Revisiting National Democratic Revolution (NDR): the 'national question'.[1]

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Introduction

The moment when one becomes newly curious about something is also a good time to think about what created one's previous lack of curiosity. So many power structures-inside households, within institutions, in societies, in international affairs-are dependent on our continuing lack of curiosity. 'Natural,' 'tradition,' 'always,' each has served as a cultural pillar to prop up familial, community, national, and international power structures, imbuing them with legitimacy, with timelessness, with inevitability. Any power arrangement that is imagined to be legitimate, timeless, and inevitable is pretty well fortified. Thus we need to stop and scrutinize our lack of curiosity. We also need to be genuinely curious about others' lack of curiosity-not for the sake of feeling self-satisfied, but for the sake of meaningfully engaging with those who take any power structure as unproblematic. –Cynthia Enloe (2004, 2-3).

This work is part of a larger study of the current political era as well as a rethinking of previous positions I have held on NDR and a break with some of what I have learnt from others. It is incomplete as a study of NDR, in that the *democratic* and *revolutionary* element is dealt with elsewhere (though it is artificial to separate any of these concepts from one another).

Furthermore, what is said must be provisional. It is provisional for me and also because there is a need for all such enquiries to be tentative and couched in qualified, yet developing terms. There can be no more 'laws' of inevitable advance or guarantees, as found in early Communist documents[2].

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[1] Nomboniso Gasa, John Hoffman and Steven Friedman read an earlier draft of this paper. Much has been deleted, added or used for other purposes, but their influence is still present. Obviously they bear no responsibility for the final outcome. At an earlier presentation and subsequent discussions, Peter Hudson has helped to qualify and enrich the ideas in this paper.

[2] Even the SACP, 1989, conference used this phraseology, and it was not only the SACP. See ANC (1969) on the current international phase of transition from capitalism to socialism. The document begins: 'The struggle of the people of South Africa is taking place within an international context of transition to the Socialist system, of the breakdown of the colonial system as a result of national liberation and socialist revolutions, and the fight for social and economic progress by the people of the whole world.'.. One of Stuart Hall's attempts to apply a corrective while remaining a Marxist was to speak of Marxism 'without guarantees'. See Hall, 1983,84

'Victory' is not 'certain', contrary to a well-known struggle slogan, which may have served its purposes of inspiring in times of doubt. Also, what victory entails is no longer as clear within the national liberation movement as may have been the case when one single 'army' marched against apartheid.   While taking stock of what have been our understandings, it is necessary to avoid advancing alternatives without necessary humility. This of course holds for those who have been associated with the liberation struggle, as I have been, but also for those who have not but 'always knew' some of the liberation movement formulations were wrong. For this reason many have never read what I am criticising, so certain were they of its erroneous character. We all need humility if we wish to find solutions.

While indicating the tentativeness of what is advanced some parts of what follow are more provisional than others, in particular the initial very brief criticism of notions of imagined communities, discourse theory and related paradigms.   I disagree with most of these trends but they must be taken seriously, since they are 'there' and have some influence.   My object is to indicate that these approaches, however popular in sections of academia, may generally or often form barriers in understanding social relationships.

While I am aware that the relationship between classes is a decisive factor in any revolutionary or transformatory outcome or failure to achieve significant change, that is not discussed here and may be examined in the context of the 'revolutionary'.   It is of course extremely relevant to the character of any nation that may be formed. My views on that question are relatively fluid and I do not wish to re-enter well covered ground. While I still disagree with certain scholars and political actors, it does not seem useful to engage on previous or still existing terms, relating to 'workerists' and 'nationalists', race and/or class.

These earlier arguments on NDR were premised on pre-determined outcomes of an intermediary and long-term kind and the debates often centred on delineating the phases or whether such demarcations were needed at all. My sense is that it is important that an outcome should not be prematurely elaborated. A process and an outcome needs to be seen as not requiring speedy finalisation in any theory or programme, although there are obviously basic principles or driving aspirations that bring people together and may, in the present period join together with varying degrees of closeness many who have not previously been linked. But such programmatic elements need to be closely tied to identifying key actors.

Insofar as agents for substantial change are not easily definable, a non-sectarian process of building a coalition of emancipatory forces would itself contribute as transformatory developments unfold. (On the notion of an emancipatory programme, see Suttner, 2010, 40ff). None of these happen in a single decisive moment, as depicted by phrases like 'transfer' or 'seizure' of power and similar instrumentalist understandings of power and democratic and revolutionary change whether by peaceful or other means (See numerous documents of ANC and SACP on their websites, including Joe Slovo's formulation of 'elements' of power' achieved in negotiations).. (See alternative formulation of Morobe, 1987, 81-82 and   Poulantzas, 1978, 257, Suttner, 2004, 695-6). The actors, as they emerge, will themselves make an input as struggle or containment of struggle develops. They will engage in relationships of power, not with a thing called power. (Poulantzas, 1978)

This paper is premised on a continually developing notion of democracy, liberation and transformation. It is not for me as a 'philosopher king' to specify in advance the composition of forces for realisation of 'end goals.' Emancipation is conceived as unfolding and never to be finally realised, though what gains are made over time will depend on the programmatic developments and agents who contribute towards directions taken. Whether developments are more or less transformatory will depend on what role each agent or class or group with one or other identity is able to assert for itself within the overall balance of forces.

In any case, the content encompassed in hegemonic notions that may arise in the development of an emancipatory project will need careful interrogation and avoid cynicism or romanticism. Many old formulations need rethinking just as new ones must be advanced with sufficient rigour. Many of the fundamental positions of Marxism need revisiting and elaboration, insofar as these may be advanced as having continuing relevance. While I do not subscribe to notions of the working class being a spent force (Marcuse, 1991, part of the pessimistic background leading to the contemporary rise of postmodernism, see Wood, 1997, Berman, 1988) it is equally important to dispel romanticism of what the working class may do. We need to recognise variables that condition this, including the type of trade unions and working class and the changing character of political organisations like the Communists. But this is for separate examination, in investigating the composition of the national liberation or emancipatory forces that may emerge and in some cases are emerging in the context of the current conjuncture.

How do we revisit the question of NDR?

Theory is important not just to philosophers but all of us, because how we understand our world enables us to direct our action in a manner that is most fruitful and more likely to achieve results we seek. The words national, democratic and revolution are concepts, that is, ways of making sense of our world and in this case purporting or aiming to advance liberation.

But these understandings are not fixed meanings for all time and we can argue over how we comprehend them. These are sometimes referred to in a more specialised use as 'essentially contested concepts,' (Gallie, 1956) although my view is that the category of concepts that may be contested in the narrow sense of having multiple meanings some of which may not be recognised or agreed on, may be much wider than those Gallie lists.

There needs to be more attention to conceptual usage in South Africa, and to combat the tendency to work in dichotomies, to ascribe singular, static and essentialist meanings to concepts. Cherryl Walker, for example speaks of the politics of the 1980s 'essentially oppositional, attuned to the past rather than the future' (1991, at iv.) It seems quite logical and politically viable to simultaneously draw on the past, act in opposition and look to the future. Both the inspiration of the past and acting in rejection of oppression provide a sense of strength and empowerment necessary to build a future. (For further use of dichotomies where these constitute barriers against complex understanding, see Hassim, 2003, 48, criticised in Suttner, 2004, 698-9). Feminism is often counterposed to actions and

movements with prominence of mothers (see Wells, 1991, 1993, Walker, 1991, Hassim, 2006 criticised in Suttner, 2006, Gasa, 2007a.). This is within the context of defining feminism in the singular and not as bearing a plurality of meanings. (See Walker, 1991, and in contrast Gasa, 2010, on some women not recognising their experiences in the discourse of scholars and many feminist debates. This is not restricted to South Africa and the third world and can be found in the UK. (See Woodward and Woodward, 2009,3).

There needs to be a sense that we can work with some words like those comprising NDR and attribute a meaning, but that this is essentially contestable. When one speaks of the national and indicates that it has dangers, that is, to speak of tendencies which may or may not be realised. That there are possible problems does not mean we exclude the use of the word or the utility of the concept of the national or unity under all conditions. It is my impression that some scholars are reluctant to simultaneously hold onto the notion that a concept has dangers, but is not necessarily excluded from use under all or most conditions!

Equally, that one points to something potentially happening is to indicate a trend, not its inevitable unfolding. It appears that there is an intellectual trend in currency which works with inevitabilities or singular possibilities as opposed to mediatory factors that can alter trajectories in a variety of ways. (Southall, 2003, 30, 31 on an inexorable logic leading to undemocratic outcomes through national liberation. See criticism in Suttner, 2004a, 8-9)

Any use of concepts for liberatory purposes has to work with a notion of plurality and dynamism of meanings. (For failure to recognise the mediatory factors that may affect the impact of such factors, Nagel, 2005 and in contrast, see Walby, 2006). For static and essentialist understandings of concepts, including the notion of ubuntu, see much of the understanding of custom in South Africa, for example Holomisa, 2010). On the dynamic nature of political concepts see Hoffman 2001, 2009, Arblaster, 2002. On their contested nature, see Blakeley and Bryson, 2002, introduction.) The use of the word democracy is regularly used to have one meaning and implicitly equated with representative democracy, referred to as liberal democracy in much writing. (Giliomee and Simkins, 1999, Southall, 2003 and in contrast, Arblaster, 2002, Suttner, 2004, 2004a, 2006a).

It is important that the 'list' of essentially contested or dynamic concepts is never finalised. Even the word dog can be given more than one meaning and may when overlaid by rituals and beliefs take on many features apart from those of the conventional 'dog world'. But dog is not a word that relates to theory and this contribution relates to theory. The argument then is that any concept or theory i.e. concepts that have theoretical implications is contestable. (See also, Hoffman and Graham, 2009, xxx-xxxi).

Genesis of NDR not decisive issue

The notion of NDR evolved over decades in the history of the African National Congress (ANC, originally the South African Native National Congress, SANNC, established in 1912) and South African Communist Party (SACP, established as the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) in 1921). NDR is linked to the characterisation of South Africa as a special type of colonial state (CST), under apartheid. (ANC, 1969, 1984a, SACP, 1962, 1989, Slovo,

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1976, 118-149, 1988, Jordan, 1988, 107-8, 1988a, 100ff. Lerumo, 1971. See also alternative approach of Lionel Forman and Neville Alexander, amongst others, (Forman, 1992, part 4, Alexander, 1985, 41-56,126-153, 81-110). The special character derived from the coloniser (all white people, benefitting in varying degrees) and colonised (oppressed black people, experiencing such oppression in varying degrees) in occupying the same territorial unit.

If that were a valid characterisation, have the problems it points to been eradicated? Or if the analysis purported to show certain political, social, economic and many other relations of power, do many of these not persist or take different forms while still existing? This has not been addressed in this paper, whose purpose does not include that. Those Marxist understandings of revolution which require change of ruling classes certainly do not seem to help our understanding. (Found in ANC, 1969).

The genesis of NDR is not considered here, (but see Hudson, 1986, 6-38, 1988, 262-67, SACP, 1981, Section 2, Simons and Simons,1985, chapter 17, Everatt, 2009, ch 4, Lerumo, 1971, 111-117, Jordan, 1988, 89- 110, Bunting, 1998, 20-48). But it would be wrong to reduce a living body of theory, strategies and tactics to its origins whether in resolutions from the Comintern[3] or elsewhere. (This is found in throwaway remarks on NDR like 'one of the vestiges of the SACP's Stalinism,' Pithouse, 2010). Even if an idea or a word or a phrase has its origins at a particular place or moment historically, it has to exist as a revolutionary theory in a specific and changing social terrains.

Its efficacy is not dependent on or negated by its origins, but whether it can be adapted to or is amenable to local conditions at any specific moment and location. The concepts themselves need constant re-examination insofar as the theory is to retain any validity as a coherent mode of understanding. Equally, mediatory factors may lead the concepts themselves to take on different meanings from that at another moment in time.

The theory of CST is integrally related to the strategy (and/or theory) of NDR. Both would never have developed and remained relevant had they not derived from and addressed and explained people's experiences and signified meaningful ways of remedying the problems they faced over a considerable period of time. (Hoffman and Graham, 2009 on the relationship between theory and abstraction, theory and reality, xxviii-xxix). That is not to say that NDR or any one of the words remains without problems today. Nor does it mean that what some people say entails implementation of NDR need be accepted.   Such theories, strategies and tactics ought not to be left to scholars or political leaders but be part of a generalised debate. In such discussion it may be that NDR is reconstructed, in order to increase its relevance or discarded.

Over the years the notion NDR came to comprise the strategy and tactics employed from the mid-20th century to combat a combination of oppressions and exploitation that black people

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[3] The Communist International (the Comintern) was a worldwide organisation of communist parties that operated from Moscow from 1919 until 1943. '[E]ach member party was, in fact, a section of the Comintern, … its official name was "The Communist Party of [a country]. Section of the Communist International" and Comintern officials at the centre often referred to it as "our party"'. (Davidson, Filatova, Gorodnov, Johns (eds), (2003), 1.

experienced. The notion of NDR (deriving from the characterisation in CST) entailed combining resistance to both national oppression and class exploitation and avoiding either a class reductionist or race reductionist mode of understanding and strategising, that is explaining everything either by race or class (Wolpe, 1988, Jordan, 1988, 1988a, Slovo, 1976. See also Hudson, 1986, 1988, Alexander, references above). Over time NDR also incorporated gender in an undeveloped way without fully unpacking the problems in understandings of gender and patriarchy. (ANC, 2002, scattered generalised references in resolutions, referring to rights of women and patriarchy, 2007, for example, paragraphs 20, 24, 48, 85, and 98,118)

Considering NDR today, the words *national* and *unity* were historically very important, joining people from all oppressed sections of the population and a range of classes who suffered under apartheid and those whites who actively struggled for freedom. It unified the oppressed while narrowing the base of the apartheid ruling bloc, which gradually lost support as resistance intensified.

Imagined community?

In engaging the question of NDR, at the outset one is dealing with a phenomenon that is both subjective and objective. In that sense this paper does not rely on notions like 'imaginary communities' (Anderson, 1991) or similar phrases like national (ist) imaginaries. Any satisfactory analysis of nationalism and in this case it is almost exclusively in relation to South Africa, needs to combine both objective and subjective elements. The study must link social and political relations at the level of institutions and structures with discourses, ideologies and 'imagined' notions of these. This is insofar as the 'imaginary' is at all applicable.   This may include past relations within a supposed community or some unified organisation or other social combination, which exists in evidence we can marshall.

I do not deny the importance of imaginary phenomena that have a bearing on the formation of national movements. In the case of nationalism in South Africa, my sense is that there have been few of these. But the notion may be applicable in referring to the moment of formation of the ANC and other important phases of political history, representing radical acts of 'imagining'. (Qualification under the influence of Peter Hudson, discussant 7 March 2011).

But there can be no valid claim to having established a nation in South Africa through imagination or otherwise. Furthermore, this cannot be elided, as Anderson does with the notion of nationalism. (Anderson, 1991, chapter 1 and 2.) It is noteworthy that while the word 'nation' first appeared in the 13th century, the notion of nationalism only appeared during the 19th. (See Williams, 1983, 213-4. For a criticism of Anderson from a different perspective, see Chatterjee, 2010, 23-36). I agree with Chatterjee's criticism of Anderson's claim that once conditions for a nation were formed, according to his definition, these became '"modular", capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations, …' (Anderson, 1991,4).

In other words, the origins of nationalism anywhere are imitative of this model, which is primarily European and the indigenous base and agency is secondary. 'If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain "modular" forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine?…Even our imaginations must remain forever colonised. (Chatterjee, 2010, 25-6.)

Nationalism is understood in this paper to relate to mobilisation and organisation of a range of people in order to liberate people from oppression and establish a more emancipatory national order, sometimes referred to as a new nation.

Nationalism is a mode of organising forces or agents for change behind a banner that unites people, sometimes a wider range and sometimes narrowing in the scope of its constituency. That is a provisional and broad formulation and I do not hover for long on definitional questions, insofar as developing a characterisation would then be constrained. Insofar as concepts aim at broad understandings that are bases for theoretical generalisation and continued modification within the realm of theory as well as brought by practical experience, definitions by their nature tend to freeze a moment in the life of a phenomenon.

Nationalism itself may be found in a range of manifestations and carry meanings and derive from origins and bear connections that are wide-ranging. Quite apart from the input of organisations over time, the constituency of African nationalism widened as a range of organised sectors emerged and developed. It would be extremely limiting if a discussion of African nationalism in South Africa were to restrict itself to any strict definition of its scope. The ANC was in fact formed before the organised labour movement. (Limb, 2010, xii, so that its professional and chiefly leadership reflected the social conditions of the time.) The origins of African nationalism could arguably be traced to 19th century or earlier, warrior traditions, African spiritualities, Christianity with a range of missionary influences and converts who re-interpreted the message in a range of ways more or less empowering to the gradually conquered peoples.(See for example the range of important contributions in Bredenkamp and Ross, ed, 1995). The social base of the emerging nationalism changed substantially over time.

This lack of common origins and imaginations is obviously the case in South Africa where many black people and almost all whites were outside the nationalist movement. The notion of nationalism used by the ANC has not referred to a nation in the process of becoming or in existence *because of some imaginary past*. There does not seem to be evidence to link any such explanation with the case of South Africa, where the nationalist movement was in contestation with a range of forces supposedly representing communities benefitting from apartheid. Any nation incorporating both oppressors and oppressed could never have been based on some 'national imaginary'. It is a long objective and subjective process, insofar as it may be realisable. The nationalist movement in South Africa was in contrast based on black and primarily African people, by no means comprising or even 'imagining' the implications of a broad future nation, beyond generalised notions of non-racialism (another concept whose content requires deeper analysis. For historical background, see Everatt, 2009).

In the case of South Africa, while there may have been foundation myths within the component elements of nationalism, as in notions of ancestry of particular clans, the ANC had no such illusions. From the very outset the SANNC was formed to unite people who saw themselves as having distinct and often divided/ divisive pasts. (See below).

In no way does the ANC ever appear to have regarded itself as having constituted a nation by itself or within South Africa. The word nation is sometimes found in literature of the liberation movements, but it coexists with the ever-present imperative of 'building the nation', of consolidating unity to achieve that. That remains the phraseology in 2011. (ANC, 2011). The ubiquitous struggle slogan 'unity is the watchword', is in no way a declaration of a unity that exists without problems but expressed an aspiration. It may well be, as is argued later, that there is unsatisfactory awareness of the erasure that unity may entail, but that unity has never been regarded as settled. Equally insofar as an imagined *community* goes further than unity and implies a common identity and bond, on what basis could the ANC ever have claimed this? It has certainly not done so to date.

At most some people see the adoption of a constitution as creating a nation. Thus Hassen Ebrahim refers to the process of constitution making in the title of his book, as the soul of the nation (Ebrahim, 1996). He also uses the phrase 'birth certificate of the nation' in reference to the constitution, echoed by former Minister, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, (2006). This is illusory. A constitutional document cannot create a common identity if that is one of the connotations of nation or forge unity in a manner that comprises commonality of understanding of a broad nation. Nor are there even common 'imaginings' and there cannot be in so polarised a society.

Even though South Africa today is under one constitution, it will be very, very long before that is a document (or there is even any other document) around which there is a common understanding. It is doubtful that the time of a common South African identity is near or realisable or desirable. It is a fool's paradise to see the World cup as such a manifestation. (See innumerable references to the world cup's contribution to nation building in www. google.co.za, including Times editorials, statements of Mr Danny Jordaan, leading football official and others. See also Boyle, 2011).Whatever sense of belonging may have been generated by that, it is clearly not the understanding nor the lived experience that 'simunye' 'we are one' or 'we are together', as a popular slogan goes.

There are different imaginings of the past but also the nation-to-be

What the national may imply or even nationalism relate also to who the subjective bearers or agents of this movement and goal are, and to what extent it has internal divergences, that as we are witnessing, indicate diverse expectations of how liberation should unfold and towards what type of nation it should move, if nation building is to be embarked on. In the case of the ANC, (the main bearer of the nationalist project), in any attempt to explain its 'imaginings' one has to factor in that some people had clearly prepared for the post-apartheid period in a different way from others.

They envisaged a 'better life for all', the ANC election slogan in 1994, in a different way from many others, often realised in relation to their personal fortunes. Shortly after the first democratic elections some new parliamentarians were in a position to buy houses in prime areas in Cape Town while others used credit cards or cheque books for the first time in their lives. The disparate 'imaginings' led some to leave direct politics and be 'deployed' in business. Some who are in business were not present in the ANC until recently where they have often become very visible or quietly present. That has implications for the unfolding of liberation, in particular the weight of capital or sections of capital as opposed to labour, in the national liberation alliance. The strategy and tactics documents of the ANC adopted at ANC conferences since 1994 has reflected a distinct shift which represents a raising of the status of sections of capital and relative equalisation with the working class as a 'motive force' for change. (See www.anc.org.za, for conference reports)

Some who were belatedly involved in the struggle, on the eve of 1990, like 'traditional' chiefs, imagined a 'restoration' of powers, beyond what they held under apartheid and are in fact being granted under proposed legislation. (See Gasa, 2011, Claassens and Cousins, 2008). This also envisaged the displacing of democratic local government by that of chiefs, often in localities precisely the same as that geographically designated as Bantustans in the past. (Gasa, 2011a).

This strengthening of the powers of chiefs is a feature of the current *realignment of the national liberation alliance.* It also draws in other forces that were not present in liberation activities or even seen to be hostile to apartheid. These include sections of business and elements of the church. These may have had previous links with certain sections of leadership but definitely have these now. This has earlier been referred to as a contradictory factor in the immediate backing for the present leadership. (See Suttner, 2010). Its potentiality for internal conflict is now being clearly manifested. (Sunday Times and Sunday Independent, headlines 27 February 2011).

Equally, the 'call' of office, and service to the people has come to mean something very different from that of the period of anti-apartheid struggle when many envisaged or appeared to visualise their future entailing little more than torture and possible death. This is not to deny the bravery of large numbers of those people, who may have chosen new courses of self-realisation, at the time of or after the period of dangerous struggle. At the time of writing there are allegations involving millions of rands misappropriated by former head of Correctional Services, Linda Mti. If these allegations are valid, it illustrates the contrast between what an individual did, Mti having faced great danger as an ANC operative in Lesotho, and what they may have been involved in now. (Personal knowledge of a few individuals who worked closely with assassinated MK and SACP leader Chris Hani in Lesotho).

With the opening of ANC membership to all who wish to join, the notion of NDR is vaguer in many peoples' minds (than it may have been in the past). Understanding is not facilitated by rote like recitation of formulations derived from 1969, by some of the leadership. Many people now join the ANC and switch previous allegiances and associate with the organisation

that holds the key to tenders and other ways of making money.   This is not restricted to Black economic empowerment but many whites and other minorities who are involved in irregularities or are councillors representing the ANC or others connected with it, as in the case of the late underworld figure, Brett Kebble and the current apparently unprecedented political and economic influence of the Gupta family, immigrants from India in 1991. (Sunday Times and Sunday Independent stories ibid. Variations of this phenomenon in relation to Shabir Shaik and various sections of ANC leadership and government corruption are in the news continuously).

Making sense of South African history and the present through discourse.

Discourse analysis and postmodernism appear to inform a number of scholars in the present period, but there is considerable difference amongst those who use these tools, even if partially as I do.   I have much respect for certain studies relying on discursive analysis, in particular some of the work of Michel Foucault. (See Foucault, 1979, 1980, 1990). But while discourse is a key element in constituting power relations or elaborating on these in the world of words and other representations, it is not sufficient to do so in itself. It has not the power, as attributed to words by sections of academia. Thus Shepherd and Robins write:

> One of the most compelling ideas to have come out of the humanities and social sciences is the idea that language, words and the names that we give to things play an active and *determining* role in constructing social realities. Far from being a passive process whereby we specify what is already known, the act of naming something becomes *part of the process of its constitution, and an active site of contestation*….To say and to name is to know-but always to know in particular ways….(Shepherd and Robins, 2008, 1. Emphasis inserted.)

In some ways, this is at once very far-reaching in the assertions being made but also possibly not consistently so. If names play an important role, something less than determining, it is surely within a context where that naming resonates or is conditioned by or 'functional' because of social and power relations. Power relations are not purely discursive but the discursive operates within power relations and may through language, it is true, play an important or crucial (but not determining) role in altering such relations in some future or ongoing phase. Language is a social phenomenon before it is constitutive of other social relations as one of the factors that construct identities, relationships and other phenomena. In other words, language is embedded in social relations that vary contextually. (See Wood, 1997, 5).

But then the authors do concede that it is 'part' of the process of constitution of social realities. Part may be a determining part, so that it remains open whether this sentence is a qualification. It is also not clear whether the contestation is restricted to the level of discourse or as would be more plausible in my view, to a range of sites, discursive and otherwise.   The final sentence at once emphasises the relativism of discourse as a form of knowledge creation and it being connected to where one is located. That may be unproblematic, but only if such 'saying as knowing' is located within actual social realities. Or does this mean that what we say and therefore 'know' is equally valid to that of others who may experience something else or record distinct relations that are different from the discourse of those who say and therefore know? (See Wood, 1997). Is the power of some

people saying not greater than that of others by virtue of the extra-discursive position that they have in relation to others?

Discourse, especially in scholarship may have important consequences in knowledge production and validation of knowledges (See Foucault, 1980, chs 5, 6). But this is within a broader social context for both knowledge generation and institutions and organisations that enable/ disable and surround knowledge production and the wider social relations in general. This is not restricted to scholarship, and as Foucault indicates found, amongst a range of other places, including political parties willingness to entertain certain theories or not. (Foucault, 1980, 110).

A university is a site where discourse is operative, but it has power relations outside of and beyond such discourse and one of the reasons why certain paradigms remain dominant despite their lack of explanatory power is because of gatekeeping and power exercised around various rites of passage towards becoming a recognised scholar and sustaining such reputation. Much of this happens without overt discussion or in silence or with common understandings amongst some who hold this power.

What is the power of discourse in admission of students, marking of scripts and theses? What is the power of discourse in selection committees and deciding who is made a professor and not? Editorship of journals is obviously a key site. There is nothing discursive about peer review through buddy networks. There is no public discourse about advancing and blocking the advance of certain individuals in academia. It nevertheless happens, and persists at this very moment. As I write, I am aware of a professor demanding that a postgraduate student lists the professor, her supervisor as co-author of a projected publication. This replicates what Bertolt Brecht said of Mack the Knife, in his *Threepenny Novel* that Mack claimed other people's murders as his own. Scandalous, yes, but how often is this happening –invisibly- without any sanction? How often does the candidate decide to make a silent tactical compromise and comply, so that these incidents are never part of any discourse?

Discourse theory along with postmodernism and a variety of other trends arose in the post 1960s pessimism over modernism's perceived incapacity to realise emancipatory projects and this sense of getting nowhere in being enmeshed by an apparently all powerful capitalism. This was taken by people like Herbert Marcuse to designate the role of the working class and other potential agents for displacement of the capitalist system as no longer relevant. (Marcuse, 1991. But see Berman, 1988).

Some of the Marxist responses to discourse theory and variants of postmodernism make important points on the apparent lack of grounding of language as constituting social relations and relationships between human beings. But without entering this debate more fully, I am concerned not to fall into the danger of rejecting a valid emphasis of postmodernist thought on identities and difference, as appears in some work. (Wood, 1997, 5, 7). It is particularly significant to avoid this pitfall because it appears that Marxism cannot adequately address the subjective in the sense of distinct identities, working as it has tended with what Stuart Hall has called 'master categories' of analysis or

'master identities' like class or in our case also race, which have sometimes purported to explain everything (for example, Hall, 1996, 6).

At the same time, without a fuller exploration one cannot leave postmodernism and discourse theory without noting the tendency towards despair and rejection of progress, which have been crucial factors in modernity, which cannot be discarded without losing human agency. (See Berman, 1988, 34 and his reference to some of the work of Foucault indicating no escape from prison and other institutional constraints.)

The existing scholarship in South Africa on resistance history and understanding resistance and its legacies, politically historically, sociologically and psychologically is marked by very distinct and overlapping schools of thought including empirical, liberal, Afrikaner nationalist, Communist Party Marxism, Unity Movement Marxism, 'revisionist' Marxism of the 1970s onwards and more contemporary trends of a range of types. The differences tend sometimes to be homogenised by practitioners of discourse theory and/or postmodernism. This can be seen in the recent Call for Papers for the ANC 100th Anniversary conference organised by History Workshop, University of the Witwatersrand, University of Johannesburg, SA History Online, which is as much an invitation to participate as a closure by virtue of erecting hierarchies of historiography and referring as fact to 'the ideology [not structures or inner dynamics or relations that comprise-RS] of the state', the 'different ways that Congress was imagined –and therefore reinvented'…. (H-Net List on South & southern Africa, 10 December 2010.).

This way of seeing is presented as given and thus the foundations within which potential presenters should offer abstracts are confined to a new Grand Narrative (replacing an unspecified previous one). Within this discourse, the entire SADET history project is simply dismissed as 'flawed'. A revised version is relatively more generous in opening the scope of potential contributions but retains an approach that pre-empts what may be found in the conference itself. (H-Net List on South & Southern Africa, 9 March 2011).

In what follows in this contribution considerable weight is placed on discourse, but not in the way in which some discourse theorists and postmodernists appear to do. The importance of what is imagined is not denied and the importance of mythology is recognised. But this coexists with having to understand what is happening in the social relations that are under investigation and what is imagined about the future nation to be.

To relate to a recent phenomenon, it may be correct to say that people 'imagined' MK (mKhonto we Sizwe, Spear of the Nation, the ANC armed wing) to have powers that it did not possess, but that argument is based on demonstrating a real disjuncture between what people knew and hoped and believed and the actual proven or more or less evident successes and failures on the ground.

Also, the reasons for power being wrongly attributed were not simply 'imagined' or millenarian (though elements of this may have been present at times) but require complex explanation. Simple reference to discourse on 'imaginaries' would represent a short cut. What MK actually achieved was a social and psychological force and *what it was supposed*

or expected to be or do (but not actually capable of) was also an inspiration that had inspiring and material effects. This is of course a shortened version of what requires more than celebration or dismissal of MK and also elaboration of the type of power that I am indicating in brief.

In the same way, probably thousands of COSATU members contribute R 2 or other small amounts, debited from their wages/salaries to the SACP every month. They were doing this around 2002 when I saw the list of contributions from faraway places. This is because they have expectations of the Communists playing a role that it is probably never destined to fulfil. The 'imagining' cannot be studied on its own. It must be in relation to the hopes vested in the SACP based on its often heroic past, relating to people like Bram Fischer, Chris Hani, Moses Kotane, Ruth First, Walter Sisulu, Dora Tamana, JB Marks, Josie Palmer/Mpama, Joe Slovo and others. This powerful resonance of the name Communist can also be seen in the context of there being no sense of the need to change its name as was the case with many previous Communist Parties in Europe at the time of unbanning in 1990.

This expectation has now been projected into a different moment of less heroic political power relations, which render the Communist influence less powerful, because of both current subjective leadership factors and objective reasons related to the character of the conjuncture that has unfolded since 1990, where the new governments have had to accommodate capital in direct relations instead of pure implementation of radical strategy documents, irrespective of capital's wishes (as was 'imagined' in the 1969 Morogoro strategy and tactics document of the ANC). This compact is now necessary in order to effectuate transformation. (Whether this accommodation is having that effect to any significant extent is a separate question. See Mohamed, 2010, Suttner, 2010).

Understanding NDR as comprising dynamic concepts.

The concerns of national liberation movements or as the ANC summarises these objectives as (NDR), relate to three concepts which are too often treated as having obvious and static meanings. This paper understands NDR, if it is to have any strategic and theoretical value as relating to concepts which refer to ongoing processes. They are dynamic, growing and changing. This has particular application to notions like democracy, custom, culture, gender, sexuality and similar tools of analysis that may contribute to or retard emancipation. (Hoffman, 2001, 23, 25, 2009, 176-9,186-7, Arblaster, 2002, 4ff). Meanings are not singular but often multiple. These changes are not in the first place discursive, but related to choices and modes of organisation of peoples and institutions, as they experience life, its problems, possibilities and disappointments.

One cannot provide a broad sweep of post-independence developments in the states of Africa, but there are certain shared attributes in the construction of national liberation movements. It is these movements who were the heirs to the new state (bearing many features of the old, according to Mamdani, 1996, amongst others). It was through their agency that representative democracy was brought for the first time to Africa, whatever the imperfections

due to the constitutions negotiated/imposed or the weaknesses of the liberation movements or other factors, related to the character of these movements.

Democratic elections *were introduced by the national liberation movements, in the face of their denial by colonial/apartheid regimes.* That is an historical achievement that provided opportunities that may well have led to broader democratisation and development or limitations on popular empowerment. There is little debate over the meaning of democracy in contemporary South Africa, described as 'liberal democracy' by many. While it will be explored more fully when the promised work on the D part of NDR is made available, it is important to note that the understanding of 'national democracy' may often have been intended to be more than liberal (which is in fact a species of representative democracy), as evidenced by the popular power period of the 1980s but earlier in clauses of the Freedom Charter. (See Suttner and Cronin, 2006, originally published in earlier edition in 1986, 128-130, specifically contesting that the Charter was a 'document of bourgeois democratic rights' (at 129), that is liberal democracy. On popular power, see Morobe, 1987, Suttner, 2004)

This is not to suggest that this was always a common understanding, but there are definite popular power tendencies in ANC/UDF histories and it may be that the post 1990 leadership was less sympathetic to these than some of those who had participated in the struggles of the 1980s. This is not meant to create an exile/insile [internal activists] dichotomy, though different experiences create different expectations. It is also important to recognise, in line with the conceptual usage suggested that there can never be final and definitive meanings ascribed to South African democracy or the Freedom Charter and that these have always been contested. (Suttner and Cronin, 1986 more generally in discussing various controversial clauses).

Commonality and specificity in national liberation movement features.

One may discern common features in national liberation movements, but there are also very specific conditions in any country we study. Insofar as one may wish to examine the potentialities for fuller realisation of democratic development, any suggested solution to any problem has to be homespun, speaking to conditions and relationships in the particular country/ies concerned. This is one of the reasons why the Freedom Charter had continued resonance in South Africa. People recognised their own problems in what it articulated, which connected the specific they experienced with the general conditions under apartheid. (Suttner and Cronin, 2006). It is a red herring to suggest that the popular process of creation is contradicted by a committee selecting a consensus of demands for inclusion. (Chipkin, 67-69). Common features rather than details had to be incorporated since the document could not be 100 pages in length. The question is whether or not those who contributed saw the Charter as emanating from their contribution, knowing that the document could not encompass detailed demands. (Suttner and Cronin, 2006).

This question of indigeneity in this specific sense addresses a weakness of much theoretical work that it does not move from the theoretical moment and also relate to practical and organisational questions that arise in South Africa and in many respects elsewhere. (See

Hoffman and Graham, 2009, xxviii).   Notions of change cannot work, history has shown and Amilcar Cabral articulated repeatedly, unless people see these as addressing their own problems. (Cabral, 1979, chapters 4, 5, 12, 14).

The national liberation movement model

The world *national* provides the key to the first element of the national liberation model, that is, that the movement depicts itself or is attributed by others as the authentic representative of the people, or the nation-to-be. Just as vanguard parties 'stand in' for the proletariat, national liberation movements are as it were the nation in the process of becoming. That is their self-representation.   It has also been attributed to them in many cases by international bodies. This is at once a discursive device and a relationship that the liberation movement has with other organisations and the people of a territory and states and peoples beyond its own country. It is found in many revealing slogans, for example:

'ANC is the nation'

'CPP[4] is Ghana, Ghana is CPP'

'KANU[5] is your mother and your father.'

The attribution of authentic representativity even before an election had been held was a powerful means of delegitimising the colonial/apartheid power, even if in some cases this was shared between two liberation movements. The eviction of the apartheid regime from the United Nations General Assembly in 1974, for being unrepresentative of the people of South Africa was a powerful diplomatic victory. That was augmented by the status accorded to the ANC and Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), gradually to accrue primarily to the ANC.

Such status was attached to a number of liberation movements in the course of struggle and before facing elections, by the United Nations General Assembly and the then Organisation for African Unity. *The victory in elections that usually followed could be seen as merely confirmation of leadership and national liberation movements being primary nation-builders. This status was already awarded/earned independent of national elections, and appeared to endure irrespective of any future electoral test.*

It raised the potential danger which may be acting itself out in Zimbabwe, that there is a construction of the liberation movement, the primary freedom fighters prior to independence

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[4] Convention People's Party led by Nkrumah.

[5] Kenya African National Union, the dominant party for most decades after independence, initially led by Jomo Kenyatta. I am indebted to Caroline Kihato for informing me of this slogan. Incidentally, the slogan also speaks to the broader and important phenomenon where liberation movements and communist parties depict themselves and often act out the role of parents or a family in relation to members. (Suttner, 2008, chapter 7). There is not space to develop this, though under the National Research Foundation chair of local histories and present realities at the University of the Witwatersrand, held by Professor Philip Bonner, Dr Arianna Lissoni is uncovering path breaking material, including in the Dinokana area of Zeerust, where maGorillas, as the young boys who were recruited were known, in almost every conventional respect related to the ANC as family. This included when they were allowed to break from an accepted practice and marry Tanzanian women after decades outside the country. Again the ANC took parental responsibility in providing the lobolo. (Personal Communication A. Lissoni)

as the embodiment of the nation and as many used to say 'no force on earth' could defeat them. It then meant no reactionary force but it may have come to mean that not even the people in elections can dislodge the 'embodiment of themselves', the liberation movement having been constructed as that. The model provides the danger of liberation movement hegemony never being challengeable. They are the permanent bearers of national liberation. Liberation is not seen as a *continuous process*.   It may mean the original national liberation forces are augmented by others.   But there can never be any organisation other than the bearers of liberation at independence or having a tight link to what was constituted as the initial precursors of the nation. Slavoj Zizek captures this phenomenon:

[T]he Party thinks that it is the Party because it represents the People's real interests, because it is rooted in the People, expressing their will; but in reality the People are the People because-or, more precisely, in so far as-they are embodied in the Party. And by saying that the People do not exist as a support of the Party, we do not mean the obvious fact that the majority of the people do not really support the Party rule; the mechanism is more complicated. The paradoxical functioning of the 'People' in the totalitarian universe can be most easily detected through analysis of phrases like 'the whole People supports the Party'. This proposition cannot be falsified because behind the form of an observation of a fact, we have a circular definition of the People: in the Stalinist universe, 'supporting the rule of the Party' is 'rigidly designated' by the term 'People' –it is, in the last analysis, *the only feature which in all possible worlds defines the People.* That is why the real member of the People is only he who supports the rule of the Party: those who work against its rule are automatically excluded from the People; they become the 'enemies of the People'.   What we have here is a somewhat crueller version of a well-known joke: 'My fiance′e never misses an appointment with me because the moment she misses one, she is no longer my fiancée'-the People always support the Party because any member of the People who opposes Party rule automatically excludes himself from the People. (Zizek, 1989, 146-7. Emphasis in original.)[6]

In contrast, if the notion of national liberation is to have a continuous meaning, widening the scope of freedom, this is realisable only if the notion of national liberation is itself continuously developing under scrutiny and re-evaluation, with or without the original national liberation organisation in leadership.

The emphasis on unity

The national liberation notion stresses unity. In the face of divide and rule that led to conquest or continued colonial/apartheid rule, the emphasis on unity was an important starting and continued rallying point. It was part of the lesson drawn from the 'time of the spear' and the onset of the 'time of the pen', as certain Xhosa- speaking poets put it. (Kunene, 1964, 23-24, Odendaal, 1984-5-6). It is interesting that the imagery of the pen as a weapon recurs in mid-twentieth century Hungary. When Marxist philosopher Georg Lukacs was arrested and asked to surrender any dangerous weapons, he put his pen on the table. (Zizek, 2002, 12).

The quest for unity reflected the history of conquest in South Africa (and all over the continent) related partly to the division of the African peoples, where some victories were scored over the Boers, British and other European colonial powers, but there was seldom a combined defence.

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[6] I am indebted to Peter Hudson for drawing my attention to this passage.

In the establishment of the SANNC, the chiefs who had led the resistance in most cases were provided for in a House of Chiefs, modelled on the House of Lords and there was an attempt to create a bond between the past and the new professional, religious and other elites who initially led the organisation. (Walshe, 1970, 30-42, Benson, 1985, ch 1). The various permutations of resistance in relation to the missionaries, mission converts and the chiefs in South Africa are extremely complex. While in some cases, those who originally sought refuge in mission stations or became preachers were despised and regarded as a competing authority within chiefdoms, this did not mean that the new converts were automatically agents of the European missions and they themselves often fought over their own version of the teachings of Christianity, often subverting that of the church which had inducted them. The missionaries are often depicted as handmaidens of imperialism but they were also very often in conflict with the British and the boers and amongst themselves. (See for example, Villa-Vicencio and Grassow, 2009, 108ff). Added to this complexity many chiefs had invited missionaries to establish themselves within their domain and teach their subjects. Also, a large number of the chiefs led the resistance to conquest and contributed in many ways to the initial founding of the ANC. (Odendaal, 1984, photograph no 14, page not numbered regarding Swazi royalty funding the SANNC newspaper, *Abantu Batho*). But gradually after Union chiefs became discredited, with some notable exceptions. Currently they are re-emerging as custodians of tradition, in the context of a reconfiguration of the liberation alliance.

Pixley ka Isaka Seme, one of the founders, correctly stressed the need to end division:

The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xosa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between the Zulus and the Tsongaas, between the Basutos and every other Native must be buried and forgotten; it has shed among us sufficient blood! We are one people. These divisions, these jealousies, are the cause of all our woes and of all our backwardness and ignorance today. (Seme, 1978 [1911], p. 72. Original spelling).

This statement illustrates that the quest for a future nation was never premised on common imaginings (as in Anderson, 1991, 5ff), or a sense of or purported sense of common identities, community or cultures. (as in Anderson, ibid Gellner, 1983, ch 5, 1997, 6 and generally). There was no imagined unity. Nor was there any checklist of characteristics, as found in Stalin (1913). The aim was to forge these different identities into unity. The declaration that we are 'one people' is very clearly not a statement of accomplished fact but an aspiration, (a new 'radical imagining',) counterposed to the history that preceded the initiative to unite.

There was also a conception of the SANNC as a 'native union' (Seme, 1978 [1911], 72). That is a phrase carrying revolutionary connotations where the organisation of the oppressed, however unrepresentative it may then have been of the people as a whole, becomes the foremost or only element of a new Union of South Africa. Thus the ANC was seen as the organisation consolidating the oneness desired for the African people as a whole. Jordan writes:

Eighteen months after the inauguration of the Union of South Africa, Pixley ka Isaka Seme made his historic call for the convocation of the African National Congress. By that act alone the emergent black national leadership posed an alternative conception of the 'nation'. Though few at the time would have recognised this, Seme and the founders of the ANC were laying out the tasks that the national liberation movement would have

to assume in order to fulfil its historic mission. In addition to abolishing the colonial relationship, establishing democracy to secure the right of self-determination, it would also have to unify the South African people and act the midwife at the birth of a new nation. (See also Jordan, 1988).

Interestingly, in re-reading this statement of Jordan's, it requires qualifications that may not have been in the minds of many of us at the time it was written. The notion of 'historic mission' designates a teleological unfolding of phenomena. I agree with Dubow that there was nothing inevitable or pre-ordained in ANC victory as the leader of such a mission. (See Dubow, 2002, xiv). In ANC history, there are periods when the organisation was practically non-existent, and by no means the leader of any (future) liberation struggle. (See Walshe, 1970, Dubow, 2002, ibid, Limb, 2010, chapters 11-13).   It does not, however, assist our understanding of complexities and conditionalities and variations in activities to simply characterise the entire period up till the 1940s as reformist and moderate, by virtue of their pursuing a parts of petitioning the British or local authorities. Motlhabi, 1984, 38, 71, Ross, 1999, 86.   See in contrast, Limb, 2002).

That emphasis on unity remained central to the ANC in the decades that followed, when its very existence was threatened. The younger generation of cadres were always counselled in the wisdom of keeping people within the fold, weaning away individuals from the ranks of the 'enemy', even if there were differences between them and those already within the 'popular camp'. It also saw the constant desire to avoid splits and make some individuals who had been expelled return to the ANC, as many did (for an example of such dialogue see Wilton Mkwayi interview, SADET, 2008, at 272, relating his communications with Tennyson Makiwane). Many returned and re-joined in 1990 when the organisation was unbanned.

It is crucial to acknowledge the importance of building unity in the face of colonial/apartheid divisions, enforced by urban legislation, schooling, mining, Bantustans and a range of other means aimed at defeating unified opposition to apartheid. In furthering the imperative anti-apartheid unity, going in fact beyond the African community, it was not always possible or even necessary to disaggregate that unity and understand the different cultural and other identity components. 'Not necessary' here meaning that for the purposes at hand a unified force had to be built and it was not generally a requirement or feasible in the prevailing conditions to enquire into nor was there time to examine each person's cultural self-understanding and representations.

Unity and intolerance of difference

Characteristic of the unity of the national liberation movement is that it is a hegemonic unity which seeks overall leadership and representation of all forces in all sectors struggling for liberation under specific banners. In the context of violent resistance especially, the stress on unity and all struggling people standing under the aegis of the liberation organisation made sense, although it meant that the specific character of sectoral organisations or those who

identified with particular identity groups tended to be absorbed within or not find expression or not articulate their identities within the 'national'.

After liberation inside South Africa and other states there has tended to be an intolerance of independently established sectoral organisations. When someone has become involved in organisation around problems related to basic utilities, within the ANC there has been a degree of hostility and the individual would often be characterised as disgruntled. (Personal experience of discussions of the phenomenon, when being briefed up till about 2004).

Recently, in late 2010, the ANC attacked a civil society conference for aiming at 'regime change'. It lamented that the government and the ANC were not invited when they were facing criticism. (ANC, 2010) By implication, in demanding an invitation the ANC and government did not respect the independence of these social movements or aspirant social movements. On the face of it, this contrasts with the sectorally based affiliates of the United Democratic Front (UDF), though many of these had seen themselves as acting primarily for the ANC, during the 1980s. (Suttner, 2004)

At the same time in the case of post 1994 South Africa, it is necessary to disaggregate the various sectoral organisations and not simply see them as a breath of fresh air that can be designated as new social movements. In some cases, these organisations have used the constitution to advance their aims. In the case of others, however, the goal of socialism was set as a standard whereby the 'democratic breakthrough' of 1994 (the phrase first used by the SACP and now the alliance as a whole) is seen as unimportant. 'We don't want the fucking vote', in the words of Ashwin Desai. (Quoted by Sachs, 2003). Likewise, insurrectionary tactics have sometimes been used where officials were quite willing to talk. On one occasion the home of the executive mayor of Johannesburg was attacked in his absence, while his wife and children were there and the atmosphere was threatening. (See Suttner, 2004a, 771).

There is thus a need to know how the organisations relate to legitimate laws and rights that need to be defended by all. This is not to fetishise the law and constitution as unchangeable. But in this case, the law was not challenged but simply ignored or subverted. We also need to understand who comprise these organisations, what their weight may be in terms of organised numbers or whether they merely 'represent their jackets'.

National liberation, 'social cohesion' and distinct identities

The overall understanding of the ANC as bearer of the national vision does not envisage much space for independent identities. As indicated, profound awareness of distinct identities was neither always possible nor necessary for the tasks at hand. But many such identities have emerged fairly boldly in the period after democratic elections, for example, a range of people admitting to consulting their ancestors or becoming izangoma/ izinyanga (isiXhosa, isiZulu words for spiritual healers), which I can recall being mocked by African activists in the 1980s. Sometimes the boldness conceals charlatanism for which many people have unfortunately fallen costly victims.

The notion of the national is said to coexist with a celebration of diversity, which enjoys legal protection (Constitution, Statutes of South Africa, 1996, sections 9, 10, 15-19, 23, 29, 30 from the Bill of Rights) and the ANC purports to celebrate (ANC, 2007, paragraphs 23, 38, 209). All cultures and identities are thus to be respected, but there is a qualifier. In political understanding these should feed into an overall national identity. (ANC, 2007, paragraphs 71,101.) This is not an invention of the period of presidency of Jacob Zuma but can be seen in the writings of someone like Joe Slovo (Slovo, 1988, 145-7).

In reality there is an erasure of a dialectical relationship between specific identities and a potential unifying national identity. 'Unity' is instead equated with a hierarchy where the distinct element must comply with and be absorbed into the requirement of hierarchically greater national 'unity'. But within this 'unity' there is no place for 'tribalism' and 'regionalism'. These will be stamped out wherever they 'rear their ugly heads' (ANC, 2007, 101). This is also found in statements of the late Samora Machel who declared that 'our struggle killed the tribe...We killed the tribe to give birth to the nation.' (Munslow, 1985, 77).

Social cohesion. The current emphasis on building 'social cohesion' feeds into this fast tracking of unity and appears to intend to emphasise notions of patriotism, (See ANC, 2007, paragraphs 51,55,65,165, for example, Xingwana, 2009) which will in fact be hegemonic notions of the current ruling elites, insofar as these 'cohere' amongst themselves, which is not certain.

Identities are capable of being hostile to the 'nation formation' and 'social cohesion' process, in that at any particular moment nation building is led by the ruling organisation/party. It is the legal and legitimate right of all to choose their political affiliations and this includes having conceptions of the nation that may diverge from that of the ruling party. The constitution is an important step towards building a nation, but it does not itself establish a nation as implied by some ` (Ebrahim, 1998) or 'social cohesion'. That is an *ongoing process, which may never result in a national formation or social cohesion, depending on one's definition.*

There is a dangerous current tendency to treat social cohesion as an indisputably desirable phenomenon whose meaning and significance may be treated as obvious. Thus the ANC glossary in the Strategy and tactics documents reads: '**Social Cohesion:** A feeling of being together as one'. On the continuing value of social cohesion, see ANC, 2007, paragraphs 51, 55, 65,186,199, 204,206, Chidester, Dexter and James, 2003.) Neither Chidester, Dexter and James nor Chipkin, (2008) define the term.

Chipkin appears to rely on informal networks that are supposedly better able to contribute to social cohesion by interacting on cordial bases. How this relates to the whole and the character of some of the values, remain vague and uncontested. Inequality prevents 'social cohesion' and social cohesion depends on egalitarianism (Chipkin, 2008, for example at 188). How much further does the notion of social cohesion takes us in understanding barriers towards relationships that are equal and often 'distrustful' (a recurring word in some social

cohesion literature) and anti-social, violent and manifesting other social traits that hardly build common values?.

The term social cohesion, along with similar current ideas may almost inevitably become *a threat to distinct identities* and interests. One has to confront the impossibility of a sense of agreement by all on being part of this cohesive community, of allegedly shared values or sense of belonging/holding together.

Social cohesion has entered the vocabulary of the ANC earlier than today and it has never been clear how it is used or that its usage may be contested. The words are inherently open to multiple interpretations, though presented as if that were not.   The concept had been raised as one of the elements of the notion of an African Renaissance as early as 1996 by then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki. While still president, in 2008 he referred to the centrality of

the matter of social cohesion… to the work of government. In this regard, we continue to encourage, through different forums, a national dialogue among all our people, to address the variety of challenges in the country.

The intention is among others to:

• strengthen platforms that engages the nation on the *social ills* currently facing South Africa and through which solutions are collectively sought;

• promote a *caring society* in which human dignity and life are respected;

• mobilise mass commitment towards *positive values, responsible citizenship and patriotism;* and

• build bridges within and between communities in the face of intolerance and *deep social divisions.*

 (Mbeki, 2008. Italics inserted to indicate notions that are highly contested.)

It is obviously desirable to seek basic consensus on rules of the road or non-violence and similar modes of ensuring that actions that disrupt social order and relationships between people are minimised. But it seems that the quest for broader understanding of the concept is often linked to patriotism (interview with Minister of Defence, Sunday Independent,). When one commends the Defence force as a primary bearer of patriotism and social cohesion one is creating a masculinist and militarised notion of what this cohesion may compromise, 'tough love' as opposed to cuddling. Why are these to be opposed? Is our caring nation- to -be not to comprise both qualities of human strength with tenderness, that such strength need not be manifested through power over others, but tenderness towards others?

The term ubuntu obviously has similar connotations to any understanding of communities living in harmony. But our understanding of ubuntu is in reality subject to contestation (see Suttner, 2010a, 523-4 and below).

There is a danger that the uncontested use of 'social cohesion' may augment the dangerous elements in understandings of national unity and be as much a method of 'inclusion' as of marginalisation. The notion derives from a disparate range of social thinkers who have themselves been socially conservative or whose works have often been put to conservative or reactionary purposes. It was an important idea during the Blair period of re-making Labour

Party and Labour government and a commission in the UK deliberated on the concept. (House of Commons, 2003-4). Key founders of the notion or elements of it like Edmund Burke, Emile Durkheim, (as developed by Talcott Parsons) are normally eschewed in relation to developmental projects. These origins do not simply point to a concept that tends to be socially conservative but to the ways in which its vagueness can be used for limiting individual and social freedom. This is a vagueness that may not always be intentionally deployed and is also found in words like community, solidarity, people, society and other concepts which are defined and understood in a range of different ways. Precisely for that reason, that the meaning of social cohesion is taken as given, or as obvious, creates considerable danger.

The notion of oneness or holding together is what binds the 'national' and social cohesion as working concepts and objectives, which may in fact comprise state or national liberation movement identity. But, it is well known that some communities existed and continue to exist in relative independence of central authorities. Colonial power often did not penetrate large parts of a country. Imperialism often tried to operate 'on the cheap'. Consequently, to this day communities exist quite independently of or relating to a greater or lesser extent to many national and state unification efforts. Likewise, in South Africa, identity formation represents ongoing processes and they may link with or be quite independent of nation formation. They may converge and where there are areas of divergence that is quite legitimate insofar as such identity formation even if called 'tribalism' is harmless and in no way antagonistic to the Bill of Rights. It is important and probably constitutionally demanded that the right of individuals to form identities of their choice is protected, provided these do not collide with the constitutional framework.

There is nothing wrong with the words social cohesion and nation building as such, as long as they are recognised as up for debate and argument and their meanings are not treated as obvious. We cannot at one moment say, here we are, nation building is completed or even that it is desirable! It may well be that the constitution or much of the constitution represents a basic collation of beliefs and interests shared by most South Africans. But there are many who do not agree with some of the content. That is their right. One may believe or do what one wishes until it affects the rights or perhaps legitimate interests (which need to be problematised) of others. (to adapt John Stuart Mill, 1991) Acting out anti-constitutionalism is likely to be illegal and thus impermissible beyond secret thoughts. Obviously *the constitution can be revisited, especially where proposed changes would enlarge the scope of freedom or inclusion within its rights.*

Returning to 'tribalism' and regionalism, one can sympathise with those who reject use of the word tribe, insofar as it usually implies primitive. (On broader origins of the word tribe and its becoming derogatory, See Hammond-Tooke, 1993, 37-8). But that is by no means universal especially where the community concerned use that designation as is the case in much of Africa and almost universally and apparently without objection in describing some communities in India. It is still in widespread use in South Africa, including Judge President Bernard Ngoepe (quoted Mangcu, 2009, 191.)

The designation of tribalism or ethnicity cannot be equated with ethnic chauvinism. This is how Joe Slovo appeared to see it, more or less to be overridden by a national identity (and now 'social cohesion', the latter term not in great usage before Slovo's death. See Slovo, 1988, 145-6, 149, ANC, 2007).

Likewise the notion of regionalism is not inherently divisive. It requires a case-by-case study of regional character in order to avoid the discourse that preceded establishment of the one party state in Africa. Insofar as it is desirable to build common understanding around laws that protect all, that needs to be worked on before going for the more grandiose, broader and imaginary cohesion, on the basis of 'what holds us together'.

Retrieving legacies and suppressed identities. While there is this tendency towards erasure of identities, there is an apparently divergent movement and only apparently so, in the celebration of Africa's past in static, romanticised, essentialised terms and this has considerable relevance to how social cohesion is conceived in recent ANC pronouncements. If respect is emphasised and recognition of what belongs to local people, what does this mean in terms of local knowledges, spiritualities and authorities claimed to be traditional?

It also affects what we may describe as the counter-apartheid knowledge project. Indian scholar, Gyan Prakash has emphasised that colonialism was not merely physical conquest but also entailed a knowledge project (Prakash, 1999, 3-10, for example), marginalising local understandings and belief systems. Part of liberation is not merely recovery of legacies that were trampled on, but development of a trajectory of emancipatory knowledge, entailing ways of understanding ourselves and our relationships in ways that are no longer demeaning. (Suttner, 2010a, 515-517, 525ff). This cannot be through simple retrieval or purported retrieval of customs of the past. (As with Holomisa, 2010).

This is often related to a purported universal and consensual way of doing things in pre-colonial Africa. Beninoise philosopher, Paulin Hountondji (1997, chapter 2) talks of an 'imaginary consensus' that is said to have reigned in pre-colonial Africa, which bequeathed to the present generation certain customs, which are in the hearts of all African people no matter where and when. Amongst many other authors on ubuntu in South Africa, Lesiba Teffo speaks of ubuntu/botho as part of some universal belief system, the 'spiritual foundation of all African societies…' (1999, 154,) Hountondji, (1997, 55ff), describes this as 'ethnophilosophy').

Another danger in simple/unproblematic retrieval is that there is often an assumption that chiefs are the custodians of these belief systems and know the culture better than anyone else and sometimes important alternative sources are ignored (Gasa, 2011). But generally it is elderly males who are the bearers of this oral tradition, often conceived as the result of transmission as an unchanging body of beliefs and traditions, over centuries.

The pre-colonial Africa 'consensus' has been built on to romanticise certain forms of leadership in the present. (See biography of Oliver Tambo by Callinicos, 2004, 14, 34-5 and generally. See earlier, Mandela's reflections on the consensus building within chiefdoms. There is no denying that there was a greater tendency towards reconciliation in African

customary courts than in Western courts and similar proceedings, in the context of their broader location in the pre-colonial society (as described by Mandela, 1994, 19-21 and in the early scholarly work of Max Gluckman, 1955).

But that is not the same as a generalised reign of consensus. If that is suggested (and now transmitted over time to recent generations) why were there continual breakaways of pre-colonial groupings forming new chiefdoms until the arrival of whites in settler colonies restricted the space and resources though the fissiparous process continued? Why, if there was such consensus were there wars in pre-colonial Africa, dominating substantial parts of the 19th century in South Africa, before the colonial conquest of most parts, most obviously following the rise to power of Shaka?

Within the ANC, operation by consensus is a valid phenomenon in that votes are not revealed or often not taken, but beneath every consensus is a dominant interpretation of its meaning and that continues to be subject to contestation, as with broad UN resolutions whose meanings are changed over time, as is the case with the use of force in international law. This has been completely rewritten in the post-Cold war period. The question really is how do those who are not dominant fare in terms of policies that are implemented and hard to turn around. In the present period, the meaning of an outwardly expressed or claimed consensus may be even less meaningful than it was at an earlier period of the ANC.

The celebration of the African past is important in the sense that the peoples of Africa are not asking to be tolerated or only to be treated as equals, but also to have their heritages recognised, acknowledged for what they are, the famous cities, places of learning and monuments to artistic creativity whether in sculpture, songs, poetry and rich intellectual thought. (See, for example, Bonner et al, 2007, Iliffe, 1995, Fage, 2002, Diop, 1987, Davidson, 1974, amongst many other works).

Not only was unanimity or consensus not present all the time in the pre-colonial order, but in contrast to static romanticism, these were dynamic social orders. There were always changes in custom, as noted amongst others by Monica Wilson (Hunter) (1961) J.F Holleman (1952) and Jack Simons (1968), amongst the early scholars of pre-colonial culture and customary law

Insofar as the precolonial societies were patriarchal, colonial and apartheid rule enhanced the power of male family heads beyond what had been the case prior to conquest, removing rights that women had previously possessed. (See Simons, 1968,187,194,198,261, Hunter, 1961, 119, Holleman, 1952, chapter viii). What this means is that the unconditional embrace of the past or manufactured versions which tend to be more conservative in relation to women is also an embrace of elements that threaten constitutional rights.   Under the guise of custom, cohesion (at the local chiefdom level) and unity, rights are in fact being suppressed.

This is not to say that custom, cohesion and unity are inherently problematic terms. What is at issues is the deideologising and denial of their contested nature. One cannot be against custom in a liberatory society. One cannot oppose attempts to ensure work for the common

good or respecting that which has been transmitted from the past. But none of this is a simple task and interpretations must be recognised as multiple.

Retrieval and renewal is based on values that in most cases replicate those that are on the one hand elements of heritage whose meanings are living and changing parts of people's lives. They may live in a range of conditions but that requires constant modification. The spiritual realm has room for flexibility and is not static. For example, if one is called to be a diviner requiring a long period of seclusion and this is not possible for the person concerned, a different arrangement can be made, accommodating the particular needs of the person. A series of distinct arrangements have to be made in different settings. (Personal communication Nomboniso Gasa, who is isangoma 2 April 2011).

But one of the key weaknesses of 'indigenous knowledge studies' (IKS) is that there is a tendency towards treating these as static and essentialist. Meanings are not problematised and evidence is not contextualised in changing social conditions.   (See Suttner, 2010 523-525). It leaves an opening for exotification and also appropriation of IKS by a range of business operations. This may be happening with the word ubuntu derived from a Nguni proverb, replicated in other languages, referring to one person's living amicably with others or dependent on others or 'personhood'.

The notion of caring embodied in the proverb is often commended to South Africans as a basis for mutual coexistence and there is clearly a basis for interpreting the word in a socialist or humanistic and emancipatory manner. The unionist slogan, 'an injury to one is an injury to all', and many similar phrases or proverbs evoke the same sentiments.

But it is also used by numerous business enterprises like Ubuntu armed response, Ubuntu financial services and many others to be found in telephone directories or the Telkom website. It is a part of business management courses which see ubuntu as a tool for ensuring peace between labour and capital. (Mbigi and Maree, 2005). We may ask what advantages do the initiators intend to accrue to each side?

The resultant *contestation over meaning needs recognition and engagement instead of ubuntu being treated as singular in meaning and unalterable or beyond debate.* Paradoxically, Ubuntu armed response knew better than some social philosophers than to accept that the meaning of the concept and the proverb from which it derived could have a meaning decided for all time. It is for those who have emancipatory visions to contest its appropriation by romantics, essentialists and those who represent repressive notions of social relations, as any private security company does. The private security sector represents a massive private concentration of force, but it also understands that it has to contest for its space, using most of the terminology of 'social cohesion', phrases promoting gated communities like ensuring community safety and neighbourhoods, where one will not come to harm etc.

The national liberation movement and the nation are highly patriarchal

The notion of the nation like all else in life is gendered and the liberation movements have tended to be masculinist and patriarchal. These characteristics were not uniform and mediated by the specific struggles concerned. (With less emphasis on mediation, see Nagel, 2005, in contrast to Walby, 2006. See also McLintock, 1995, Ranchod-Nillsson, 2000, Ivekovic and Mostov, 2004, amongst others). Nor were women without any agency, even where there was de jure absence of women in the public space or their actually or apparently accepting the supportive roles to which they were often relegated. (Ginwala, 1990). Despite the supposed dominance of the public realm by men, there is a long history of women's resistance in South Africa, strikingly illustrated in the march on Bloemfontein in 1913 under the banner 'we have done with pleading, we now demand!' (Wells 1993, Gasa, 2007b)

Nor did all men act in the same way. There needs to be recognition that some did play important roles in promoting gender equality and formed barriers against abuse, within institutions that were in fact masculinist in character, culture and power relations. (Suttner, 2008, chapter 6).

It remains history, however, that the SANNC was established as an all-male, all African organisation and women were only admitted in 1943, though they played a de facto role before this inside and outside the organisation. (Ginwala, 1990). In other words, the initial notion of the nation-to –be was that of an African male one. No one else was included then, though of course this changed in terms of gender and population groups admitted over time.

But the legacy of masculinism remains amongst other reasons in that the leadership of the ANC has always been male or male-dominated. Also, within the oral tradition of the ANC, when one is counselled on what to do, and how to conduct oneself one often hears reference to 'exemplary comrades' and how they behaved. Despite there being formidable women, though relatively small in numbers in the leadership, these tend to be overlooked in favour especially of men like Moses Kotane and Walter Sisulu, whose reputation (in the view of this author) is well-deserved. (Personal experience over some decades, when actively involved).

The patriarchal relations of the outer societies, African, colonial and apartheid era whites were imported into the ANC. Women were the primary if not the only caregivers, consigned to the domestic space, though we can see in the 1913 march and early Communist documentation that this public/private divide was contested, if not always through use of feminist language. (Walker, 1991, 42).

Nevertheless it was men in the main who formed the professional strata that comprised the initial leadership. It was men who could attend meetings at all times or come home late. Even in the neglected phenomenon of the ANC and Communist Party creating their own intellectuals (Suttner, 2005, relying on Gramsci's approach to what constitutes an intellectual, Gramsci, 1971, chapter 1) in practice it favoured men. Moses Kotane, who became a leading ANC/SACP intellectual, never attended formal schooling. The only education he had was self-taught and within the Communist night schools. (Interview Joe Matthews, 2009, Bunting 1998, chapter 1). This education in *night* schools meant it was the time when the caregiver

had to be at home and women and young girls were seldom able in the African community and usually beyond, to attend such classes.

Over time the ANC has attended in significant ways to the question of gender as exemplified in the declaration of the Year of the Woman in 1984 and in the 1990 National Executive Committee statement on the emancipation of women. (ANC, 1984, 1990). But all policy statements then and to this day and most legislation address the inclusion of women, that is, admission of greater and greater numbers of women in places previously the preserves of men. Women's status and inclusion is also treated in isolation from patriarchal powers which are not problematised.

As advances were made, women entered male organisations and institutions, where the times of meetings the structure of courses and strategies remained informed by the socially constructed needs of men. In the first democratic parliament large numbers of women were elected (increased in later years) but they generally continued to be the caregivers and home makers and many could be seen carrying shopping bags for the evening meal. Consequently their modes of entry have been different from that of the males who entered or who were already in the public domain.

The tools for dealing with women's advancement organisationally, were those made in masculine structures. Because the men were primarily leaders and there has not to this day been a single female president of the ANC, it is the men who form the primary models of leadership.

The models are by no means uniform. While the imagery of militarism and notions of bravery being associated with warfare, are very powerful within the ANC and it appears most nationalist movements (Ivekovic and Mostov, 2004, introduction), a person like Chief Albert Luthuli provides an alternative imagery of manhood and leadership, the firm but gentle man, who was dependent on his wife, Nokukhanya, as breadwinner, but also to listen and make input to his speeches, 'generally strengthening his confidence' (Ntombazana [Dr Albertinah Luthuli], eldest daughter], in Reddy, 1991, 15).

Because Nokukhanya MaBhengu Luthuli had to rise early to work the fields, Luthuli played an important role in nurturing the children. After MaBhengu went to bed (because she had to rise at 4 a.m.) he would stay up and talk with the children and pray and sing hymns and then sit down to read and write (and eat sweets). If any child's blanket fell off, it was Luthuli who would tuck them in. If any of the children had to go out to 'release themselves' Luthuli would take the child out. (Suttner, 2010b, relying on interviews with Albertinah Luthuli, Thandeka Luthuli Gcabashe and Thembekile, MaLuthuli, Ngobese, 2009 and Rule, 1993. On ANC masculinities in the period of illegality, more generally, see Suttner, 2008, chapter 6).

This is not to say that Luthuli was born with immunity to dominant masculinist norms. In his younger days his fanatical love of sport led him to link football to muscular manliness, and to bear the outlook of many ordinary young growing men. (See Alegi, nd). .

But that Ntombazana perceived her father's vulnerability and saw that he needed his confidence to be strengthened by his wife is a unique testimony of a type of masculinity that is not present in public discourse today, which does not feel that toughness is the only emotion to be displayed, with little room for gentleness.

Models of leadership may be supportive of women's rights and gender equality or undermine these. The ANC needs to clarify its position, if it seeks continued leadership or part of any foregrounding of struggle on this issue. Before gender equality can be realised there needs to be a decisive break with patriarchal relationships. The 'public' needs to move into the 'private', that is, everything that happens in terms of domestic care and household management is a question of politics and gender (in) equality, It must also move the private into the public, in that the previous gender unequal institutional culture, replicating that of the home needs to be remedied. When Dr Frene Ginwala became the speaker of the first democratically elected parliament she found a urinal in her office. There were few toilet facilities for women and no crèche facilities for children. This merely symbolised the overall institutional culture that had previously prevailed and still exists in various degrees in all the professions. No one can be a successful advocate/barrister, for example, without an absent Other who is taking care of or supervising the care of the children. The quantitative advancement of women has been within masculinist institutions.

Amongst other interventions the ANC, as government, has made in gender relations has been unevenly over gender violence in its discourse but also through protective legislation. Unfortunately this has not met with adequate community or police support and enforcement needs more organised backing. Static or dubious notions of culture are also used to suppress constitutional rights of women, with some stripped naked for wearing jeans or miniskirts or other clothes offending taxi drivers or other 'repositories of culture'.

Failure to come to terms with multifaceted implications of patriarchy

It must be seen as part of the unfinished business of the ANC that it has never thoroughly characterised the notion of patriarchy in its fullest manifestations, nor adequately organised and mobilised against attacks on gender equality. That is, including operating in a range of institutions and spheres of society and relationships between people attacking the freedom of women.

It is also *about policing heterosexuality, which is depicted as the only natural form of sexual relationship*. This is not of course peculiar to South Africa. To legislate on the rights of women and 'alternative' sexualities means that one must understand that it is not merely prejudice or hatred or dislike of the Other which sustain opposition to these rights, much as these may be factors.

We need to locate patriarchy as part of the public/private distinction where the presence of women in the public domain is an aberration and the institutions need to be reconstructed in order to be user friendly to all genders and sexualities. Audre Lorde has remarked that: 'the Master's tools will never dismantle the master's house' (Lorde, 2007, 110).This extends to political organisations and the professions.

Equally we need to understand that patriarchy operates in a different manner towards 'alternative' sexualities insofar as it is enforced against all. It targets the non-heterosexual person, but it also keeps all who are already following heterosexuality in conformity with the patriarchal notion of 'normality'.

Patriarchy and Freedom of sexual orientation

While the right to freedom of sexual orientation may be constitutionally entrenched, it is not deeply grounded. Insofar as people pursued alternative relationships (that is, alternative to heterosexuality) during the struggle they were generally invisible until the 1980s (though even then a small group were fairly openly gay or lesbian) and the idea of freedom of sexual orientation entrenched in the constitution is a latecomer to the rights in the Bill of Rights. (Gevisser, 1995). While the legal rights to practise such freedoms are in place, many or most still experience extensive victimisation and little protection. (Nel and Judge, 2008) There are strong moves to roll back these elements of the constitution. Some who have conservative religious bases or are chiefs and also sections of the ANC leadership clearly do not agree with this element of the constitution. (cf Zuma, 2006, news account). It is a case where some rights are more equal than others. It is also part of a realignment of the liberation movement alliance, where socially more conservative forces have been drawn closer.

The attack on non-heterosexual sexualities goes beyond the rights of gays and lesbians but affects a range of choices of sexuality. It is based on a myth of these being 'unAfrican'. (Epprecht, 2008, Gunkel, 2010). The word heterosexual only came into the English vocabulary in 1901, after the word homosexuality was listed in the Oxford dictionary in 1897 and the history of Africa, Asia and all continents of the world show that a range of sexual practices have existed from time immemorial. (Cranny-Francis, Waring, Stavropoulos, Kirkby, 2003, 17, Menon, 2007, 3-51).

The treatment of this question as an infringement of human or minority rights may be correct but this emphasis often tends to erase the complex operation of patriarchy, which is not adequately covered by the question of legal rights (for example, Ndashe, 2010, Gevisser, 2010). Another reason to question the usage is to ask how we know what a majority practice is. What is an alternative or dissident sexuality? (Epprecht, 2004, title page). Can it not be heterosexuality itself that deviates from the norm? Heterosexuality enjoys the assumption of being a majority practice because it has been depicted and legislated and naturalised as such. At the same time, those who contemplate open departures or practise these secretly are deterred from openness, amongst other reasons because research shows that attacks on alternative sexual identities increase with greater visibility. We know that the support services, such as police, medical and social work tend to be unsympathetic. There are cases where doctors have 'outed' victimised individuals and endangered their lives. (Nel and Judge, 2008).

If we have no way of counting who is a secret or aspirant practitioner of various forms of sexuality, how can we say what a minority tendency is and what the extent of alternatives to heterosexuality may be? Who knows what the potentialities are in many cases of people who

happen at one moment to be purely heterosexual and for one or other reason may or do secretly become bisexual or engage in one or other form of non-heterosexual activity. Consequently there cannot be statistics that reveal what is majority or alternative practice. Heterosexuality could in theory be an alternative despite its being in outward practice 'compulsory' and naturalised. (On the use of 'compulsory', see Rich, 1983). It may well be that heterosexuality is the ideal or practice of most. But that cannot be assumed.

That the lack of enforcement diverges from the law on freedom of sexual orientation means there is not willpower to ensure constitutionality. The laws seeking to remedy apartheid are generally unchallenged in public discourse and may enjoy enforcement, with exceptions regarding unskilled foreign Africans and foreigners who are not white in particular. But do most South Africans accept that the right against racial discrimination is equal to the rights against gender violence and freedom to choose sexual orientation?

To enforce these constitutional rights requires organisation and both feminist organisations and those of alternative sexualities, alternatives to the 'natural', heterosexual, are very weak. In contrast, the religious right and 'traditional' chiefs who spearhead patriarchy appear to have the ear of the president and sections of government and are organised. That is a key question to remedy for all those who respect the indivisibility of freedom. In the case of patriarchy, it needs to be rolled back more substantially to undermine its public/private foundations. In regard to sexualities it is a key question to end the invisibility of those who have constitutional rights which they fear to exercise or are often victimised when they do. It is necessary to eliminate a de facto hierarchy of what purport to be equal rights. Only then can these rights be lived so that we all know and accept that they are rights.

Violence/militarism

Without denying the insights on structural and other violence beyond what are treated here, perpetration of violence is primarily a question related to men and is endemic in our society as a whole, mainly perpetrated by men. This is a problem in a range of societies and especially those which have undergone armed liberation struggles, though the structural violence of most societies appear to include as a specific element, gender violence whether or not there has been a liberation struggle. (Mostov and Ivekovic 2004, introduction, Enloe, 2004, for example chapter 7). Furthermore, within South Africa, the legacies are also found in sites which precede and coexisted with the liberation struggle including township gangs and other forms of predominantly masculine violence. (Glaser, 2000, Steinberg, 2005, 2008, Bonner and Nieftagodien, 2008, in the general texture of the social relations and specifically at 8ff and 100ff).

The ANC was formed in the aftermath of the wars of resistance to conquest. Consequently people like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu recall growing up and hearing about Makhanda (Xhosa speaking prophet who led an attack on Grahamstown in the early 19th century) and other heroes of resistance (Mandela, 1994, Sisulu, 2001, 2002. This, incidentally, is another instance where the role of women, as warriors, is neglected. (See

Weir, 2007 and the case of the mother of Sekonyela, the baTlokwa regent, MaNthatisi, who led her warriors in battle in the early 19th century).

Has the national liberation movement settled with its own history in order to address these questions insofar as one may argue that elements of its heroic legacies are related to or are used to legitimate current violence or war talk? (Suttner, 2010c). Wars of resistance to conquest themselves leave a residual respect for a warrior tradition of manhood now in regular but decontextualized display through songs and utterances. Interestingly, Thula Bopela and Daluxolo Luthuli (who was in the ANC/ZAPU [7]Wankie campaign, in Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) hit squads and apparently returned to the ANC), write of their recognising with gratitude the ANC and MK 'giving them the opportunity to express their manhood.' (Bapela and Luthuli, 2005, Acknowledgements. See also title of chapter 1:'from boys to men'.).

That is why, when the ANC established radio stations in various independent African states the broadcasts would begin by invoking the memory of great warriors of the past. (CD:Radio Freedom,1996, Lekgoathi, 2010, 143ff). MK was conceived as an army 'born of the people', a result of the closing of the space for legal and peaceful resistance to such an extent that the only way to meet violence was by counter-violence.

With great foresight, African intellectual and ANC leader, Professor ZK Matthews remarked on the armed struggle being led by people like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu who were *committed to peaceful nonviolent struggle*. (ZK Matthews, 1964, 354.) On a superficial reading this could be construed as naiveté on his part, to depict Mandela and Sisulu as nonviolent resisters. But in reality, Matthews understood that resort to arms was an interlude. It could not be a permanent state of affairs or state of mind that preoccupied the people of South Africa, if they wanted to build a democratic, emancipatory society. Physical force could be provisionally accepted as defence against violence but it would never be sustainable or of utility in *resolving* problems. (Personal communication, John Hoffman, 21 September 2010.)

Luthuli is wrongly depicted as having absolutely opposed the armed struggle and the formation of MK (Couper, 2010) or alternatively so fervently supportive as to have named MK. (Zuma, 2010, citing no source). Luthuli like Kotane was slow to agree. The more impatient, younger Mandela and Sisulu had already secretly inquired about receiving arms from the Chinese in 1953, echoing the sentiments of many others at that time, to 'fight back'. (SADET, 2004, Mandela, 1994, E. Sisulu, 2003). Luthuli concluded that the intransigence of the apartheid regime made the resort to arms a necessity, though he cautioned that people had to be properly trained. (Suttner, 2010b).

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[7] Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, then led by the late Joshua Nkomo which formed an alliance with the ANC which led to combined military actions in former Rhodesia, starting in 1967.

What is not understood by some of the current generation, who sing songs of war with words like 'kill the boer'[8] or police, like General Mzandile Petros, who are quick to speak of 'picking up the spear' again (Tau, Germaner, 2010) is that violence is not and was never seen as a virtue, but a tragic necessity. (Interview Albertinah Luthuli, Suttner, 2010a). Interestingly, this was well understood in one of the most important ANC documents, the Morogoro Strategy and Tactics of 1969, mapping out a strategy for defeating apartheid, including extensive armed struggle:

When we talk of revolutionary armed struggle, we are talking of political struggle by means which include the use of military force even though once force as a tactic is introduced it has the most far-reaching consequences on every aspect of our activities. It is important to emphasis this because *our movement must reject all manifestations of militarism which separates armed people's struggle from its political context.* (ANC, 1969. Emphasis inserted).

There is absolute clarity here. 'All manifestations of militarism', that is war songs, romanticisation of war, the gun, shooting and similar are not applicable or their applicability has to be carefully judged in the context of peaceful struggle. That such songs are part of liberation heritage does not mean that they can be applied in the same way as Nkosi sikelele i Afrika, since many liberation war songs, may constitute incitement and entrenchment of a militaristic climate in the present context.

One law for the lion and the ox is oppression

-William Blake, ([c 1790-1793] 1966)

Recently the South African Communist Party sought to rebut criticism of spending on the World Youth Festival, entailing millions of rands during 2010, by indicating supposed ignorance of the value of 'social cohesion' amongst the critics. (SACP spokesperson, 2011). In referring to social cohesion, one would have thought that Marxists, amongst the first, would be cautious. If one takes the above quotation from William Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, it is a maxim of Marxism that law cannot serve rich and poor equally.

'**Justice is open to everyone in the same way as the Ritz Hotel**', according to Judge **Sturgess(nd.), derived from** Anatole France, referring to the Paris Ritz. Entry was both free and unfree. The word law can also be taken as an embodiment of a community of unequals or a nation or 'cohesive community' and requires examining the terms of such legal unity or cohesion or basis for coming together or allegedly holding people or groups or classes together. That is why judges often speak of 'society' demanding a heavy sentence. (Suttner, 1986). Any Marxist or any one of us will need to learn again from Blake that social cohesion and national unity entails joining different elements, each of which experience such union differently.

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[8] It should be noted that the term boer, originally meaning farmer and referring to Afrikaner whites in the main was used during the struggle to refer to those who formed part of the apartheid institutional structure, whether formally or informally. This applied to English as well as Afrikaans speaking 'boers/boere'. (See Suttner, 2010c)

Is the unity (or law equal in joining) of patriarch and women the same experience for each? Does the unity of patriarch and non-heterosexual people have the same level of benefits for each? (This is not to suggest that patriarchal features are never replicated in non-heterosexual relationships). What is the equality for the intersexed person when only two genders are listed in the laws of citizenship of any projected cohesive community? What is the unity of a national entity that privileges inherited leadership to the detriment of those who are 'joined' under the jurisdiction of 'traditional chiefs' against their will? What is the quality of cohesion in a society where forced marriage of young girls is happening daily in areas like Lusikisiki and virginity testing is becoming a well-established practice? How do we characterise a law that binds big capital and the poor together as if they must each bite the bullet with equal consequences? Are the unpaid miners in Aurora's Grootvlei mine in an emerging cohesive relationship with the main shareholders and owners?[9] What do we call the cohesion which allows relatives of high officeholders to accumulate great wealth through patronage or uninvestigated irregularities? What is the guiding principle of ubuntu in the hands of Ubuntu armed response as opposed to Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu, given that ubuntu might well be held up as a guiding principle of social cohesion and nation building?

Nothing is inevitable and irreversible.

This contribution has entailed a critique of the foundations of the national in the national liberation model and its connection with notions like social cohesion, which may currently feed into a range of scourges such as violent masculinities, intolerance of identities, gender and sexual violence, elevation of non-elected chiefs above democratic government, essentialist and romantic notions of culture and custom.

None of this is our inevitable destiny. At the start of this paper I quoted Cynthia Enloe on the importance of being curious, asking questions about what we take as inevitable and natural in our lives. There is nothing inherently wrong with a notion of the nation or social cohesion or community or unity, as indicated before. *Tendencies in one or other direction do not mean inevitabilities.* We need to understand how a tendency has unfolded and how to re-direct it towards a path that is empowering. It is up to those of us who believe in emancipatory, unfolding goals to enter debates and struggles over the meanings of all concepts that affect our liberation. We should do this on a non-sectarian basis in order to involve as wide a range of people who wish to defend, advance and broaden our freedoms. Emancipation is not a word with a final meaning, like most else in this paper. It needs to be appropriated with its relevant and associated concepts to give meanings and match these with social organisation to take us to a space where we can enter a process of continual advance and popular self-empowerment.

This work is essentially provisional. Questions are more important than answers when we are flooded with answers that are leading us no further towards solutions. This is an attempt to ask the right questions and tentatively suggest directions to pursue.

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[9] This is a mine owned by Zondwa Mandela, grandson of Nelson Mandela and Khulubuse Zuma, nephew of the president, where miners have not been paid wages for over a year.

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