economic programme GEAR (what does this stand for? You should write out the acronym at least once). Even before GEAR was adopted, neo-liberal tendencies within the government were being uncovered. First through the introduction of an extensive liberalisation programme which allowed reduction of tariffs in several sectors, and secondly by a privatisation programme signed by Thabo Mbeki, which privatised South African Airways and Telkom.

As the RDP office was closed GEAR opened up for: cuts in state expenditure, rationalisation of the public sector, deregulation measures like further liberalisation of foreign exchange and further privatisation of state assets. Consequently, ANC had departed from the manifest upon which it won its first election (Habib, 2012). As indicated in the beginning of this chapter both poverty and inequality increased in the years that followed after GEAR's introduction, yet poverty levels decreased after the year 2000. Why did ANC decide to take on such a dramatically different policy trajectory as GEAR, fully aware that their constituents expected a developmental state providing welfare and jobs to the population?

4.4 The promises

The original initiative to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) came from The National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA) which regarded the programme as socio-economic targets on which the achievements of ANC government could be measured against (Marais, 1998). The RDP captured the promises of the anti-Apartheid movement made to its constituents in the first democratic election. It was based on the principles of the Freedom Charter. It incorporated a set of social, economic and political policies which aimed at transforming South Africa into a more just and equal nation. The programme originated from the popular movement, but also consulted with corporate business. It was claimed that RDP belonged to everyone . Some of the main pledges of the RDP were the following:

- Create 2,5 million new jobs in 10 years
- Build one million low-cost homes by year 2000
- Provide electricity to 2,5 million homes by the year 2000, doubling the number of households with such access from the then 36 per cent
- Provide running water and sewage systems to one million households
- Redistribute 30 per cent of agricultural land to small-scale farmers within five years
- Shift the health system from curative services towards primary health care, with free medical service for children under six years and pregnant women at state facilities – by 1998, all South Africans were to receive their basic nutritional intake, thanks to school feeding and other schemes
- Provide 10 years of compulsory, free education as well as revise the curriculum, reduce class sizes and institute adult basic education and training programmes
- Extend infrastructure through a public works programme
- Restructure state institutions to reflect the racial, class and gender composition of SA society (Marais, 1998: p. 180)

Assessing the above goals one can without a doubt claim that the RDP was ambitious and encompassing . It demanded that the state of South Africa undertake severe measures to

secure access to income. The economic policy direction of the Base Document of RDP was Keynesian, aiming at establishing a mutually reinforcing dynamic between basic needs provision and economic growth. However, the RDP had severe shortcomings. Many of the elements in the programme were left disintegrated and poorly described in detail. For example it did not express the impact of land reform on rural economic strategy or the effect of a national minimum wage on sectorial investment and employment trends. Moreover, it lacked a nominal integration of macroeconomic policy with industrial policy (Marais, 1998).

Returning to COSATU's engagement with RDP we find different views on what role COSATU took in its involvement with the development of the programme. On one side, it was claimed that COSATU served as a representative of the interests of most forces in the society and with this legitimacy helped ANC to draft a broad based programme. On the other side, some union activists claimed that COSATU in the first four drafts actually copied an already agreed ANC policy with the purpose of committing ANC to its own policy (Marais, 1998).

4.5 Leverages and responses

In a 17-18 year perspective and after 1994, power resided in the hands of business and business was in control of investment. The fact that the ANC needed to boost the economy meant leverage was in favour of the business community. While the leverage of ordinary people and civil society could be restricted to mobilisation and the vote, these were not a threat to the government since they had just entered office. In other words, the ANC could take people's vote for granted, but they could not take investment for granted. As a result the ANC made serious concessions to the business community through the GEAR project in 1996 (Habib, 24.09.2012).

A substantial part of this concession can be traced back to a strategic economic choice. Namely, the way to improve conditions for the black majority would be through growth rather than through redistribution. Moreover, the government used subsidies to fund social services and other programmes for the poor population. Mbeki (2008) claims that the state redirected revenue from mineral sales in order to fund welfare programmes instead of creating jobs and redistribute land.

The adherence to the business community thus had consequences, and from 1999 the discontent materialised into protests and the emergence of social movement struggles. The upsurge of the political struggles has according to Habib (24.09.2012) two roots. The first consisted of the broader civic life (Treatment Action Campaign, Anti-Privatization Forum, Homeless' Federation etc.) while the second was to be found within the Alliance, namely COSATU. From 2000 onwards COSATU launched a range of struggles and actively supported the Treatment Action Campaign. Furthermore, and probably more importantly at the time, COSATU was one of the major forces bringing Zuma to power.

These struggles started to create tension which resulted in elite uncertainty. As a possible consequence Thabo Mbeki started to use the expression 'the rage of the poor' and a slight shift to the left could be detected. Two examples of this shift could be the introduction of the *Social Support Grant* and the discussions around the Developmental State. Moreover, after Polokwane the programme *New Growth Path* can be considered as a slow shift to the left.

COSATU has undertaken a self-conducted *Workers' Survey.* The aim of the survey is to provide an analysis of the perceptions of union members on issues facing the labour movement. Its objectives are: to help union members, shop stewards and activists to enrich their views on workers' needs, desires and hopes, strengthen internal democracy, improve the organisation of the unorganised and finally serve members better (COSATU, 2012e). According to the survey approximately 25% of COSATU members and a fifth of other urban workers said they took part in community protest action in the past four years. The main issues they protested against were quality and cost of electricity, water and housing (COSATU, 2012e).

The behaviour of COSATU members in the form of community protests can be interpreted as an expression of dissatisfaction with the government's provision of services. We see here that the members chose to express themselves through the community into the streets. Whether there was an option to express the same dissatisfaction through the structures of the unions and in COSATU, which is in the Alliance, is difficult to measure. What we know is that as many as a quarter of the members chose to openly protest against their own government.

On the other hand COSATU members form a significant component of ANC membership. Moreover, there is a clear strategy from COSATU to encourage the working class (specifically COSATU members) to swell the ranks of the ANC. The 2015 Plan calls for members, leaders, shop stewards to join the ANC *en masse* (COSATU, 2012b).

> This is a part of the contestation for the soul of the movement and 'jealously defend the progressive and working class bias of the ANC' (COSATU, 2012c: p. 7)

We see here a possible two-sided approach from the organised labour to obtain influence on the policies of the government. Webster (25.09.2012) argues that ordinary working people struggling for basic services at the same time as ANC is in power is a recognisable contradiction. Without knowing which of the members chose which strategy, perhaps this diverging approach might be an indication of a two-fold member base which has different opinions on how to be heard. As previously mentioned, a dualism within the labour movement was evident already in the pre-transition period. The dissatisfaction with the government was not only evident through community protests which COSATU members participated in, but it also dominated the debate at the 11th COSATU congress.

4.6 Achievements – South Africa on the developmental road?

During the Apartheid period the inequality between the black and white population was extremely high. Economic discrimination was one of the tools of repression. The white population which constituted about 20% of South Africans received around 70% of total income from 1917 to 1970 (Seventer and Whiteford, 1973). At the end of Apartheid the expectations that the government would balance the inequality in favour of the black population was generally perceived, but also put into policy in the RDP. Post-apartheid South-Africa's between-race-group income inequality has indeed fallen. The main explanation for this might be the decreased labour market inequalities and among others the legalization of black unions in 1980. However, the inequality has risen within each racial group post-Apartheid (Nix, 2007).

Today South Africa is regarded as a middle income country according to *The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Country Report* of UNDP (2010). As we refer to the report on MDGs we must be aware that South Africa is here measured against the eight predefined

goals of UNDP. These goals might not capture all indicators of the socio-economic status of the country, but as I am here focusing on poverty, goal one *"Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger"* can give us an insight in how UNDP and the government assess the progress.

South Africa is described as having a sophisticated infrastructure, a well-developed private sector and a stable macro-economy. In fact the GDP per capita was by 2007 R36 461 (USD 5168) (UNDP, 2010) while it was 4334 USD in 1995 (Jenkins and Thomas, 2004). Although, as many studying development have pointed out, GDP per capita is not a sufficient indicator when we want to reveal the poverty level in a country, the income did not increase substantially in 12 years. Indeed, in South Africa it might be a deluding indicator. Therefore, it might be useful to introduce the Gini-coefficient which measures the income distribution. The value zero of Gini-coefficient indicates perfect equality where all values are the same. Here it would show that everyone has an exactly equal income. A Gini coefficient of *one* expresses maximal inequality among values[6]. However, the gini is sensitive to what is included and excluded as income. The gini-coefficient including salaries, wages and social grants were 0,7 in 2000 and respectively 0,73 in 2006. Per capita expenditure excluding taxes the indicator was 0,65 in 2001 and 0,67 in 2006. Compared to the Apartheid period the gini-coefficient was 0.55 in 1960 measured by person, and 0.59 post-Apartheid measured by household (Jenkins and Thomas, 2004). Indeed, inequality has continued to rise post-Apartheid. Looking at the differences between the races the between-race-group contribution to overall inequality fell from 62 per cent in 1975 to 33 per cent in 1996 while the within-race-group contribution rose from 38 per cent of total inequality to 67 per cent during the same period (Nix, 2007). Putting these numbers in perspective, the gini-coefficient for Norway in mid 2000s was 0,44[7].

So what can these indicators tell us? Looking at the GDP per capita indicator we could easily believe that South Africa is a country on full speed towards development. Comparing the GDP per capita to Uganda, which had an indication of 523,1 USD in 2009[8], South Africa which scored 5168 USD in 2007, most South Africans would live a decent life. This is unfortunately not the case. Although the MDG report tells us that absolute poverty has

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[6] http://www.fao.org/docs/up/easypol/329/gini_index_040en.pdf (Read 04.11.12 at 15:00)
[7] http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=26067&Lang=en (Read 04.11.12 at 14:54)
[8] http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Uganda
(Read 04.11.12 at 14:54)

declined (UNDP, 2010), the gini-coefficient serve us the knowledge that inequality has rose post-Apartheid while COSATU was in the Tripartite Alliance. Yet, how much responsibility must COSATU take for the rising inequality level?

The inequality level tells us that a part of the population live in poverty, while others are blessed with wealth. This knowledge is worldwide known. South Africa and Brazil are indeed the countries which are known to have the most unequal societies worldwide[9]. Being in the field I observed the level of poverty myself. Millions of South Africans, mainly black, still live in townships where families are accommodated in shacks measuring 2-3 square meters. Supporting the above are indications on hunger and malnutrition. Unemployment, in most cases, results in poverty leads to malnutrition. A proxy for income poverty and hunger can be found in child malnutrition. According to data provided by *District Health Information Systems* malnutrition among children below five years measured on average between 2001-2010, the state that scored highest on malnutrition was KwaZulu-Natal with 13,3% prevalence of malnutrition (UNDP, 2010).

The MDG report argues that absolute poverty has declined. They explain this by the redistributive measures carried out by the government along with economic growth. Social grants and investment in service delivery such as sanitation, water, electricity and housing are highlighted as the pro-poor mechanisms undertaken by the government (UNDP, 2010). These efforts do not prove to be sufficient if we are to interpret the level of service delivery protests taken place. The grievances which led to these protests are in many cases justified as the services delivered are increasingly becoming privatised. Services which previously were free of charge now requires payment. According to Habib (2012) 12654 service delivery protest took place in 2010 and 11 033 in 2011 respectively (Habib, 2012: p. 9).

> Inequality and poverty are two different concepts. As we have seen, extreme poverty is to a certain extent reduced, while inequality grow. You can get rid of poverty, without tackling inequality (Habib, 18.09.2012).

The question is; have you then achieved development? The relation between inequality and poverty will be returned to later in the thesis. COSATU's assessment of poverty, inequality and unemployment will also be dealt with.

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[9] http://dailymaverick.co.za/article/2012-08-15-brazil-and-south-africa-united-in-inequality (Read 04.11.12 at 16:17)

The rate of unemployment rate by quarter three 2012 was 25,5% or 4,6 million people according to *Statistics South Africa*. It is the highest level since the QLFS commenced in quarter *one* in 2008 SSA (2012). The expanded definition of unemployment which includes discouraged jobseekers increased to 36.3% from 36.2% previously[10].

e 20: Unemployment rate by population group

	Black/African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	All population groups
Q3:2011	28,9	23,6	10,8	5,6	25,0
Q2:2012	28,7	24,0	9,5	5,7	24,9
Q3:2012	29,1	24,5	11,7	5,9	25,5
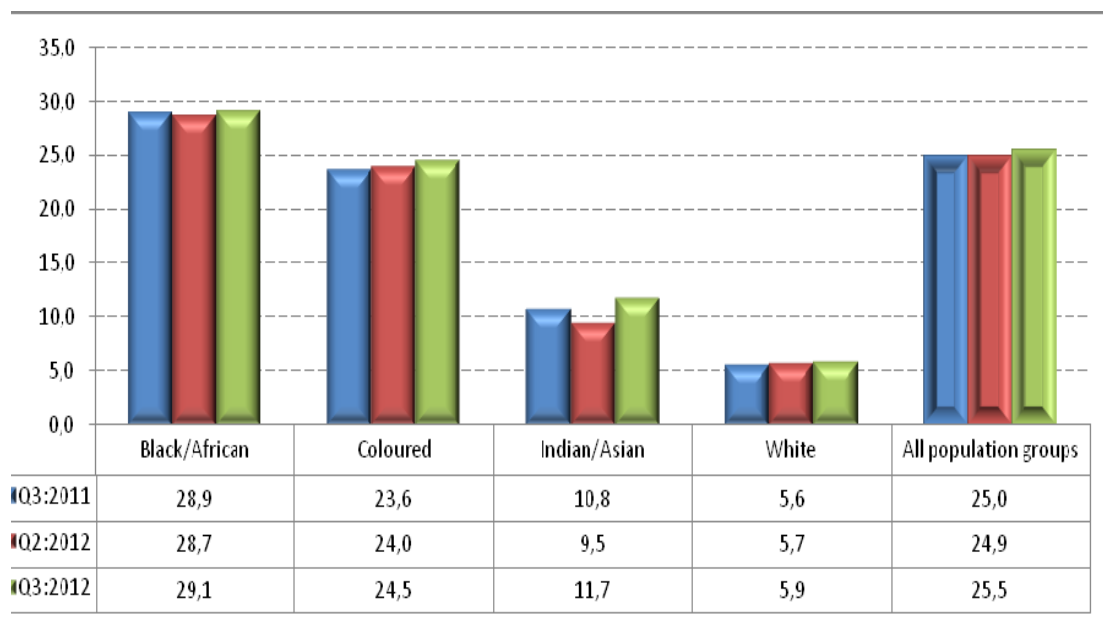
Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey 3rd quarter 2012.

Here, students (42.3%)) account for the largest share of the unemployed population, followed by home-makers (18.6%) while discouraged work-seekers accounted for 14.8% of the not economically active. Compared to a year ago the share of students among the not economically active population increased by 0.5 of a percentage point; while the share of discouraged work-seekers remained virtually unchanged (SSA, 2012). The employment to population ratio measures the proportion of the country's working-age population that is employed. It is defined as - persons in employment divided by the population[11]. Poverty and employment are inter-linked. From 2001 to 2009 the employment to population ratio is 51% on average among men, respectively 37% among women and 43% on a national level (UNDP, 2010).

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[10] http://m.news24.com/fin24/Economy/SA-unemployment-on-the-rise-20121101 (Read 04.11.12 at 18.30)
[11] http://www.oecd.org/employment/employmentpoliciesanddata/onlineoecdemploymentdatabase.htm#unr (Read 04.11.12 at 14:15)

In the coming section we will look further into why South Africa faces the development deficit and the remarkably high unemployment rate despite their ambitious plan to eradicate the underdevelopment among the majority of South Africans.

Two sides to the story of achievements

The governmental programme Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR) succeeded RDP only two years after it was adopted in 1994, the shift towards a conservative macro-economic programme followed. Economic growth was at the forefront. At the 10th anniversary of the democracy the government reviewed its own performance. They highlighted that: 1,985 545 housing subsidies had been approved to the value of R24.22 billion, new water connection benefitted 9 million people, electricity connections had been extended to 70 per cent of households by 2001, 1.8 million hectares of land had been redistributed since 1994 and 1,600633 new jobs had been created.

However, as the government congratulated themselves with the achievements above, GEAR had introduced a new cost recovery model which meant that ordinary people had to pay for water, electricity and telephone services. As they were unable to allocate funding for these new costs, millions of people were being cut off from these services (McDonald and Pape, 2002). Former General Secretary Jay Naidoo stated as RDP minister to NEDLAC that;

> There is no way the government can provide even the basic services. That is why we have to help local government structures to access capital from the markets at favourable rates (McKinley, 2003).

At the same time GEAR was responsible for millions becoming unemployed. As free trade became the ideal within the global economy, the new established democratic state of South Africa was quick to take on the dominating measures for its own economy. The state opened up for privatisation and downsizing of the traditional interventionist state; massive retrenchments were a direct consequence of this. Actually, the industries that can take main responsibility for the retrenchments are export oriented. Empirical studies have shown that the industries with best export performances are also those with highest rates of lay-offs. According to COSATU 20 per cent of formal sector jobs, or ten million jobs over a ten-year period, disappeared between 1990 and 2000. In fact, half (COSATU, 2000) of these jobs vanished during 1997 and 2000. Outsourcing and casualization resulted from increased

domestic and international competition. Permanent jobs were replaced by precarious and vulnerable work, hiring mostly unskilled employees. In the wake of retrenchment less formalised work increased with women most dominant.   Actually, South Africa's commitment to the controls of the IMF, WTO and World Bank have been reinforced by the its membership in the G20 group of countries (Satgar, 2012).

> Taken together, the constitution of the G20 demonstrates renewed attempts at core-periphery coercion by inviting these countries into the highly exclusive G7/G8, or, put more bluntly, by co-opting them into the rules and standards of the core-alliance coercion by ensuring official, and thus more tightly integrated relations with the IMF and the World Bank (Söderberg, 2004: p. 81)

On the other hand, some benefitted enormously from the transition. The middle class expanded in which new black professional and civil servants were included. More importantly, a small black politically connected entrepreneurial elite emerged. This elite went under the name Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) which I will return to later. Nevertheless, as poverty first increased and then decreased, the inequality measures rose consistently throughout the post-Apartheid era (Habib, 2012). These were strong tendencies of a rightward move of the Alliance and the Government. Yet, COSATU remained loyal to the Alliance.

5. POLITICAL DYNAMICS - A THREE-WAY BALANCING ACT

In this chapter I will assess COSATU in relation to power. I outline a tendency that COSATU has a three-way strategy to obtain influence as a trade union movement in the South African society. First, I will look at COSATU's relation upwards to the ANC. In the pre-transition period COSATU was considered a strong political power base. In the post-transition period COSATU is still in an alliance with the ANC, but which factors in the trade union-party relationship define COSATU's level of power and the fights they chose to pick? Second, I will look inwards into the trade union federation COSATU. In what way do the policies of the Alliance and COSATU's adherence to these, influence the members' satisfaction? What possible response can be read out of the rank and file members? Third, as COSATU has been regarded as a social movement union it is necessary to assess its relation to civil society in order to discuss their actual power among people on the ground. Finally, this chapter concludes with a discussion on whether COSATU succeeds in balancing this three-way approach.

5.1 Upwards

One can claim is that much of the ideological trajectory of the ANC-government was already destined even before ANC won its first election. Feigenblatt (2008) explains this by claiming that questions related to the economy were almost neglected during the negotiations. ANC regarded political power to be more important than economic power, because the latter could be transformed into economic power in the future.

During the last phases of the negotiations with the Apartheid state ANC accepted the responsibility of a debt reaching 13.62 billion USD which was owed to 233 different banks (Allen, 2006). After winning its first election ANC was quick to mend the debt wound by accepting a loan from IMF. The new relationship with IMF was mirrored in language of the first post-Apartheid budget, namely the aim of "macro-economic stability".

In fact, due to the above, Satgar (2012) argues that the macro-economic management was locked into the neo-liberal direction the moment ANC took on the debt obligations of the Apartheid government. However, the pressure also came from within South Africa. Large businesses which wanted to re-enter world trading and investment relations were pushing the ANC Government to: implement tax cuts, deregulate the labour market, privatise state

assets and liberalise foreign exchange. The actors involved were the South African Chamber of Business, employer federations, banking houses, major corporate blocs as well as the external lobby of the international financial institutions (Catchpowle and Cooper, 2003).

On the other side was a different leverage - the voting poor who had high expectations towards the newly elected government. Those expectations were mainly related to eradication of poverty through job creation and housing. Therefore, the ANC Government faced the challenge of achieving accelerated growth in a limited period in order to improve the level of development both for the voting poor, but also for the corporate sector. A two-sided strategy can be interpreted out of the political decisions of ANC in the wake of these pressures. ANC chose on one side to embark on the *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) which was soon abandoned and replaced by the World Bank approved structural adjustment programme *Growth Employment and Redistribution Programme* (GEAR). On the other hand, in order to overcome the opposition to the latter economic agenda the ANC Government established a corporatist political framework which secured political legitimacy of the Government (Catchpowle and Cooper, 2003).

Capital was given privileges and some of these privileges had a direct impact on workers. In order to better facilitate *Black Economic Empowerment* (BEE) which will be returned to later, the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997* allowed small businesses with less than ten employees to raise maximum weekly overtime from 10 to 15 hours, cut overtime pay from one and a half times normal wage to one and one third, and negotiate a reduction of family leave for employees on temporary contracts (Murray, 2003).

According to Catchpowle and Cooper (2003) the ANC chose to embark on a 'neoliberal corporatism' as state strategy. This model, which was also to be found in Australia, Brazil and Argentina, employed corporatist measures in order to secure an acceptance of neoliberal free market policies from the leadership of the trade unions. As the leadership of the trade unions were granted a say in the state's economic decision-making process, the corporatist model ensured that the radicalism of the membership was to some extent contained. In fact, corporatism diffuses and suspends class warfare. By implying a class harmony, concepts within socialist principles might be suspended (Adam et al., 1998).

If Catchpowle and Cooper (2003) are correct in their analysis, neoliberal corporatism might have been the most comfortable strategy as the government had to satisfy two very different groups with diverging interests. As we shall see later, the corporate sector and the voting poor both had their leverages, but one of these turned out to be more powerful than the other.

Empowerment of the few

Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is a democratic initiative to give the black community access to corporate ownership and management roles. BEE is based on a collectivist theory aiming at empowering the poor. It is intended to make the poor feel they have influence within the capitalist state. BEE enriches a few which is intended to trickle down (Murray, 2003).

Murray (2003) argues that BEE is both elitist and corporatist in its nature. Elitist since it enriches the top layer of South African society despite being wrapped up in rhetoric of social equity. Corporatist because it is involves the top representatives of the state, business and the working class.

Mbeki (1999) approaches BEE from another point of view. He argues that deracialisation is one of the main desired effects of BEE;

> I will speak only to the question of the challenge of the formation of a black capitalist class, a black bourgeoisie. This is, and must be, an important part of the process of the deracialisation of the ownership of productive property in our country. Ours is a capitalist society. As part of the realisation of the aim to eradicate racism in our country, we must strive to create and strengthen a black capitalist class (Mbeki, 1999): 2

In response to the above Murray (2003) underlines that the creation of a black bourgeoisie is not just a question of the deracialisation of South Africa. It is also a vital objective in providing the ANC Government with a firm social and political buffer against the demands of a restless black working class seeking comprehensive economic improvements of the type that it are unlikely to be seen under the restrictive GEAR programme.

The question that arises is whether or not the initial intention of BEE was the aim of deracialisation in South Africa through empowering a few. It might serve as a social and political buffer against the demanding working class as Murray (2003) claims. But if this is

the case, the ANC Government must have been quite certain that skin colour is sufficient to represent the black working class. Assessing the lifestyle of BEE class today, there seems to be few other attributes that would legitimise them as representatives of the working class other than skin colour. If we look at the statement by Mbeki he argues that in order to eradicate racism a black bourgeoisie must be created. Here he uses Marxist language to describe the resources the black elite should be entitled to. By using the term *"deracialisation of the ownership of productive property"* (ibid.) he does not only apply for an acceptance from the black population, but he (also through Marxist rhetoric) asks for an understanding from the working class by describing resources as productive property. This can be seen as a tactical move to make the black working class accept development of a bourgeoisie since the ownership of productive property shall be moved or shared by those who control it - the white descendants of the former apartheid elite. In other words it can be argued that Mbeki tries to legitimise the transfer of enormous resources to a small (black) group and thereby justifies it with deracialisation . Considering the history of South Africa, emphasising deracialisation might be a populist manoeuvre. Moreover, it is a conceivable political aim for the masses to understand and accept.

Why are BEE and Mbeki's words important in this context? On one hand introducing the representation of race into the corporate sector might serve the idea of a more heterogenic sector reflecting the population of South Africa. However, in order to understand how the wealth in South Africa is mainly concentrated among a small elite belonging to the business sector today, we must get an insight in how it ended up there despite ANC's promises of implementing the *Freedom Charter* [12] as a part of the transition. The Freedom Charter states among other things that - *The people shall share the country's wealth.*

Habib (2012) suggests that the government was faced with two diametrically opposing interests which implicated different policy trajectories. On one side the foreign investors and the domestic business community, which pressured for liberal economic policies. On the other side was the majority of the South African population, which had voted for the ANC. Both had their own leverage. The former had investment while the latter had the vote. The leverage of the voters could be compromised as black South Africa had no other alternative to vote for than the ANC. They would not vote NP and in the lack of an alternative

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[12] http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=72 (Read 05.11.12 at 16:57)

opposition the leverage of the corporate sector came across as much more threatening than the lack of support at the next general election. In this case Stein Rokkan's words might be an appropriate description for the above; "votes are counted, not weighed" (Adam et al., 1998: p. 141). If we assume that the above is a logical explanation for why ANC chose to adhere to the corporate sector, how did the member base in COSATU respond to the new policy direction?

The emergence of labour brokers and other deficits

One of the main issues discussed at the congress was the expansive use of labour brokers in South Africa. In short, labour brokers supply employers with labour in order for corporates not to hire employees on longer-term contracts and thereby fulfil the labour rights. In using labour brokers one avoids a substantial part of labour regulations. The labour brokers are regarded as a big threat to workers' rights. The introduction of the labour brokers is a new pressure on the wage earning class. It is a pressure that derives from the neo-liberal economy in South Africa. However, Schröder (24.09.2012) claims that labour broking is a direct result of ANC labour market policy. Moreover, research from the *University of Cape Town's Development Policy Research Unit* (DPRU), shows that of the 3.4-million jobs created since 1994, about 1.2-million jobs were created in the financial and business services category. Labour brokers together with security services filled 900 000 of these positions (Parker, 2012). According to Schröder (24.09.2012) COSATU kept quiet on the issue except from calling on ANC to ban labour brokers. Nevertheless, COSATU lost the battle of banning labour brokers. COSATU parliamentary officer, Prakashnee Govender, admitted the following;

> In relation to labour broking we were not successful in getting agreement for a complete and full ban (Vecchiato, 2012).

The allowance of labour brokers might place an added stress on COSATU as the labour broker regime produces grievances to workers' rights. Furthermore, the model of organising is threatened by contract workers and labour broker workers. The tendency is that workers do not just hop to and from companies within one industry, they change industries. It becomes difficult for unions within one industry to organise the workers since they are constantly moving vertically between industries. Schröder (24.09.2012) connects the issue of the labour brokers to a broader tendency within COSATU, namely that they do not represent the members' interests and that the conditions for the workers are decreasing;

> Since 2008 and until now South Africa lost over 1 million jobs. COSATU has not attempted a single campaign or statement in defence of the one million jobs that have been lost. It takes up e-tolling. Labour Research Services (LRS) did a survey on collective agreements that have been signed between 2007 and 2009. In the vast majority of these agreements, all they win for their members is what is already in the law. Moreover the working hours of organised workers are drifting upwards, from 44 hours to 45 hours. On maternity leave COSATU agreed that you have to work one year for the same employer to get maternity leave. They are making important concessions. They are also making concessions on how many days off shop stewards get. A NALEDI survey reveals that 60% of the members are not happy with wage settlements which the unions are making (Schröder, 24.09.2012).
> .

The above statement gives a harsh verdict over the trade union movement. His statement on the failure to represent stands in contrast to the perception of COSATU representatives which regards COSATU as the single progressive movement for social development. Yet, other academic representatives do recognise that COSATU finds itself in a contradiction between representing the workers and copying the lifestyle of the corporate and political elite as they interact with them in various investment deals, bargaining councils or in government bodies.

5.2 Inwards

COSATU and the naked truth

In this section I will look at COSATU's own analysis of why South Africa has a very high unemployment rate which goes hand in hand with the poverty level. What consequences does this have for mobilisation inwards in COSATU? The socio-economic report to the 11th National Congress of COSATU clearly states that:

> All the policies that have been adopted in the past 18 years have failed to deliver on the fundamentals; unemployment reduction, poverty elimination and the reduction of social and economic inequality (COSATU, 2012d).

COSATU is open in their perception of policy failure since the day ANC took office in South Africa in 1994. Further they explain why the policies failed;

> In our assessment, the failure of these policies does not lie in what they sought to achieve (all of them claimed to deal with unemployment, poverty and inequality). These policies failed because of the inappropriate policy instruments that they proposed in order to achieve their goals. In some instances, even the understanding of the reality that they sought to transform has been extremely limited and distorted, leading to a limited number and inappropriate policy tools being deployed, if not some of them plainly wrong (COSATU, 2012d).

COSATU has concrete solutions on what must be done in order to halt the unequal development of the society. These solutions are based on the Freedom Charter (1955), cemented in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and reemphasised in the socio-economic report (2012);

> The only shortest route to broad-based development available now is the speedy implementation of the Freedom Charter (COSATU, 2012d).

COSATU pushes for broad-based industrialisation and state-intervention to address inequality and deliver basic services such as education, health and housing. This demands a change in ownership and control over the economy. COSATU highlights that the resources extracted from the mines are directed by the state to build domestic industries. Assessing documents presented to the 11th National Congress of COSATU we find a coherent criticism of government policies. The arguments and resentment towards the government policies was also to be found among the delegates taking the floor at the congress. There seems to be a unanimous tone among the affiliates and COSATU itself that they are severely dissatisfied with a large number of government decisions, if not to say the entire economic policy direction of the ANC-government.

An aspect by COSATU's approach to the Alliance is their relatively harsh criticism of government policies.. This criticism was observed at the COSATU congress, and is found in the congress documents and is communicated by the COSATU representatives and affiliates interviewed. In the *Secretariat Political Report of the 11th National Congress* the core of the criticism is formulated as an emerging crisis and can be summed up in this quote*:*

> An emerging **organisational crisis**, in which the ANC, in particular, is increasingly wracked by factionalism, patronage and corruption, and is unable to reassert the mission and strategic vision of the organisation (…) There is a growing social distance between the leadership and the rank and file (…) The crisis is systemic and relates to the broader crisis in the state and society. Because the state is the ruling party, and the leader of the Alliance, and society, this situation also has profound implications for society more broadly, for governance from national to local levels, for all state institutions, and for progressive civil society, including the labour movement (COSATU, 2012b: p. 29).

The critical description of the state is also to be found in the report:

> A crisis in the state, in which years of neglect, fiscal cutbacks, and contracting out of state responsibilities combined with endemic corruption, and a failure of political and bureaucratic leadership – together render elements of the state apparatus increasingly ineffective, or even dysfunctional (COSATU, 2012b: p. 29).

However, their commitment to ANC stands strong;

> We must do everything we can to assist this fight, and make sure that the ANC succeeds (COSATU, 2012b: p. 29).

How can the criticism be interpreted? Webster (25.09.2012) claims that ANC and the leadership of SACP view COSATU's criticisms as being overcritical; moreover they don't acknowledge the achievements post-Polokwane. On one hand, he thinks that the Secretary General of COSATU, Vavi, is expressing ordinary workers' feelings in the sense that their expectations towards the government have not been fulfilled. On the other hand, COSATU is part of a contradiction where the ANC is in power in a neoliberal world and struggling with progressive policies on social expenditure. At the same time they have a legacy and history and problems translating ideas into practice, which has left ordinary working people struggling for basic services like water and electricity.

Nevertheless, COSATU does dare to speak the harsh truth about the status of South Africa and place the responsibility of the poverty crisis on the ANC Government. I assess their ability to target the dysfunctions of the government as brave and an important contribution to a debate about South Africa's future. But as we shall see, it is not only the ANC government that is subject to criticism. In the next section a crisis within COSATU's own structures draws the attention to its inwards strategies.

The Marikana alert

The massacre in Marikana in August 2012 provided the basis for uncovering a range of social tensions which seemed to be linked to economic structures and rising contention among the workers. In the midst of these tensions the trade union structures seemed to be caught in crisis of representation. Some claim that the Marikana incident is the most serious violent episode that happened in South Africa since the defeat of Apartheid. Nevertheless, the brutal behaviour of the police, who are members of POPCRU which is a COSATU affiliate, will not to any significant extent, be discussed here even though the police represents the state and the state is in the control of ANC.

Some claim that the reason why the miners abandoned NUM as their representative in the bargaining process is because they were unresponsive to the miners' claims. Many of the mineworkers employed at the Lonmin's mine have been seduced by local lending institutions to take up microcredit loans. Due to the very high repayment levels many of the workers were bankrupt after the interest from their pay checks had been deducted. The Marikana

miners are a part of a migrant labour system that kept their workers in debt as a part of their exploitation. At the same time, one of the micro credit institutions, Ubank, was owned by the NUM and Chamber of mines. Consequently, according to Bateman (2012) the miners had no other option than to demand a very high wage increase in order to repay their micro-debts.

The columnist Eusebius McKaiser in the online newspaper *News24* argues in his column[13] *Marikana: a story about unresponsive leadership* that the leadership in NUM and COSATU was failing to comprehend what happened in Marikana and why the workers lost trust in NUM. They, on the other hand, argued that the abandonment was not related to distrust but to the influence of other illegal strikes elsewhere. Actually, in the political report to the 11th COSATU congress the erosion of the unions on lower levels is drawn up as a serious negative trend, but the report tries to explain this tendency by pointing to the lack of discipline.

COSATU released a statement "urg(ing) all the workers who have left the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) to return"(ibid). McKaiser writes that this "urge" is fascinating. Moreover he compares the members' behaviour to naughty children who ran away from home and who should return if they know what's good for them. Munusamy (2012), on the other hand, emphasises Vavi's statement in *The Justice Factor* on e.tv. Here he expressed worries about the social distance between leaders of COSATU and their members;

> If 'systemic problems' such as these were not confronted and dealt with, COSATU may have no future beyond five years (Munusamy, 2012).

Here we see Vavi admitting that a distance exists between members and leaders in COSATU and that this problem is systemic. Moreover, he takes the challenge seriously since he describes it as fatal threat to COSATU. At the 11th COSATU Congress Sdumo Dlamini, the president of COSATU, took another approach to the Marikana incident. He blamed the gap between the rich and the poor. He pointed out that capitalists made huge profits even at a time of economic meltdown.

> Mine workers cannot be expected to keep quiet when they know that the chief financial officer, Alan Ferguson, of Lonmin mines makes R 10.2 million a year (Sathekge, 2012).

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[13] http://www.news24.com/Columnists/EusebiusMcKaiser/Marikana-a-story-about-unresponsive-leadership-20120920

If these two statements can be compared, we see a diverging approach in the way ex-union members are addressed. Vavi looks inward into the faults of the union movement while Dlamini blames the greed of the rich capitalists. However, both of them are addressing the grass root members. These divergent explanations might indicate that COSATU is not being consistent in how to deal with the fragmentation of its unions; moreover it might reflect a disagreement within the leadership on what the underlying causes of Marikana are. For all that, it is possible that they see both explanations as relevant. The point here is that they need to express support for the workers in order to invite them back to NUM.

What lessons can we learn from Marikana? As service delivery protests have been the usual way to express discontent in post-Apartheid South Africa, the Marikana incident constitutes a much more remarkable way of expressing discontent. First, it took place in a relatively stable sector (Munusamy, 2012). Secondly, a wage rebellion that resulted in a 22% wage increase without the help of professional trade unions must make the bells ring within both NUM and COSATU. It questions whether the miners need the NUM now that they can pull off a bargaining agreement without the involvement of the formal unions. Another example of alienation from established unions is to be found within NUM as well if we return to 1996. At the Anglo American's Rustenburg Platinum Mines, where NUM had a union density of 30 per cent, the union refused to negotiate over the uninformed demands of the workers. After a change of ownership the workers demanded repayment of their pension money, death benefits, long service and bonus amounts and income tax deducted. The management bypassed the union and negotiated with the Workers' Committee. Angry workers stated:

> The NUM's leadership is no longer interested in worker's issues, all they are involved with now is the establishment of an investment company and the buying of shares with our pension fund in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. We don't want to see NUM's leadership here (Adam et al., 1998: p. 152)

A possible persisting result of the Marikana incident is the fact that workers abandoned NUM. As mentioned above, this can be explained by the social distance between union members and union leadership. This explanation is also emphasised by Webster (25.09.2012):

> When you disconnect it from the grass root, you are losing your members (Webster, 25.09.2012).

A similar perception is to be found among the representatives of the civil society, since they claim that the workers on the ground are no longer satisfied with how COSATU is operating.

That is why they pull out and so many independent unions are coming up (Moloko, 01.10. 2012).If this is the case, we must look into why this social distance has appeared within the union. Webster (25.09.2012) explains the social distance within NUM by the union being a part of the capitalist system in South Africa;

> I think Marikana did capture the sense of an organisation that has not only played the important role in the transition, but has been transformed by the transition into a organisation that in practice is really part of the capitalist system in South Africa. The decisions that have been made of establishing investment companies for example has drawn them into the stock market and into all sorts of potentialities of social mobility over the last 20 years (Webster, 25.09.2012).

NUM, like many other unions has set up trust funds or investment companies within the sector they organise. Generally, such investment companies were established to provide independent sources of revenue for the unions and to enable workers to share in the economic opportunities that had opened up for the former disadvantaged (Iheduru, 2001). NUM owns the Mineworkers' Investment Company (MIC) through the Mineworkers' Investment Trust (MIT). MIC has a net asset value of its portfolio at R2.8 billion[14]. The mission of MIC is to improve the quality of life of the members of NUM. Indeed, the MIC is a BEE company. Officially, the union claims that it will not risk a conflict of interest by investing in mining, but newspapers have over the past years revealed the contrary. A number of investments have been in conflict with living conditions for miners and NUM's income[15].

I would claim that this new trend of investment companies puts organised labour in a delicate position, since the unions are now both labour and capital workers are inadvertently owners of companies. It must be legitimate to question the consistency of such an arrangement. Iheduru (2001) refers to the above trend as *labour capitalism* defined as labour's response to changed economic and political spaces in which it operates. Moreover he claims that labour capitalism has emerged behind the backs of union membership. His approach to the growing sector of union initiated investment companies is controversial; nevertheless it is indeed relevant here and therefore needs further attention.

Neo-liberal reforms have had consequences for union finances. Retrenched workers have decreased union fees and as a result labour unions in several countries have established

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[14] http://www.mic.co.za/ (Read 15.11.12 at 16:44)
[15] http://africanarguments.org/2012/09/06/mines-malema-and-mangaung-south-africas-descent-into-a-morass-of-corruption-greed-and-factionalism-%E2%80%93-by-keith-somerville/ (Read 15.11.12 at 16:56).

business ventures to provide additional income to the union. In addition these business ventures also provided employment for the retrenched workers. In fact, white corporate South Africa has in many cases financed the establishment of new businesses by the union investment companies. Labour capitalism is regarded as an aim within the BEE ideology, thus creating a black capitalist class. Labour capitalism can be explained from two different incentives. The first is a strategy that upholds socialism gaining control over the means of production by owning the businesses. The second, in contrast to the first, sees it as a sell-out by former unionists who aim at fast tracking upward social mobility (Iheduru, 2001).

The first explanation comes across as a cursory way to look at the economic structures in society. Although, the unions can gain control over some enterprises, it will be a minimal share of the corporate sector and the union ownership of these enterprises is not likely to represent a substantial change in the segment of society that controls the means of production. As we have seen earlier, the neo-liberal policies and processes of globalisation encompasses much more than simply the access to ownership of means of production. More importantly, if the unions receive funds from the corporate sector to set up the businesses of the union investment companies, there are strings attached and it would be naïve to think that funding from the corporate sector does not come without conditions. An example of the latter is Afrikaner-owned *Sanlam insurance conglomerate* who provided a special purpose vehicle (SPV) for the take-off of *Sarhwu Investment Company*. Sanlam owns 15 per cent of the company's shares. The second perspective is a rhetoric recognised among many trade unionists, however it is difficult to prove or disprove. The question about the trade unions making money is indeed a question about the role of a trade union and whether it is able to maintain its initial role while sitting at both sides of the negotiating table.

Returning to the case of Marikana, it would be difficult to argue that both *Ubank* and *Mineworkers' Investment company* do not gain from the current economic set up around the mining sector. The question rather is if NUM intentionally practices a milder pressure on the employers due to their own interest in profit increase. Nonetheless, even though Dlamini is making a populist statement by explaining Marikana by the difference between rich and poor, he might want to step carefully in this field knowing the economic interests NUM has in the mining industry.

Another aspect to the fragmentation tendency is the substantial proportion of migrant workers employed in the mine sector. They might have lower barriers in pulling in the direction of

splinter unions due their lack of historic loyalty to NUM and COSATU. Fragmentation of NUM means a weaker NUM and inevitably a weaker COSATU. There is no doubt that both NUM and COSATU are aware of this threat as it is clearly formulated in the COSATU Statement on the Marikana massacre;

> At our congress we shall seek to strength the capacity of the federation to intervene when its affiliated unions faces problems. We shall do everything possible to prevent splits and preserve and strengthen our unity. The old slogan: "United we stand – Divided we fall" is not empty rhetoric. It is the key to our success in transforming workers' lives, building prosperous and peaceful world and preventing any more Marikanas.[16]

The issue of unity was strongly articulated throughout the COSATU congress. The aim of leaving the congress as a united front seemed to be the aim among both leadership and delegates across sectors. In fact, the rhetoric around unity was so striking that you started to wonder why this was repeated like a mantra. If you need to emphasise unity to such an extent, could there be a deficit of it?

The political report presented by Vavi to the congress, is a frank and revealing assessment of COSATU itself and the political situation it finds itself in. As mentioned earlier the political report expressed among other things a sharp critique of the policies and priorities of the government. The response by the Secretary Generals of ANC and SACP was that the report speaks as COSATU is outside the Alliance.

Webster (25.09.2012) interprets these two standpoints as if COSATU is confronted with a historic cleavage. In brief, the debate concerns the role of COSATU. Whether it on one side is a grass roots movement which focuses on work place issues and working class concerns, like childcare, or if it on the other side is an arm of the liberation movement. In other words, the trade union arm of the political movement. The latter is what we have seen above – a very common tradition in Africa. At the congress this tension could be seen indirectly through the debate on the political report. Vavi tends to be in favour of seeing COSATU as a grass roots movement rather than an extended arm of a political movement. To rephrase the point of the Secretary Generals of SACP and ANC in response to Vavi's political report: *Are you part of this liberation movement or are you a separate political project?* In this way they are making an historic point of the relation to the state (Webster, 25.09.2012).

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[16] http://www.cosatu.org.za/show.php?ID=6437 (Read 15.11.2012 at 17:44)

5.3 Sideways

In this chapter the trade union movement is discussed in relation to civil society and social movements. COSATU is here regarded as separated from civil society, not a part of it. The purpose of approaching COSATU's sideways alignment is to assess its ability to connect with a broader sphere of South African society. The sideways-axis is the third direction in which I review COSATU's strategy.

The role of the civil society and social movements

Three tendencies describe the behaviour of civil society and grass roots movements in South Africa after the transition to democracy. First, central civic and trade unions in the Apartheid struggle in the 1980s were generally absorbed into government and state institutions after the transition. Moreover, many community-based organisations (CBOs) transformed themselves into professional NGOs. They had a supporting role to the state in delivering social development and public services (Heller, 2003). Yet, these collaborative state/society relations have been strained as the government turned to neoliberalism and as they were associated with grievances of socio-economic deprivation. This has led to a development of post-Apartheid social movements, in addition to pre-existing NGOs, focusing on demands for land reform, housing, public services, HIV/Aids treatment and other socio-economic rights. There is a tendency for these movements to concentrate on "bread and butter" issues which have a link to constitutional socio-economic rights (Ballard, 2005).

Equally important, the latter movements have generally been issue-based and fragmented. Thereby their potential to build a coherent movement that can challenge national policy making has been weak (Stokke and Lier, 2009). And yet, according to COSATU the progressive civil society should have a great role in the second phase of the transition. Meanwhile COSATU has acknowledged that a general demobilisation of the people has appeared, which is the second feature;

> Most activists are no longer sure what the strategic objectives are…there is very little participation and involvement in decision and policy making…the Alliance itself has no programme (COSATU, 1997b: p. 3 inMcKinley, 2003).

The above claim was also supported by Tørres in a debate organised by the Norwegian Council for Africa on the topic *Where does South Africa go from here?* She claims that the level of involvement among the masses has declined. Indeed, some of the responsibility of the decline must lie within the civil society itself. In fact, civil society did admit that it was a

mistake to leave the responsibility to ANC and remain passive (NCA, 2012). This decline is indeed coherent with how Schmitter and O'Donnell (1986) describe the decline of civil society activism in a democratisation phase. Among other explanations they emphasised that such decline could be due to a 'movement fatigue' and the idea that the expansion of political society eats away at civil society.

The third feature is related to the increased use of state coercion. An example of this is portrayed in the documentary film *Dear Mandela.* Here shack dwellers risk eviction by the local government for so-called informal settlements. *Dear Mandela* raises the issue of violence, house demolition and forced removal of the shack dwellers. Moreover, when they resist they are met with repression from the state (Kell and Nizza, 2011). The same trend was experienced by one of my informants;

> (…) Then I became a victim. I was arrested and tortured. 11 hours chocked, kicked by a security branch. Then I was charged with instigation. Today it is coming back because today the Zuma government is charging with instigation (Moloko, 01.10. 2012).

The above quote and the examples pictured in the film are part of a general trend according to Harvey (2003). Social movements are increasingly labelled as politically controversial and even criminal. Consequently, they are marginalised from democratic politics and governance. The social movements are thereby weakened organisationally and as a result the impetus of trade unions to seek collaboration is weakened. Harvey (2003) analyses this state coercion in a post-Apartheid context. Dissenting social movements and their activists are increasingly facing what Gramsci labelled hegemony armoured by coercion. In any case, Stokke and Lier (2009) conclude from the above that brutal exercise of power by the state leads to a backlash of social movements leaning towards local community activism rather than advancing a process of scaling-up from local and inchoate militant particularisms.

If we return to South Africa, the expansive social rights embraced in the constitution are indeed encompassing and stand out on a global level. Nevertheless, these rights remain only descriptive as the majority of South Africans are deprived of basic social rights such as the right to housing and food. As these rights are not fulfilled, a reaction is expected. In the last ten years South Africa has seen a resurgence of active civil society, thus the active organisations seem to be differently composed compared to the civil society which opposed Apartheid.

In alignment with the above Grugel (2002) argues that post-transition states trying to regulate civil society activity may be partially successful. Once democratisation takes place, the types of groups that are active and their demands on the state, change. Some anti-authoritarian groups find that they are satisfied with the democratic progress whereas others are disappointed with the new role of the state and the resulting civil society divisions. Furthermore, this is a response to the changed opportunities for engaging with or against the state that democratisation implies.

> A lot of people voted for the ANC. Hardly after 2 years, 1996, ANC shifted from RPD to GEAR and it became worse. People who were employed were entrenched from work. People were evicted from their own homes. There were a lot of challenges whereby people did not have access to land. The amount of water that was promised was reduced. The electricity was reduced, then the government started making deals with the private sector to provide services. Then I stood up again to oppose that. Fortunately, from other communities people came together to oppose that. So people from other communities came out to oppose privatisation and evictions. Then we came together, realizing this is the result of privatisation. Fortunately, the anti-privatisation was formed whereby we came together to oppose privatisation. Now, I became also involved. Then with the experience with the struggle against apartheid, then I am also anti. It looks like I am always anti-anti everything (Moloko, 01.10. 2012).

Ultimately, some organisations opt for a non-confrontational policy in relation to the new democratic state. This can be viewed as responsible behaviour rather than a weakness.

5.4 Falling off the tightrope

Looking at COSATU in a historical perspective it has had significant achievements. It is by far the biggest and strongest federation in South Africa considering the member base and its political and labour rights accomplishments. Two particular achievements are: one - that it helped stalemate the Apartheid state and, two, the affiliates' succeeded in: raising wages, improved conditions of employment and the introduction of the 'rule of law' at the workplace since the mid-1980s. Moreover, it has blocked the repressive amendments to the Labour Relations Act in 1988. COSATU was one of the initiators of the RDP and in general it has filled the role as a defender of freedom of expression and democratic organisation. It has defended the need for a critical debate within the popular movement and nurtured a tradition of participatory democracy. Later they won a progressive new Labour Relations Act (Marais, 1998). I have discussed the main elements within each of the three strategies (upwards, inwards and sideways) that COSATU has embarked on in order to remain strong and gain power. In the next section I will try to connect the features of three-way analysis.

Embarking upon contradiction?

Tørres (2000) suggests that throughout the 1970/80s an increasing number of issues were raised by labour. In other words COSATU affiliates became more politicised and thereby the form of the trade union could be described as social movement unionism or political unionism. A strong link between industrial issues and politics emerged. COSATU raised issues which were outside the traditional scope of workplace concerns by addressing people's everyday struggles. The anti-VAT campaign in 1991 is an example where COSATU took on community struggles. As COSATU demanded a postponement of the implementation of VAT, they stood out as a representative of the poor. However, the alignment with the civil society was not a one-sided relationship. COSATU and its unions also mobilised the other way around, i.e. communities supported workplace struggles for instance by providing strikers with food (Tørres, 2000).

Engaging in social issues outside the workplace while aligning with the civil society made COSATU one of the most famous social movement unions in the world. A majority of my informants claim that COSATU still is one of the most progressive forces in South Africa. In profiling COSATU it is necessary to underline that they are not a homogenous group, on the contrary, they consist of affiliates from all sectors in the economy and their membership base reflects that. It would therefore be logical to expect that the membership base has diverging interests.

> One out of ten COSATU members are schoolteachers, well schoolteachers are not traditional industrial workers, they are a part of the public sector, but they are a category of workers who are earning R12-14000 a month. There are others, in farm work, security, clothing sector, what you call precarious workers, maybe they get R2500 a month. They would not have benefits; medical aid, pensions etc. (Webster, 25.09.2012).

As the trade union movement is organised across sectors it has a pluralistic base and plays an important role in South Africa. COSATU was born at a time when South Africa was going through the transition and it played a critical role in the transition. This is its historical legacy. Hence, it occupies a big space within the new political set up in South Africa whereby it is represented within social dialogue institutions, various departments and in government (Webster, 25.09.2012, Patel, 05.10.2012, Bodibe, 22.09.2012). The role it plays can be related to its attributes. COSATU is mass based and very well organised. It is able to bring the economy to a standstill. Its constituency relates to its structural power. In fact, a significant proportion of its members are members of the ANC. It has a formal channel of

communication with ANC through the Tripartite Alliance and similarly with the government through NEDLAC (Bodibe, 22.09.2012).

However, unions who align themselves with political organisations become more problematic. Moloko (01.10. 2012) relates the problem to ideology.

> The workers are agitating for socialism while ANC is capitalist. COSATU speaks the language of socialism while making deals with the capitalists. Then you are faced with a double standard (Moloko, 01.10. 2012).

Webster (25.09.2012) has a similar analysis of the above contradiction;

> COSATU presents a united policy concept based on the struggle for socialism, and yet they are deeply entrenched in the new political elite. The COSATU leadership was during the congress staying in the best hotels and driving state of the art cars. Moreover, they are in an Alliance with ANC, which is providing a space for conspicuous consumption among a small group of people(Webster, 25.09.2012).

Consequently, behind the facade of unity there is a deep contradiction on how to reconcile the rhetoric of being the voice of the working people with the fact that membership is drawn from a relatively small section of wealthier workers in the country. These workers have access to benefits like better schooling and healthcare. He underlines that one of the victories of the unions was to provide workers with medical aid. Pensions are also very important (Webster, 25.09.2012). The latter could be an indication of COSATU's priority of mobilising inwards towards the members with existing benefits. Obviously, a trade union movement must be found relevant among their ordinary members, those who pay dues. COSATU is relevant as long as they improve working conditions. If it did not address work place issues, membership would decline (Bodibe, 22.09.2012).

In other words, the strength of COSATU can be regarded as a conditional strength. Their membership base is dependent on the achievements related to work place issues, not unlike any trade union movement. Thereby, mobilising downwards seems to be inevitable.

Following the claim put forward by Webster (25.09.2012) that membership is drawn from a relatively small section of wealthier workers, some economists criticising COSATU go as far as describing the labour movement as a representation of the aristocratic class. Effectively workers are the privileged layer and because they are the privileged layer they should be more circumspect of their demands. In fact they are claiming that COSATU is looking after their own members interests and these interests are contrary to the interests of the unemployed (Habib, 18.09.2012).

Habib (18.09.2012) argues that the logic of these economists is part of a broader agenda to weaken labour regulations. As the trade union movements' interests are contrary to the interests of the unemployed, the labour regulations must be weakened in order for poor people to get jobs. A similar perspective projecting that the workers are a privileged group and a winner of the transition is put forward by Seekings and Nattrass (2006). They claim that high wage and capital-intensive strategies hurt the unskilled unemployed.

Although Seekings and Nattrass (2006) cannot be accused of wanting to increase flexible labour regulations, it must be questioned what purpose this claim should serve. It raises the question whether the wage earning middle class should be responsible for lifting the unemployed classes out of poverty by accepting a lower wage themselves and thereby release resources for job creation.

COSATU's approach to civil society alignment

Meanwhile, the 2015 Plan calls on COSATU to strengthen its emphasis on ideological contestation and political education. The plan urges for investment in internal education. To align with civil society, social movements and mass democratic movements (MDM) have been a priority in the 2015 Plan. These movements imply student movements, traditional allies, progressive civil society and other coalitions. COSATU points out that it has become more complex to have relations with new social movements as a number of them are in opposition to the ANC and indirectly to COSATU who is also a member of the Alliance. COSATU has therefore looked for new partners;

> More nuanced rights based social movements are beginning to emerge such as SECTION 27 and Equal Education campaign, which respect our independence, and are developing a healthy relationship with the Federation (COSATU, 2012b: p. 7).

COSATU aims to rebuild their traditional mass based sectorial MDM formations. They want to strengthen the communities and their organisational structures in order for them to sustain and give progressive direction to their own struggles. Here, organised workers should play a more active role in rebuilding these structures. Moreover, COSATU points out that ANC branches must act as a social movement, not as appendages of local councils.

Here we could interpret the above by claiming that COSATU wants to re-strengthen the civil society voice in order to build its power base towards ANC within the Alliance. However, as admitted they do face challenges in finding partners among the civil society. In the final chapter the question of civil society alignment will be returned to.

Member stratification

As a result of the liberalisation of the economy which was facilitated by GEAR, the member base of the trade unions has changed. Due to casualization and informalization of work, where unskilled work is outsourced, COSATU consequently represents a member base which is older, skilled, educated and inhabits secure jobs. The member base has socially changed since the beginning of 1990s (Southall and Webster, 2010).

South African society is highly intertwined between those who are: formally employed, unemployed or casual workers; an extended family can contain all of the latter groups. This differentiation among the working class has existed since the 1970s. A potential conflict between: the employed and unemployed, rural and urban based industrial workers, organised and unorganised workers, full-time or part-time contract workers, semi- and fully- skilled workers and unskilled counterparts must be recognised. Indeed, organised workers in the formal sector comprise a small portion of the total labour force while domestic workers, farmworkers, cleaning and security workers and small retail outlet workers are unorganised. Their common features are that they work in low-paid, low productivity and insecure sectors (Marais, 1998). On one hand COSATU here has a huge member potential which could imply increased power and the possibility to obtain a certain level of labour regulation within sectors which today suffer from worker exploitation. On the other hand, one might wonder why COSATU has not targeted these groups already, with the exception of NUM which has made some efforts to recruit retrenched workers (Vavi, 2013).

Stratification is also to be found within industries such as the metal industry. Here the African work force becomes more differentiated with regards to occupation and income. The staff member's main concerns were individual promotion and advancement while their blue-collar colleagues favoured mass-based and militant unionism in defence of collective

interests (ibid). Within mining the blue-collar members are disappearing. About 40 per cent of the members of NUM are in white-collar positions (Schröder, 24.09.2012).

Such conflict of interest might have consequences for the principle of solidarity within the working class movement. This observation is coherent with the view of Schröder (24.09.2012). He claims that COSATU to a large extent has abandoned blue-collar workers to the advantage of white-collar workers. Although the number of members of COSATU has increased and reached two million, the types of members have changed. The majority of COSATU members are employed in the public sector with typical white-collar jobs where the members are able to pay higher dues. At the same time blue-collar and unskilled workers from mining and manufacturing have declined from 60% in 1994 to about 36% in 2004 (Momoniat, 2012). Although he is more critical, they all point to the trend that the social base of COSATU has changed. But what does this imply? Momoniat (2012) argues that COSATU's organisation became more structured from the beginning of the 1990s onwards; however, at the same time the trade union federation also became more bureaucratic. As the number of members increased, Momoniat (2012) argues that the very nature of the organisation changed. Hierarchic structures were introduced, which on one side intended to streamline bargaining into a centralised process as well as organise unions into sectors. The downside of this reorganisation was a break in communication with rank and file members of the union. Marikana is an example of how communication channels increasingly failed. Another important aspect which Momoniat (2012) draws attention to is the way the union fees were collected. Traditionally the dues were collected by the shop stewards. This ensured accountability of the shop steward towards the rank and file members. However, accountability to the constituency is weakened because dues are now automatically paid to the union and no shop steward has to face the rank and file members. 65% of COSATU members state that there has not been a shop steward election in their workplace in the last four years (Vavi, 2013) showing that they are no longer held accountable. Meanwhile, shop stewards seemed to have shifted their loyalty in an upwards direction in the union. On one side this weakens COSATU's principle of worker control, but on the other side it might enhance the tendency of union aristocracy.

If we return to earlier discussions on the social base of COSATU we find the statement that the wage earning layer of the South African population is regarded as privileged, which points in the same direction as above. Assuming the social base within COSATU has

changed, implications must be considered. Before proceeding it must be underlined that the member base of COSATU still consists of a varied sphere of workers who have attained different levels of wages and benefits i.e. Webster's quote on wage differences within COSATU. Nevertheless, if the middle class is dominating COSATU today we can presume that COSATU's priorities are in accordance with the interests of this class. As a matter of fact, Webster and Buhlungu (2004) argue that casualization and informalisation of employment leads to a crisis of representation. The crisis occurs when organised labour, sometimes as a result of its own success, finds itself representing a well-protected, but declining core of workers while being non-representative of the wider working class. If this is the case COSATU confronts many of the same challenges experienced by trade unions in neoliberal countries such as the UK and Australia.

In fact, Beckman (2009) argues that COSATU fails to respond to a wider popular constituency, originally mobilised into a range of social movements and action groups. Normally, trade unions overcome the disjuncture between parliamentary politics and civil society to the extent that they reach out, support, and give a voice to these wider movements. Their failure to do so confirms, in this view, that unions have either been effectively incorporated into ruling-class politics or are in the hands of a labour aristocracy that is preoccupied with its own material interests and fails to involve the population at large. Labour aristocracy refers to the class of privileged workers who have higher salaries and benefits than other groups of workers; they are therefore not interested in recruiting more members to the union.. The term derives from Mikhail Bakunin who challenged the idea that organised workers are the most radical (Hodges, 2006). COSATU's drift to the right helps explain why the trade union movement has taken on or accepted aspects of the neo-liberal trajectory of South Africa. Lehulere (2003) argues that the rightward shift within COSATU has been challenged by the membership. Discussions on economic strategy have been met with ideas of socialism, however, this resistance only managed to reduce the speed with which COSATU embraced neo-liberal policies.. He explains the move to the right by a series of political and ideological defeats of the militant parts of COSATU deriving from the successive generations of the Durban strikes in 1973 and student revolt in 1976. In fact, he claims that Stalinist socialism never had the opportunity to flourish within the labour movement because of state violence against the working class. This created a state of emergency in the late 1980s and early 1990s with a wounded working class. It was precisely

this internal and international defeat of the working class that facilitated a move in a rightward direction. .

If there is truth to the above and a certain labour aristocracy is dominating COSATU, how can this perspective be understood within the theory of power? Returning to Gramsci and his idea of the historic bloc, the emerging labour aristocracy within COSATU and its proximity to the ruling class in South Africa can be evidence that certain layers in COSATU have been incorporated into the historic bloc.

Overcoming subordination or staying in convenience?

Southall and Webster (2010) discuss what unions can do to enhance their political influence within a successful liberation movement while simultaneously protecting their autonomy. As mentioned earlier they argue that COSATU felt increasingly marginalised within the Alliance over social and economic policy.

Since labour's interests in many cases are in conflict with capital's interests, and assuming that the government prioritized the leverage of capital instead of the leverage of its constituents (Habib, 18.09.2012), COSATU ought to be subordinated within the Alliance. Southall and Webster (2010) argue that as in other post-colonial states COSATU had to deal with the tensions between its ambitions to enter a constructive partnership on behalf of workers and the tendency of the government to prioritise national development before workers' interests. By emphasising national development ANC chose the strategy of GEAR and defended their prioritisation with the following arguments in the document *The State and Social Transformation*:

> Economic globalisation …imposes a certain surrender of a nation state's control over many areas including currency and fiscal policies, environmental control and the effect of the new international division of production and labour…(ANC, 1996: p.24 in McKinley, 2003)

Referring to the above arguments, in this case it meant prioritising capital's interests in the expense of labour, in order to encourage investment to finally get the economy back on its feet. In fact, the above statement meant that the government intentionally opened up for an increased pressure on labour rights by allowing the new international division of production and labour to take root in South Africa.

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Nevertheless, the ANC congress in Polokwane in 2007 signalised a certain redistribution of power within the Alliance and set the stage for new priorities within the government. However, was the power enough to change the trajectory of the neo-liberal agenda?

During the ANC National General Council in Durban in September 2010 COSATU conducted an internal debate on their continued relationship with the ANC which was published. It was a discussion on the problems facing South Africa. The paper which was subtitled 'The Alliance at Crossroads – the battle against a predatory elite and political paralysis' warned against the corruption which permeates the government and the country. The paper was a harsh critique against certain layers within ANC. It named South Africa a predatory state where 'systemic creation of a network and patronage and corruption' was evident. Further they claimed that corruption was rooted in the mechanism where ANC members' access to political patronage was the only route out of poverty. ANC youth league and the black business elite were pointed out as the predatory elite (Plaut and Holden, 2012).

COSATU's own analysis of the ANC government not only launched campaigns against corruption, but also raised the question of whether they might establish an alternative left-wing party. The latter is indeed not a new discussion, but an alternative that has constantly been raised throughout the years. A phrase from the call was formulated as following;

> Walk out of the Alliance and call on the SACP to contest political power or start a new working class Party that would unite labour, SACP, social movements, civil society formations and the left wing political formations committed to the radical transformation and socialism. Under this scenario COSATU acts with other to challenge the ANC in power (Plaut and Holden, 2012: p.80).

This did indeed not become policy. However, the uncovered critique is worth regarding. On one side the threat to withdraw from the Alliance could have served as leverage. However, knowing that this is an alternative that has been discussed for a long time, the leverage might not be that strong. Moreover the statement recognised that the 2015 Plan of COSATU joining ANC *en masse* had already failed. They also recognised that swelling the ranks of ANC was a wrong strategy when the initial aim was to lead the ANC in another direction. Claiming that even ANC members play a minimal role in defining strategy and therefore swelling the ranks alone would have been ineffective (Plaut and Holden, 2012).

Even though COSATU claim that they fail to influence ANC, Habib (2012) points to Polokwane and asserts that COSATU's and SACP's leverage increased since they provided a significant share of the institutional platform bringing Zuma to power. He adds that business still has a substantial power and leverage, but the power of business that prevailed under Mbeki has eroded and opened up for a more equitable balance of power. Yet, comparing COSATU's own perception of its power with the perception of Habib (2012) there seems to be a diverging view.

Returning to Southall and Webster (2010), there appears to be inherent strains in the relation between labour backed ruling-parties and organised labour in late industrialising and developing countries in a context of globalisation and neo-liberalism. Where it is emphasised a continued cooperation between party and unionmight only be realised if labour is subordinated by the governing party (Southall and Webster, 2010).

The question is how sustainable such subordination is, if the policies of the government put severe pressure on labour regulations and continuously dismiss the social development agenda of the trade unions. On the other hand, Beckman (2009) argues that African trade unions are centrally placed in providing the basis for popular representation due to the centrality of wage labour in the resuscitation of the "national project" . Unions have a special place in the defence and promotion of national development policies because of the way in which wage labour is located at the very cutting edge of technological transformation of society. They are capable, he argues, of defending a national development project in opposition to neo-liberal globalisation.

Recognising a possible crisis

COSATU has a comprehensive approach to what they call a multiple emerging crisis. This is a crisis which has four dimensions. It applies to the state, to the organisational status of ANC, it is a social crisis (poverty, inequality and unemployment) and finally it is a crisis of political legitimacy. Uncontested evidence of the state being dysfunctional is the fact that three out of 36 government departments received clean audits in 2010/11 and only 13 out of 343 local governments in 2011/12. The textbook scandal in Limpopo is an example of serious corruption on the province level of the state.

Within the crisis of the state we find an institutional crisis linked to non-delivery which regards working class communities. The lack of delivery applies to electricity provision, housing, public transport, public health and public education. Privatisation of basic services along with underfunding of public services has shifted the burden to the working class.

Hart (2002) links the neoliberal model of growth with the history of transformation of the municipalities since Apartheid. Deracialisation and local level development has been hard to separate from the unfavourable effects a neoliberal growth model has had on workers.
The local state has gone from being a provider of basic services to becoming an insurer. This labelling can be illustrated by how water and electricity grids have been extended to millions of new households during the ANC-government, while over ten million households have been a subject to water and electricity cut-offs due to non-payment. This is the change from a statist delivery model to a neoliberal one (Lier, 2005).

> A crisis of poverty, inequality and unemployment, reproduced by the structural features of our economy. This systematic crisis is function of inherited economic relations, but also worsened by inappropriate neo-liberal policies, and policies focused on promoting elite economic empowerment. It is now accepted, in our broad movement, in and government, that even higher rates of economic growth along this problematic growth path will not succeed in addressing these challenges, but will continue to produce the same structural problems which generate the triple crisis; and that we need to embark on a different growth path. It is now agreed in principle that there is a need for a ´radical' shift in economic policies (COSATU, 2012b: p. 9).

The contents of policy shifts are contested within the movement and state. Although the Polokwane resolutions provided clear support for "the radical shift". A change of conservative macro-economic policies is resisted by a powerful bloc in the political leadership and bureaucracy. The result is now an economic policy paralysis and failure to drive a coherent agenda.

Moreover, COSATU is worried about the trend in opinion polls showing people's disillusion with the current leadership. A part of this trend is to be found among the youth who find themselves alienated in society and are increasingly politically demobilised. This can mean that a growing number of the electorate do not intend to vote in 2014 (COSATU, 2012c).
If this is the case, it is a threat that COSATU, SACP and ANC must take seriously in order to keep their formal legitimacy in South African society. However, on the other side such an observation of a possible threat might serve to the best interest of the Alliance. Namely, that it gives them an incentive to prepare for a stronger mobilisation of the young population.

6. WHAT DOES THE CASE SAY TO THEORY?

6.1 Labelling COSATU - a social movement union?

An assessment of the perception of COSATU's characteristics in South African society might be valuable to further understand the developmental function of the trade union federation. Although, I do not claim that COSATU must have the attributes of a social movement union to act as a development agent, social movement unionism does provide potential leverage due to its broad representation. This leverage might be the weapon which can challenge power.

A question which I raised to all of my interviewees was whether they considered COSATU a social movement union. The response was clearly polarised where two contrasting views were dominant. Bodibe (22.09.2012), the former director of National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI) affiliated to COSATU, claims that it is the most organised formation in civil society. Moreover, COSATU define themselves as a SMU. This is explained through its focus on both social issues as well as traditional work place issues. Affiliates and all of my informants from COSATU confirm that COSATU can be labelled a SMU. Although the context has changed, COSATU has not retreated its function since the 1980s, however, there is adaptation of the social unionism to the reality of today. He gives an example of COSATU engaging in social issues;

> Many NGOs, when they have an issue that they want a mass organisation to take up, they turn to COSATU. One example is the Secrecy bill and HIV/AIDS – the treatment action campaign. The government was forced to supply treatment (Bodibe, 2012).

Contrary to Bodibe (22.09.2012), Webster (25.09.2012) describes COSATU as acting in the space between business unionism and political unionism. Thereby, COSATU has changed its strategic place in society from being a social movement union towards operating in the space between political unionism and business unionism.

> In the 1980's it was a movement that mobilised and was linked up to the society. So we call that SMU. In the process of transition to democracy it has moved closer to political unionism, closer to the state and alliance. Between organisation and market you find what you call business unionism, like you have in the USA. There is some kind of element which is moving it in the direction of business unionism, but there are some elements which is pulling it back. It is the rank and file workers. That is the tension. So the leadership within ANC, SACP and the President of COSATU, Dlamini, are heaving invested in this. Vavi (Secretary General of COSATU) wants to go back to its roots, connect with the movement, revitalize it- go back to basic and become a stronger voice. Marikana captures you in the middle. When you disconnect from the grass root, you are losing your members. There are sections that have gone to the investment companies. It is three way forces pulling in different directions (Webster, 25.09.2012).

This view is contradictory to how COSATU representatives are describing their own movement. Nevertheless, the academic informants as well as the COSATU affiliated informants do agree that COSATU is currently the most progressive social formation in society. The representatives of civil society, however, no longer see COSATU as a progressive social formation.

In accordance with the above, Lambert (2002) stresses that COSATU's campaign against casualization was premised on a strong alliance with community-based organisations. Indeed he relates this alliance to the fact that COSATU's opposition to the Apartheid regime was characterised by a strong alliance with community organisations that developed effective campaigns. Yet, post-Apartheid COSATU has been accused of having a one sided approach to community based alignment. They tend to ask for support from community based formations in certain selected cases, but fail to respond on requests from the latter when they need support from the trade unions (Pithouse, 23.11.2012). Campaigns against casualization concern the members of COSATU directly and an alliance with community based organisations in this matter is not surprising. Therefore, it does not have to be an indication of COSATU acting as a SMU.

If we follow the assumption that COSATU has moved closer to the state and the alliance, this might be a strong argument for claiming that COSATU has left the trajectory of social movement unionism. On the other hand Webster (25.09.2012) stresses that the rank and file workers do pull the confederation back towards the interests of the grass root. Despite this internal force the general perception among the civil society informants can be summed up as;

> After 1994 that relationship of the CBO and COSATU is gone. It is no longer as during apartheid. Because there are organisations that opposing water privatisation, or opposing electricity privatisation. They are protesting on their own in community. And you don't see COSATU coming down on the ground supporting struggle on the ground It is not like before. Whereby the civic movement were entitled to call for stay away supported by the labour movement. There was that relationship during the struggle against apartheid. Because when we are saying as CBO: we are calling for a stay away. That call was supported by the labour movement. But today the labour movement will discuss themselves. We are not part of that. Why? Because they are part of the government. They were not part of the government during apartheid..and it is important to support the struggles. But today you wont see COSATU much in the communities. They focus only in the factory politics. Labour issues, more than the civic politics (Moloko, 01.10. 2012).

An explanation to why COSATU is not seen on the ground is put forward by Patel (05.10.2012). He claims that COSATU is very small on a grass roots level. However, he underlines that the low presence at community level does not have to be an indicator of COSATU not doing anything for the larger population of South Africa. At the same time in the cases where COSATU is claiming that they were present at community level is not proof that COSATU is a social movement union. Meanwhile COSATU supposedly has a low level of organisation at the grass roots level and has a low level of organisation around social issues, political issues and economic issues. For all that, there are organisations among the well off. COSATU is often faced with opinions claiming that they are not representing the interests of their constituency, yet that is from organisations representing other constituencies.

Another aspect of COSATU's relationship to the community and civil society is the level of social support. COSATU previously enjoyed widespread support in civil society but this is beginning to decline. Parallel to the latter decline, the increasing splinter unions are taking root and this is perceived as a general threat to COSATU's support base (Fakir, 25.09.2012). One can argue that the splinter unions challenge COSATU on two levels. First, by contributing to a fragmentation of COSATU, and secondly by contesting their support on a community level. According to Fakir (25.09.2012) COSATU will face an increasing number of unions that split from the traditional COSATU affiliates, taking place mainly within public service, mining, transport and the chemical sector. This trend might lead to a new clash in society between the mobilisation on the basis of social movement unionism and the more worker-based unionism that some of these splinter unions are categorised by. Some of these unions carry a particular brand or kind of politics that create the clash. As a result of the commitment to continuity which was expressed at the congress, COSATU is facing pressure from splinter unions for not representing the workers to the extent that they should be. Thus, they are not placing sufficient pressure on employers and the government to deliver on the social goals and goods they promised. And overall they appear to me much less accountable and much less responsive to their constituencies.

In the case of the mining sector and the union members leaving NUM because NUM failed to respond to the workers' demands, Fakir (25.09.2012) claims that the latter was not an issue. Due to encompassing demands put forward by the workers (improved working

conditions, higher wages, and better compliance with the Mining Charter[17]) the shop stewards were faced with a delicate balancing act. Negotiations are often viewed by employers as costs which they must balance up against the consequence of cutting jobs. It takes time to come to an agreement when these conflicting interests are on the table. In other words, the NUM negotiators were not unresponsive, rather responsible (Fakir, 25.09.2012). As we have seen in the case of Marikana some of the criticisms are related to the difference between the leadership and the general members of NUM which stems for NUM being a part of the capitalist system in South Africa. The critics are accusing the leadership of NUM for enjoying high salaries and other benefits related to their interaction with the political and economic elite through trust funds. The fact that the NUM members have recognised the level of enrichment among the leaders might not have mitigated their demands for improved working conditions and wages. In short, you cannot expect workers to lower their expectations when the leaders who represent them benefit from the workers being organised while the members themselves live in very poor conditions. Adding to the aspect above, polarisation between leaders and members within the trade unions might lead to a weakened ability to mobilise. Consequently, there might be a chance that employers are willing to leave corporatist structures in order to pursue a traditional neoliberal strategy of union busting (Catchpowle and Cooper, 2003).

In assessing whether COSATU has the attributes of a social movement union, we have detected four tendencies above. First, COSATU is seen as the most progressive social formation in the country due to their focus on social issues outside the workplace, secondly COSATU has moved closer to the state and the Alliance and therefore acts more in between the space of political and business unionism, third COSATU has a low level of organisation on a grass roots level and their support on a community level is in decline, and finally, the increase in splinter unions can be an indication of the resentment towards the social distance within the unions, moreover this fragmentation can lead to a clash in society between worker-based unionism and the social movement unionism.

Although the COSATU congress restated COSATU's commitment to SMU through their extensive focus on social issues (Fakir, 25.09.2012), a brief review of the composite resolutions from the affiliates provides a focus on internal strengthening politically and

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[17] http://www.bullion.org.za/MediaReleases/Downloads/Amended_of_BBSEE_Charter.pdf (Read 01.12.12 at 17:14)

organisationally. They emphasised the protection of workers' rights like protection of the pension system, except from a few resolutions calling for economic transformation, food security, health and improved education(COSATU, 2012a). In other words, the social profile was not at the forefront in the compilation of resolutions.

Returning to the issue of civil society orientation Barchiesi (2004) describes a new generation of community movements which open up a political space. The social movements have a greater outreach and have grown into a potent and decisive force in shaping the political agenda and strategies of the state. They have shown cracks, lines of fissure and potential basis of anti-systemic support in what, on the surface, seems an almost monolithic political mandate for the ruling party. Furthermore, the political discourse (dominated by the ANC) initiating ideology emphasising *transformation* and *nation* has been questioned by the new movements. As we have discussed earlier the national democratic direction became the dominant ideology within the Alliance and consequently for COSATU, resulting in a down-play of the interests of the labour movement.

Political discourse centred on *transformation* and *nation* is by many seen as the hegemonic discourse. This discourse is now being challenged by the concept "politics of the poor" which derives from the community based protests taking the form of direct action and re-appropriation. Such strategy is a part of the repertoire of social movements (Barchiesi, 2004).

These movements which can be seen as horizontal and pluralist are in general in opposition to the politics of the government and thereby the ANC and the Alliance since their protests target issues where the government has failed, especially in service delivery. In understanding COSATU's level of alignment with the grass roots dimension we must detect their relation to these new community based movements. On the question whether COSATU is a SMU Bodibe (22.09.2012) responds that many NGOs turn to COSATU when they have an issue that they want a mass organisation to address, like the Secrecy bill or the Treatment Action campaign. He gives an impression of COSATU being quite responsive to the civil society. Besides, Jordhus-Lier (2012a) underlines that COSATU launched nation-wide anti-privatisation strikes in 2000, 2001 and 2002. At the same time COSATU is accused of being dismissive of the social movements described above (Pithouse 2012, Barchiesi 2004 & Jordhus-Lier 2012). The reason is not that they disagree in case, in fact the demands of these social movements were in line with the progressive political agenda of the union movement.

However, their form of action, namely using unpredictable methods and confrontational political approaches threatened the responsible image of the trade union movement (Jordhus-Lier, 2012a). Indeed, in the wake of the Seattle demonstrations in 1999 COSATU did recognise the progressive elements in the protests against international economic institutions, however they did characterise these new social movements as a "motley crew" without central organisation, or common agenda which exposes the dangers of being co-opted (Barchiesi, 2004).

COSATU's rejection of an alignment with the new community-based social movements that have occurred in the past decade can support the argument that COSATU has distanced themselves from the grass roots level. Nonetheless, what can be claimed is that the national liberation ideology is seriously going through a credibility crisis and is being challenged by these new social movements. Recognising the above rejection of these movements could at the same time confirm that COSATU affirms its loyalty to the Alliance and the established manner or political discourse. This does not mean that COSATU agrees with and supports all the policies of the ANC as leader of the Alliance, but rather that they may have been incorporated into the structures of the historic bloc led by ANC. Furthermore, as we have discussed above the development of the BEE strata and its interaction with the political elite might be another argument of same incorporation strategy, here used to ease the racial dimension within the economic elite.

In an attempt to assess whether COSATU is acting as a social movement union we have highlighted the aspects above. By applying the theoretical prerequisites in the introduction, the case seems to be drifting away from the label social movement unionism. If we return to Lambert (2002) a combination of the following must be in place: an enduring long term alliance with other social movements which challenge the dominant structures of power and reproduction of ideology by its issue-based approach which attracts a wide social spectrum of its citizens to its cause and act collectively to challenge social institutions or corporations. If we assume that there is truth to the claims above, COSATU would not fit the description put forward by Lambert (2002). The most outstanding proof would be that COSATU does not enjoy an alliance with other social movements. Still, that does not say that they do not cooperate with elements of civil society. Yet, as claimed above they fail to attract a wide social spectrum of its citizens to its cause. If we apply Stokke (2007a) definition of social movement unionism he as well stresses that the concept implies a community-oriented

strategy where the concept of who the working people are is broad. Moreover it breaks down the oppositions between workplace and community, economic and political struggles and formal sector workers and the working poor. To some extent one can say that the social policies of COSATU would qualify within breaking the oppositions between economic and political struggles, but as we have highlighted above the focus on protecting the rights of the formal –sector workers seems to be prioritised at the expense of the working poor and the unemployed due to the possible need for COSATU to mobilise downwards and satisfy its members. Finally, Lambert (2002) underlines that the distinction between political and social movement unionism is that although both types contains certain characteristics of social movement unionism, the political unionism recognises a subordination of unions to political parties. The latter tendency is indeed confirmed above by Southall and Webster (2010) as they argued that the centrality of the political parties to the transition process placed COSATU in a subordinate position.

Following these conditions one could claim that COSATU does not fully fit into the definition of a social movement union, but does indeed have certain features of a SMU. Actually, there has been a shift in COSATU from SMU in the 1980s to political unionism after ANC came into power towards a social unionism that aims at combining popular mobilisation and political partnership (Marais, 2011). As mentioned earlier, in the period between late 1980s and early 1990s COSATU emphasized the central role of mass mobilisation as the main strategy to realise its programmatic goals. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that COSATU's focus in this period was dominated by the anti-Apartheid struggle. In emphazising Fairbrother (2008) point that social movement unionism is dependent on an upsurge of social struggle, then COSATU might be dependent on the latter in order to function as a SMU. In that case, Fairbrother (2008) might be right in his claim that this kind of unionism is periodically determined. Nevertheless, eventhough similar social struggles have not appeared post-Apartheid, critics of COSATU being a SMU have claimed that the federation have not responded to call from mass democratic movements to join the upsurge.

Buhlungu (2010) describe the *paradox of victory* within the trade union movement in South Africa. As unions have experienced a strong membership growth in the post-Apartheid era they have at the same time failed to provide political education of these members which has

resulted in a de-politicisation of the organised workforce. As a result of careerism, a drain of union leaders has taken place. Moreover, he agrees with those who claimed above that COSATU has downplayed alliances with potential social movements since it was regarded as incompatible to the alliance with ANC. In contrast, rather than being the voice of the poor majority, some argue that COSATU has left social movement unionism and failed to recruit casually employed and unemployed. This has led to a crisis of representation as we have discussed above. However, there are exceptions to this trend if we turn to unionism on a local level. South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) is an example of the latter (Jordhus-Lier, 2012b). Although, COSATU pushed policies in the Alliance which benefited the unemployed like the Basic Income Grant (BIG) that implicated a redistribution of resources from the formally employed to the unemployed, there is a structural gap between organised labour and the poor that makes such an alliance unlikely (Jordhus-Lier, 2012b).

Assuming there is a crisis of representation within COSATU due to the membership base increasingly consist of relatively well-off workers in formal sectors, Consequently, COSATU's priorities might change in order to satisfy the interests of the dominating layer of members. The fight against casualization can be an indicator. Recognizing that the Alliance has given COSATU political influence and the recognition of workers' organisational rights, yet it has not supported the workers in the struggle against workplace restructuring and economic liberalisation . Hence COSATU is losing ground in an increasingly informal labour force, but the erosion of standard employment relationships in South Africa means an erosion of the traditional base of unionism.

Next I will look at the potentials for aligning with the representatives of the unemployed and working poor, namely sideways with the community-based new social movements.

6.2 Possible alignment with community-based new social movements?

Many of my informants take an alignment with the civil society for granted. In fact they argue that COSATU has a strong alliance with civil society today. On the contrary, other informants claim first that COSATU is not present on the local level and, secondly, that they do not respond to requests from civil society to join in on campaigns.

If we look at the basic preconditions for broad alliances, Cox (1993) argues that policies which cut into transfer payments to deprived social groups and generate high unemployment, open the prospects of a broad alliance of the disadvantaged against the sectors of capital and labour which find common ground in international production and the monopoly-liberal world order.

Furthermore, on the coalition Caroll and Ratner (1994) argue that if there is to be a counter-hegemony capable of undermining the dominant discursive formation, it will be necessary to build a coalition of movements and groups that transcend single-issue and sectorial concerns. Assuming that COSATU shall be part of such a coalition they might need to mitigate their worker-based agenda, sectorial concerns, and merge their already well-developed social agenda with the agendas of their possible partner movements in their grievances against the government. While this might be a prerequisite, Schröder (24.09.2012) argues that COSATU is on the road towards collapse. In fact he claims that COSATU has outplayed its role as it has become more representative of the wealthier section in society. The possibility to align with other social movements also seems unlikely;

> Marikana has been exceptional for the political significance of Marikana again. Large sections of workers and the working class are saying openly that the ANC is the party of the rich. It is part of that process that convinces me that COSATU is finished. COSATU can't continue to play this role of trying to confuse and disarm the working class with this notion that the ANC is anything other than the party of the rich. Time is up. (…) If you go to the mass democratic movements, for about ten years they have seen COSATU as a class enemy. In the struggle on housing, COSATU don't support them, in the struggle around electricity privatisation, COSATU don't support them. They see COSATU as a privileged elite. It has long been that suspicion within the social movements, applying to both COSATU and ANC. But what Marikana has done is that it has emboldened organised workers, both inside and outside COSATU, to say that this federation is not our federation of workers (Schröder, 24.09.2012).

Returning to Caroll and Ratner (1994) and presuming that COSATU are to be a part of the counter-hegemony, their political capacity must not be restricted to target concerns that apply to a relatively well-off strata of the population. In order to be in a position of offense, (meaning that they are able to demand structural changes in order to fulfil a social agenda), COSATU must align with a broader constituency through social movements. This challenges the other part - the new social movements, to meet organised labour with better coordination, development of a joint platform and increased coherence within their political discourse. A coalition with the new social movements can help them regain their profile of representing the broader masses, as for now, like some have argued they are facing a crisis of

representation. A derail from the agenda of focusing on middle class issues, like e-tolling, is then required. The well-off strata within COSATU must therefore be ready to make concessions to the benefit of both the rank and file, but also the broader constituents linked to the social movements. Nevertheless, assuming that Schröder (24.09.2012) is right, COSATU must first regain their confidence among mass democratic movements.

Approaching the aspect of the social movements on possible alignment with the working class, the following might also serve as a precondition;

> Social movements may or may not align themselves with some aspect of working class identity, but in any case capitalism's totalizing dynamic is likely to be a common extra-discursive factor in their multiform struggles. To the extent that these struggles incorporate a resistance to the power of capital in some way, there is a strong basis in their practice for counter-hegemonic coalition formation. Such common ground need not to be the sole basis for pursuing progressive alliances, but it is likely to prove especially durable in sustaining such coalitions across successive conjunctures (Caroll and Ratner, 1994: p. 18)

However, Neo-Gramscian theory recognises that the radical-democratic character of new social movements places them in conspicuous opposition to the status quo. Moreover, their ideological and political diversity renders them an unpredictable and 'contradictory battlefield in the struggle for a new hegemony (Caroll and Ratner, 1994). If this is the case, and still assuming a coalition between these movements and labour, then COSATU is either required to denounce themselves from their involvement in the current historic bloc and join the struggle for a new hegemony or these new social movements must moderate themselves and cooperate on the premises of organised labour. Thus, running the risk of co-optation.

6.3 Accountability and sources of power

As the leaderships in unions have taken part in government structures and in bargaining councils they tend to be influenced by the corporatist mentality and approach. Hence, their loyalty towards the government might be higher than if they were not a part of the circuits of political power. Unions increasingly remove themselves from the proximity to the needs of the members, which means that they might be less adhered to. As mentioned above 60% of COSATU members are not satisfied with the wage level COSATU is negotiating.

The trade union movement does have access to power, but who the sources of power are, determines where they have their loyalty. Through the three-way analysis I have discussed

examples of sources of power which COSATU seem to enjoy. Their main source of power is still their number of members which both provides them with economic resources and legitimacy. Other sources of power which have emerged in the past years are politically and economically related. First, COSATU's institutional involvement with political power gives them both access to decision making bodies, but also entraps them in responsibility. Second, the growth of investment funds and other corporate investments gives COSATU access to economic resources and interaction with the corporate sector. In some cases, COSATU might risk having interests at both sides of the bargaining table. The involvement with investment funds brings up further challenges of contradiction. In the case of NUM's investment in UBANK, where 60% of the microcredit clients are mineworkers, it is accurate to claim that NUM is benefitting from their members' need of loans. Simply put, the low pay of the miners makes them take up loans which keep them in debt. The irony is that those who benefit from these loans are in fact the miners' representatives in NUM. As the miners suffer under being the sources of income to UBANK, it is appropriate to question NUM's investment in the latter.

Applying Robinson (2000) types of unionism by distinguishing between an autonomous or subordinate location, it can seem as though COSATU is moving further into a subordinate position. I argue this on the basis of COSATU now having adhered to the interests of economic power structures, like the investment funds, in addition to the political power of ANC as part of the Alliance.

The leadership of the unions and COSATU have increasingly become subordinate as they change the power block they are accountable towards (from rank and file towards political and economic structures).Marikana and the revolt by the rank and file indicates the mechanisms that Lukes (1974) sets as precondition for compliance to domination. These preconditions are becoming weaker or are not taken seriously enough by the power holders (here the union leadership). In other words, as the rank and file observes the conspicuous consumption by the leadership the urge to remain moderate in wage bargaining no longer seems credible. The grievances of the rank and file are increasing as the power exercised by those more dominant becomes overt.

Another example of the above is the case of *Aquarius mines* in *Kroondal* and *Marikana* in 2009 where 4000 miners were dismissed. The NUM began to be perceived as the enemy of

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the rank and file. A wage agreement (concluded with *Implats* in 2011) saw rock drill operators and those in lower-paid positions lose out, but higher-grade workers got an 18% wage increase. NUM negotiators and all skilled workers, benefited from this arrangement (Momoniat, 2012).

The latter tendency can fuel the possibility of future Marikanas or a silent union fragmentation. Therefore, the sources of power that COSATU chooses to adhere to can influence their ability to remain powerful in the future.

Looking at accountability in a broader political perspective in South Africa, the lack of a responsive opposition to ANC does have consequences for the level of accountability in the South African society (Habib, 18.09.2012). Moreover, is the access to politicians and the space to have an open political debate decreasing (Pithouse, 23.11.2012). The failure of NUM in responding to its members at Marikana can be linked to the question of accountability in general. NUM had committed itself to the goals of the bargaining councils, and recognised that these councils were composed of government representatives. , The absence of a left wing party (who would probably support the miners' strike at Marikana) could trigger NUM and the bargaining councils to be more responsive to the claims of the miners and thereby more accountable.

Nevertheless, Habib (24.09.2012) argues that the power relations have varied in the post-Apartheid period. After 1994 the power was mostly in favour of business, but by the year 2000 civic life began to re-emerge and that started to slightly increase the power of civil society. After the ANC congress in Polokwane a greater equality of power emerged and manifested itself through the New Growth Path and the possibilities of the Industrialisation Plan. The shift to the left or the re-emergence of leverages has been a result of the re-emergence of social struggles.

7. CONCLUSION

This thesis is concerned with the trade union movement in South Africa and their ability to fulfil a social agenda. Theory on power set the stage for which the analysis could play out. COSATU has throughout the thesis been the subject of study. I have analysed COSATU both in relation to its historical base and its relevance today. I believe that the method of assessing COSATU in a three-way dimension has made it clearer to the reader to comprehend the complexity of COSATU's scope. My case findings indicate that COSATU faces challenges in various relations both internally and externally. In fact, it seems that COSATU does not find its role within the Alliance.

The text visited three research questions and the first was; w*hat were the circumstances driving, the premises involved in, and institutional results of, and the achievements of the ANC-COSATU alliance?* I have tried to show the challenges and historical events that formed the conditions for broader anti-Apartheid movement prior to the transition. COSATU faced different challenges in the early 1990s. There was a tendency within the confederation that the principle of worker control was deviated. Fewer shop stewards received adequate education and training while at the same time COSATU suffered from a brain drain as many skilled unionists joined the ANC- government. This might have weakened COSATU in labour negotiations, but does not have to be an indicator of why COSATU came into a subordinated position within the Alliance. COSATU entered the Alliance as an equal player with an independent power base, but probably suffered a disappointment when they were excluded from the negotiations on the Convention for a democratic South Africa. However, they might have overrated the power they gained as one of the leading organisations in the anti-Apartheid struggle while ANC was banned and in exile. COSATU's logic in joining the Alliance was their commitment to the transformation of South Africa through active participation in the *people's government* on both top and low levels. Trade unionists were urged to occupy positions within bureaucracy and to become members of the ANC in order to have direct influence on all levels of the transition. Soon COSATU became a partner in NEDLAC which is an indicator of the trade union movement entering a corporatist relationship with the state and business sector.

Labour's response to globalisation and neo-liberal macroeconomic policies has been a two-track strategy. The strategy is on one side as opposition, acting as COSATU stood outside the

Aliance and on the other side, remaining a partner to the governing ANC. The converging tendency of capital and labour is by Webster (1998) referred to as strategic unionism or democratic corporatism. As RDP amounted for the promises of the Alliance to the electorate, one can claim that these have not been fulfilled. The majority of the black population live in poverty. The main reason for this is that the programme was abandoned by the government and replaced by the neoliberal GEAR programme. This has led to a growing dissatisfaction within COSATU, especially among the rank and file. Nevertheless, the strategy to obtain more influence within the Alliance seems to be the same today as when COSATU first joined the Alliance in the beginning of the 1990s. The strategy is to infiltrate the ANC with rank and file members of COSATU under the slogan *swell the ranks of ANC*. If this remains the only strategy to gain more power, COSATU should evaluate the gains from their first attempt.

The second research question asked - *to what extent can the label social movement unionism apply to COSATU today?* If COSATU is measured on its policy dimensions, it can be regarded as a progressive social formation with policies that reaches beyond the work place and far into the concerns of the unemployed poor population. However, due to the concessions that COSATU has made within the corporative model they have joined, their ability to prioritise and stress the social policies have proved weak. Moreover, their alignment with broader social movements is limited.

I have argued that the member stratification within COSATU is changing. Although COSATU today has reached 2.1 million members it has also lost many of the blue-collar members. The increase in members was generally found to be among white-collar members. Due to the changed composition of the members the interests of the leadership and the rank and file seems to diverge.

The final research question asked was - *what can a three-way balancing act tell us about labour's ability to represent its members and pursue their interests as well as their extended social agenda?* COSATU seem to prioritise inwards, but only to a certain layer of the membership, namely the better off white-collar workers. The blue-collar and other low-paid sectors seem deprived of influence and started to communicate their grievances. The extreme result of this can be interpreted through the upsurge in Marikana. A consequence was a fragmentation within NUM and the member fluctuation towards *Associated Miners and Construction Union* (AMCU). The threat of fragmentation and a possible spread to other

sectors is reflected in COSATU's outspoken aim of standing together in unity, although they have a diverging approach to the causes of Marikana. Whether the feeling of unity is real within the confederation, the critique of the government in the political report of COSATU brings out the question what role COSATU plays or rather wants to play in relation to the state. Distancing themselves from ANC might serve COSATU and NUM in the contest for regaining their lost members and perhaps prevent further union fragmentation in other sectors.

Within COSATU the voice of the blue-collar rank and file seems to be ignored. An indication of this was found at the Marikana case where the union leaders chose to adhere to the bargaining councils instead of the demands of the miners. It seems that the principle of worker control has been deviated. As increased loyalty to the Alliance can have led to a closer relationship between the union leaders and corporate and political elites, the power trade unions receive from such relationships seems to be on the expense of the power that lies in broad mass mobilisation. A sideways alignment with social movements might stand in contrast to an upwards alignment since a broad part of the social movements of South Africa have become sceptical to the role of labour in close relation to ANC.

Consequently, it seems that COSATU's power is dependent on its potential to mobilise and lead major strikes which is in line with Lukes (1974) claim that power is a capacity. Being part of corporatist structures constrains labour from using mobilisation as a power tool. Therefore, as COSATU might be hindered from using its capacity they might be deprived of exercising power, they remain subordinate. Recognizing that the conditions for the working class is dependent on the power they hold, they must, in the contest for power, continue fighting lions.

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INTERVIEW LIST

Date and location	Name	Position	Representing	Time	Duration	Means
15.08.2012, NPA Offices, Oslo	Ms. Liv Tørres	Secretary General Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)	PhD: Amandla – Ngawethu! The Political Impact of South African Trade Unionism	13:00:00	1 hour	Notes
07.09.2012, University of Oslo	Mr. Kristian Stokke	Professor Department of Sociology and Human Geography	University of Oslo	12:15:00	1 hour, 30 min	Notes
29.08.2012, University of Oslo	Mr. David Jordhus-Lier	Associate Professor - Department of Sociology and Human Geography	University of Oslo	10:00:00	1 hour	Notes
18.09.2012 University of Johannesburg	Mr. Adam Habib	Professor and Deputy Vice Chancellor	University of Johannesburg	14:20:00	43 min	Digital recordings
20.09.2012, Midrand, Gauteng	Female regional representative of SAHAWU	SAHAWU	South African Health and Allied Workers Union (SAHAWU)	17:00:00	17:20:00	Notes
20.09.2012 Midrand, Gauteng	Mr. Rudi Dicks	Professor and Deputy Vice Chancellor	National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI)	12:10:00	49 min	Digital recordings
22.09.2012 Thembisa township, East Rand, Gauteng	Mr. Oupa Bodibe		Former Director of NALEDI	12:22:00	50 min	Digital recordings
24.09.2012 Saxonwold, Johannesburg	Mr. Adam Habib	Professor and Deputy Vice Chancellor	University of Johannesburg	11:15:00	1 hour, 21 min	Digital recordings
24.09.2012 Rosebank Mall, Johannesburg	Mr. Ighsaan Schröder	Director	Casual Workers Advice Office	14:10	1 hour, 54 min	Digital recordings
25.09.2012 EISA offices, Richmond, Johannesburg	Mr. Ebrahim Fakir	Manager of Governance Institutions	Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa (EISA)	11:25:00	1 hour, 32 min	Digital recordings
25.09.2012 Universtity of Witswatersrand, Johannesburg	Mr. Edward Webster	Professor of Sociology and Research Professor in SWOP	Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP)	14:03:00	1 hour, 9 min	Digital recordings
28.09.2012,	Ms. Patricia	National Gender	South African	10:30:00	1 hour, 16	Digital

SACCAWU Offices, Braamfontein, Johannesburg	Appolis-Nyman	Co-ordinator for SACCAWU	Commercial, Catering and Allied workers union (SACCAWU)		min	recordings
01.10.2012, Orange farm township	Mr. Bricks Mokolo		Orange Farm Human Rights Advice Centre	12:28:00	1 hour, 24 min	Digital recordings
05.10.2012, Downtown Cape Town	Ms. Nadeema Syms	National Treasurer SATAWU	South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU)	09:25:00	59 min	Digital recordings
05.10.2012 COSATU Parliamentary offices, Cape Town	Ms. Prakashnee Govender	Parliamentary officer	COSATU	10:36:00	53 min	Digital recordings
05.10.2012, Salt River, Cape Town	Mr. Saliem Patel	Director	Labour Research Service	12:33:00	1 hour, 1 min	Digital recordings
05.10.2012, Hout Bay, Cape Town	Mr. Neil Coleman	Strategic advisor	COSATU	15:40:00	1 hour	Digital recordings
23.11.2012, Stockfleths coffee shop, Apotekergata, Oslo	Mr. Richard Pithouse	Journalist, South Africa		10:14:00	52 min	Digital recordings
Other resources:						
19.09.2012, Midrand, Gauteng	Ms. N. R. Bhengu	President	South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO)s	09:33:00	15 min	Digital recording of speech at COSATU congress
19.09.2012, Midrand, Gauteng	Mr. Ebrahim Patel	Minister of Economic Development	Government of South Africa	16:23:00	38 min	Digital recording of speech at COSATU congress
19.09.2012, Midrand, Gauteng	Mr. Trevor Manuel?	National Planning Commission	The Presidency of the Republic of South Africa	16:05:00	15 min	Digital recording of speech at COSATU congress

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Questions for COSATU representatives and affiliates:

✓ Has the economic policy of the government served the political policies of COSATU? If yes, which policies?

✓ If you could change any of the policies implemented by the government in the last decade, which policies would that be and what would you exchange them for?

✓ The socio-economic report to the COSATU 11th congress recognizes that the policies implemented have failed. To what extent is COSATU responsible considering them being a part of the Tripartite Alliance?

✓ Why is it important to COSATU to push for policies which benefits the poor unemployed population while the need to protect workers' rights are pressing?

✓ To what extent can the workers pursue their opinions through COSATU?

✓ Is the deprived population patient enough to wait for the Tripartite Alliance to create jobs?

✓ How would you consider the legitimacy of the Tripartite Alliance to represent the poor?

✓ Would say that COSATU is a social movement union, if yes, why?

✓ What signal does the erosion on the day to day union democracy send?

Questions for academics and other informants:

✓ In which way does COSATU reach the young population? Does COSATU have legitimacy among youth?

✓ Is the deprived population patient enough to wait for the Tripartite Alliance to create jobs?

✓ Unity has been a slogan throughout the COSATU 11th Congress. How would you assess the strong emphasis on unity?

✓ How do you assess the power relations within the Tripartite Alliance?

✓ Some critics say that the Tripartite Alliance is counterproductive in terms of achieving employment and social policies such as redistribution. How would you assess that claim?

- ✓ Entrepreneurship is envisioned by the government as one of the measures to combat youth unemployment. To what extent can entrepreneurship aid the youth unemployment crisis?

- ✓ Is COSATU a social movement union, if yes, what characterizes them as this?

- ✓ In which sectors do you envision job creation measures to be taken by the government?

- ✓ What does it take for ANC to change direction?

- ✓ How do you interpret the launch of the Lula moment?

- ✓ How is the relation between the government and the economic elite?

- ✓ How does COSATU work to obtain influence within the Alliance?

- ✓ In the political report of the COSATU 11th congress, COSATU admits to failure of implementation of policies due to organisational weakness and mediocrity. Is this the only explanation?

- ✓ Some COSATU affiliates say that the working class knows that it takes time to change the socio-economic circumstances in the country and therefore it is still patient, meaning that the discontent among the poor is not high enough. How do you consider that claim?

- ✓ The history of the struggle against apartheid seems still to serve the vote for ANC. Is the legacy of the struggle an obstacle to be critical to own leaders?