

**The Role of Black Consciousness in the Experience of Being Black in South
Africa:**

The Shaping of the Identity of Two Members of AZAPO

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ABSTRACT

The research attempts to understand the role Black Consciousness (BC) plays in the identity of blacks in South Africa by exploring and describing the experience of self-identity in the life-history context of two members of AZAPO, a BC organisation. The literature review explores the work of Biko, Manganyi, and Fanon with a view to understanding whether and how it might be claimed that BC galvanises the black person to discard the crippling fear of colonialism which inflicts feelings of inferiority, and to rise up to claim his/her rightful place in community life.

To explore the philosophical assumptions made in the literature review, a qualitative study was conducted. Interviews were conducted with two black adults who have adopted BC philosophy. Three separate in-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted which yielded a description of the experiences of each respondent. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews and they were transcribed for analysis. A thematic analysis was conducted using the reading guide method. The material was thematised using the following questions: What biographical factors are seen as being important prior to the respondent becoming black conscious? How did the participant come to realise his/her self-identity as problematic? How did the process of adopting BC change the participant's self-identity?

The results indicate that participants became aware very early in their lives and prior to adopting BC, that their own supportive and cohesive family cultures were at odds with the surrounding social context. Early experiences of this were initially unintelligible but impressionable. BC in this sense provided a framework for understanding and engaging with these experiences. The study shows that the adoption of BC helped to make sense of experiences of community isolation, discrimination, oppression and provided them with a mode of engaging practically with these issues. It was not adopted from a perspective of poor self-esteem or other such purely personal characteristics which may have been expected on the basis of literature in the area. BC was adopted as a way of understanding the relationship between their communities or backgrounds and the broader social environment and if there was a 'healing' project it was at this level.

However, the study did show the close relationship between individual and social well-being that emerged as intrinsic both to the philosophy of BC and the lives of these individuals. This was shown to play out in the commitment of these individuals to the development of black communities and in their tying of their own destinies to the destiny of the oppressed black people in general. These and other issues which emerged in the two case studies are discussed in relation to the literature in the area.

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CHAPTER 1:

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Out of the blackest part of my soul, across the zebra striping of my mind, surges this desire to be suddenly white (Fanon, 1967, p.63).

This type (i.e. the African) has some wonderful characteristics. It has largely remained a child-type, with a child psychology and outlook. A child-like human cannot be a bad human. Perhaps, as a direct result of this temperament the African is the only happy human I have come across. No other race is so easily satisfied, so good-tempered.... The African easily forgets of troubles and does not anticipate future troubles. This happy go lucky disposition is a great asset, but it also has its drawbacks. There is no inward incentive to improvement, there is no persistent effort in construction, and there is complete absorption in the present. No indigenous religion has evolved, no literature, no art. They can stand any amount of physical hardships and suffering.... Separation (racial) is imperative...to prevent the native traditions and institutions from being swamped by the more powerful organisations of the whites...(Smuts, cited in Harilall, 1988, pp.21-22).

The psychology of Black Consciousness (BC) is embedded in the literature of Black Consciousness movements (BCMs), both in South Africa and abroad. The body of literature on BC is for the most part not specifically psychologically originated, although certain writers like Fanon (1963, 1967) and Manganyi (1973) do focus on psychological issues. For the rest the psychology of BC needs to be picked out of the literature, which for the most part, is not written for academic purposes. Authors such as Biko (1978, 1979), Cesaire (1955), Fatton (1986), Hiro (1992), Pityana, Ramphele, Mpumlwana and Wilson (1991) and Sono (1993) say a great deal about what it means to be conscious of being black, but they do not frame their assertions in relation to the discipline of psychology. The proposed research aims to draw on this literature with a view to developing a better psychological understanding of the meaning of BC in the experience of being black in South Africa.

The study intends to investigate and understand the psychology of BC and establish it as a legitimate area of psychological study. In the present context this will be done, not by breaking new ground, but rather by exploring the validity of some of the above-mentioned authors' ideas in a formal and empirical framework. The BC Movement (BCM), which calls for the adoption of BC as a definitive step in the healing of black identity, has not been subjected to much psychological study in South Africa. The

present research will focus particularly on the meaning and experience of BC by grounding the analysis in the experiences of respondents who have become black conscious.

1.2. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The following is a concise description of what is to be covered in this thesis.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the literature on BC philosophy. The chapter provides a description of the study which is to examine the psychology of BC in the experience of being black in South Africa. Further, the delimitations of the study are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2

This chapter deals with the contextual definition of racism as the oppression of a group by another with the intention of subjugating the oppressed group. Racism is perceived to be the basic milieu from which BC emerged. The chapter describes how the concept of BC emerged in South Africa as a result of the realisation by black people that the inhumane treatment they suffered could be attributed to social practices based on racial categorisation which deprived them of a decent human life. This chapter shows that BC emerged when marginalised people equipped themselves with the skills needed to rid themselves of racism. The definition of the phenomenon of BC as a 'tool' that has the possibility to transform the psychology of black communities is to be dealt with in this chapter.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 provides a detailed survey of the work of authors who have made a contribution to understanding the psychology of BC. In particular, the works of Frantz Fanon, Chabang Manganyi and Steve Biko are dealt with. The thesis explores each author's view of the psychological ramifications of racism, and the extent to which racial oppression undermines a stable and secure sense of identity among black people. Their views on BC as a definite step in the healing of black identity are explored.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 discusses the methodology which enabled the researcher to collect and analyse data, in order to understand the meaning of BC in the experience of being black.

Chapter 5

This chapter presents the results of interviews with two participants in the form of a description of their experiences before and after they had adopted the philosophy of BC. Interviews are reported separately under major themes such as: understanding the precursors to the experiences of becoming black conscious and the conditions which lead to the adoption of BC philosophy and practice; understanding the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious; understanding the continuing importance of BC in the lives of those who have become black conscious; and the forms of practice which entail being black conscious. Then other themes such as: black identity, the plight for humanity, community development and culture from the interviews with the participants are integrated and a summary, which cuts across the interviews with both participants, is presented.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 discusses and interprets the empirical material collected for this study in the context of the theoretical issues raised in the literature review, and achieves integration of the theoretical and empirical parts of the study. This chapter also looks at the insight gained by the researcher and the limitations of this study.

Chapter 7

Lastly, implications and recommendations concerning the meaning of BC and its place in psychology are examined.

1.3. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The exploratory nature of the study takes a ‘snapshot’ of the BCM. It is a brief moment in time in which the investigation enters into the life of two participants. It should be recognised that there are a number of variables that impact on the nature of the ‘snapshot’ taken. The investigation

‘mirrors’ the lived experience of two participants prior to and after they had adopted BC philosophy. A review of a philosophy such as BC, cannot be conclusive, because as a philosophy it is changing all the time.

- This investigation is qualitative in nature, and is therefore characterised by an interpretative perspective, which means the findings are to a certain extent theory-bound, although the research was also conceived as a way of developing and extending the psychology of BC.

CHAPTER 2: KEY CONCEPTS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The discussion in this chapter focuses on racism and the emergence of BC. This discussion is prompted by an assumed ongoing debate as to whether BC is racism in reverse or whether it is an anti-racist phenomenon.

2.2. RACISM

The concept of racism has been studied widely without consensus being reached as to what it really is. The background for this lack of uniformity seems to derive from uncertainty as to whether race is anatomically, or socio-culturally determined (Tobias, 1972; Brown, 1973; McCulloch, 1983). In their study of race and racism in the lives of young people of mixed parentage, Tizard and Phoenix (1993) postulate that some regard racism as a form of prejudice based on “an individual’s ignorance of, and hostility towards, a racial group seen as alien” (p.89).

On the other hand, racism is perceived as a societal practice which keeps on changing and is used to maintain the status quo with respect to the power relations between groups (Tizard & Phoenix, 1993). This study looks at racism only in the context of the research, meaning that no attempt is made to generate a generic concept of racism. The meaning of the term racism is given a particular context in this study and will be elaborated upon in this context.

In her analysis of racism Wortham (1981) postulates how race consciousness induces racism. According to her, race consciousness and racism differ circumstantially. Race consciousness in this context refers to the state of awareness of people, which, according to Wortham (1981), is the perception of oneself and others as being biologically determined and the judgement of the self and others according to these biological attributes. She sees race consciousness as a personal attitude arising out of ignorance and as the conflict between a person’s values and the facts of reality. It is the realisation of the racial differences between categories and this leads to racial distinction.

Wortham (1981) argues further that once consciousness is articulated as a socio-cultural belief that is given political and economic expression in a society, it induces racism. As she argues that racism is

the dilemma of race consciousness translated into a sociocultural dogma that is given political and economic expression in a society. It is an institutionalised form of collectivism such as the racism of the militarised tribalism of many African countries or the apartheid in South Africa (p.17).

The extract above views racism as a political and economic force in communities, “but it is seldom presented within the context of the dilemma of race consciousness that is antecedent to it” (Wortham, 1981, p.20). By implication, it is important to note that individuals respond either to their own personal dilemma or they act as agents of institutional racism. For instance, not every black person wishes to ‘drive white people into the sea’, but there are white people who can’t meet a black person without simultaneously visualising themselves being driven into the sea. Therefore, the alleged threat the white person perceives in the presence of an innocent black may be of his/her own making. Needless to say, he/she is the victim of his/her own race consciousness. Therefore, the dilemma is his/her own private conflict. If he/she resorts to an expression that violates the individual rights of the black person, such an existential expression reflects racism. This explanation implies that once the perceived threat either of whites or blacks is institutionalised by anyone, in order to suppress the other group in such a way that its rights are violated, racism is expressed.

According to van Dijk’s (1993) perception racism encapsulates acts such as negative opinions, attitudes and

conditions of discrimination...namely those social cognitions and social acts, processes, structures, or institutions that directly or indirectly contribute to the dominance of the white group... (p.5).

In van Dijk’s (1987) view ‘opinions’ are single ‘evaluative beliefs’ harboured by the dominant group while attitudes are perceived as a “complex, schematic structure of general opinions stored in the long-term memory” (p.27). The perception of the dominant group as different from the subjugated one is attributed to opinions and attitudes.

Central to racism is the reflection of power that the dominant group demonstrates over the oppressed group, which is perceived as inferior. Biko (1978) echoes this view when he adds that racism implies prejudice and discrimination. In his analysis of racism in South Africa, Biko argues that it might thus be said that the superior and arrogant attitudes that white people have are a consequence of perceiving themselves as a superior race in contrast to the perceived inferior black race. In such a scenario they maintain the attitude through subjugation of the inferior group. To subjugate the other group as an inferior race requires that the dominant group use power to maintain its status of superiority.

Van Dijk (1993) attests that subtly and blatantly racist events are enacted and controlled by a white elite, *inter alia*, politicians, editors, judges, managers and professors. He adds that

If whites are not themselves actively involved in this modern form of segregation, exclusion, aggression, inferiorisation, or marginalisation, then their involvement in the problem of racism consists in their passivity, their acquiescence, their ignorance, and their indifference regarding ethnic or racial inequality (p.6).

This suggests that racism penetrates societies in different subtle forms. There are many of subtly and the blatantly racist events that the system of daily racism are enacted, controlled or condoned by those who practise racism.

In his study of discourses of public violence and the reproduction of racism, Duncan (1996) analyses the discursive processes involved in the reproduction of the ideology of racism in South Africa. Of particular importance is Duncan's explanation of the dominant group using power through the media to inculcate feelings of inferiority among black people. He shows that media do so by attributing negative terms to black people. Duncan (1996) argues that media reports are not neutral transmitters of information regarding issues of public violence. Instead they serve as an instrument of reconstruction of the negative characterisation of blacks.

From this perspective it seems to be appropriate to say that the stereotypical representation of the 'marginalised' which emerges from the mass media can be considered 'inherently' racist. Duncan adds

that this has an effect in maintenance of the media's domination at the hands of dominant white groups who are in charge of most forms of mass media.

In addition, Essed (1991) attests that racism operates through cultural conflicts where power is used either to reproduce and maintain racism or to combat it. Essed argues further that it is the dominant group that usually uses power to entrench racism by attributing negative terms to blacks and the projection of blacks as inferior while the dominant group is usually inclined to deny their practising racism.

In the 1968 Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, Wicker (in Wortham, 1981) states that racism is "immoral because it negates the nature of man and the requirements of his survival" (p.3). This implies that racism is viewed as a "collective illness, as a doctrine conditioned in one by his culture and shared by him with his contemporaries..." (p.5).

McCulloch (1985) refers to racism and colonialism as two integral and coordinated assaults on oppressed people. As they are characterised by violence that sustains them in all corners of social existence, they do not allow any human activity to be untarnished.

Even the search for knowledge and the honoured practice of healing become easily perverted into instruments of greed, social control, and dehumanisation (McCulloch, 1985, p.81).

These authors support Biko's (1978) and Foster's (1997) perception of racism as a system of ideas and practices which classify people on the basis of skin colour, regarding one group as more deserving of power and privilege than the other. South Africa under the apartheid regime is a notorious example. Through their quest for power, white people have collectively destroyed the land they colonised and the indigenous people.

Having explained racism I will now turn to BC.

2.3. THE EMERGENCE OF BCM

The emergence of the BCM in South Africa was a response to the political vacuum that prevailed after the silencing of political organisations and the imprisonment of political activists in the 1960s.

At higher institutions of learning, the liberally oriented National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) and the rightist Afrikaner Studentebond (ASB) jumped at the opportunity provided by the political vacuum, by pioneering and facilitating political 'relevance', even for black students. As a liberal organ NUSAS was committed to its policy of the racially integrated society (Fredrickson, 1995). Yet at the 1967 annual conference at Rhodes University in Grahamstown black delegates were segregated from white delegates and they were accommodated separately far from the conference venue. According to Fredrickson (1995) Biko, one of the delegates, realised that black students were accorded lower status and second class treatment by NUSAS.

The union's executive was made up predominantly of whites who represented mainly white students and did not understand the problems and the needs of the black students. Through their exposure to English and Afrikaans, and their superior education system, white students had an advantage which they used to describe black students' lives of which they had no real experience. Black students were 'forced' into a subservient position because they could not express themselves (Biko, 1978 & Buthelezi, 1991). According to Sono (1993) this kind of situation has also inculcated a sense of inadequacy because the black students perceived the situation as resulting from difference in intelligence rather than exposure to education. This period ushered in the realisation among many black students that their being involved in NUSAS was only a matter of visibility rather than active participation in matters that affected them directly (Sono, 1993). The continued discontent of black students and their realisation that the 'misguided' liberal bandwagon was misrepresenting their aspirations foreshadowed the desire for a vigorous, self-conscious, black solidarity (Sono, 1993).

Black students were no longer prepared to accept white representation in issues that affected them and the rest of the black community. The formation of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) by black students which laid the foundation for and became the 'cradle' of the BCM in South Africa (Ranuga, 1986) was to ensure representation of black students' views and create a sense of solidarity among black students in South Africa.

During the formative period of SASO, its perception of the role of black students in the liberation process itself eventually crystallised into the ideology of BC. It was in SASO that the adoption of BC by black people was advocated with the purpose of establishing a sense of solid identity amongst black students and restoring their human dignity and self-respect. SASO posited that active participation in their own structures, rather than mere visibility in white structures, would provide the opportunity to lift black students out of what Biko (1978) referred to as the "doldrums". Biko (1978) states that black students have the responsibility to affirm both themselves and their black society. Using BC, which primarily emerged in the student movement, SASO worked for the liberation of black people:

first from psychological oppression by themselves through inferiority complex and secondly from physical oppression occurring out of living in a White racist society (SASO policy manifesto, cited in Fatton, 1986, p.70).

This suggests that BC uses blackness as an organising principle which is conceived at the level of the individual and takes the need for a form of psychological reassessment. This psychological attitudinal reassessment prepares the groundwork for a reflexive political program which presents the relationship between self and society.

The literature reviewed reveals that the emergence of BC and how it is used to liberate black people should also be looked at against the background of the ideas of its advocates such as Fanon, Manganyi and Biko. These authors were preoccupied with and greatly distressed by the legacy of oppression, the inferiority complex of black people, and their continued tendency to idolise whites as their role models. In their writings, these authors aimed primarily at organising the physically and psychologically

oppressed people of their respective societies, to rise up and retrieve their self-identity and “true humanity” and thus resume their rightful place as respected members of society. Their common focus was the consciousness of the black person as the repository of crippling inferiority complexes.

2.3.1. The definition of BC

An analysis of BC should begin with its definition, which would serve as a context within which this investigation explores the psychology of BC in the lived experience of blacks in South Africa. The conditions and legacy of colonial racism, which affected the black person adversely, determined the emergence of BC.

The SASO Policy Manifesto (in Khoapa, 1973) provides a common definition of what BC is. (See Appendix). Central to the definition is the understanding of BC as an ‘attitude of mind, a way of life’ rather than solely as a political concept. A review of the literature indicates that BC arises from blacks’ experiences in the society in which they live. Biko (1978) defines BC as

the realisation by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their operation...and operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude (p. 49).

In this explanation BC signifies the search for self, affirms it in positive terms, and places it within a social context, which is black solidarity. The phenomenon embodies the quest by black people to claim particular values as their own; expresses an identity of the oppressed black person within a social milieu of racial domination; and also proposes a political strategy for doing this. The basic tenet of BC is that the black person must reject all value systems that seek to reduce his/her human dignity (Khoapa, 1972). Therefore black people must build up value systems and see themselves as self-defined.

BC suggests that the black person should be aware of the significance and the importance of his/her own value systems which define socio-economic, political and cultural values.

It also implies an awareness on the part of black people of the power they exert as a group. Therefore, group cohesion and solidarity are fundamental to BC.

BC poses a challenge to black people to realise that liberation is essential to consciousness of self, “for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage” (Biko, 1978, p.). The psychological impact of this realisation is the assumption that BC transforms the concept black and equates it with freedom. The challenge of BC for any black person, is the need for a new and incisive redefinition, re-identification and reappraisal of the black totality in the context of racist environments.

Instead of referring to the oppressed as ‘non-whites’ which was perceived as a negation of being and suggesting that the oppressed were “non-something” (Wilson, 1991), the oppressed preferred to use ‘black’ as the concept that gave them an identity. The concept black was seen as more than just a skin colour. It meant acting differently from white racism in the sense that the goals of the BCM were to end the oppression and exploitation of black people and to build a more just and humane society. Therefore, black was/is not just a skin colour, but symbolic of an ethic and philosophy of social justice and social change. According to Du Bois (1905) and Wortham (1981) the term black is a concept of attitudes, values and awareness deemed to be peculiar to certain ‘Negroes’. This implies that blackness is not a concept of biology and therefore is not all-inclusive even to Africans. The analysis reveals that blackness symbolises how individuals perceive themselves and their existential experiences.

In his analysis, Biko (1978) defines black as a reflection of mental attitude. This implies that black people are those who perceive and describe themselves as blacks. He adds that they must commit themselves to “fight against all those forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you as a subservient being” (Biko, 1978, p.48). In so doing he said that they should be able to restore their lost humanity and boost their self-confidence. According to Wilmore (1993), the focus on blackness does not mean that only black people suffer as victims of racism, but that blackness is an ontological symbol and visible reality which best describes what oppression means to the oppressed people. Black

then refers to all victims of oppression who are conscious that their humanity is inseparable from liberation from white racism. Manganyi (1973) also stresses that BC does not only signify skin colour. He argues that the sociological schema of the black body, which is equated to unwholesomeness, affects the black person's existential experience. Consequently, the philosophy of BC has no choice but to start from the existential experience of the black body.

In other words, it has determined part of the totality of the experience of which we are being called upon to be conscious. In terms of our body, then, we may say that we are being called upon to experience our black bodies in a revitalised way. We are being called upon to change the negative sociological schema imposed upon us by whites (p.18).

As a result of adopting BC, the black person evaluates him/herself by reflecting on the 'intrapyschic world', that is, perceptions, emotions and actions, and arrives at a perception that promotes a positive self-image.

According to Cone (1973) BC is an appropriate expression in black life, forcing the black community to deal with the new black person. It says that black people are aware of the meaning of their blackness. BC is the black person's self-awareness. To know blackness is to know the self, which is a prerequisite for being cognisant of other selves in relation to the self. It is knowing the criterion of acceptance and rejection in the human encounter. The black person knows that his/her blackness is the reason for his/her oppression. Focusing on the colour of the 'victim' is a way of accounting for racism against the black community. Cone (1973) states that it is impossible to be human without fighting against the forces that want to destroy humanity by undermining human dignity. It suggests that the black person knows that the knowledge of his/her being puts him/her in conflict with those who refuse to recognise his/her humanity. Therefore, BC is the knowledge of the source of black oppression and the willingness to fight against the source.

Also of particular importance is the understanding of the use of the concepts 'blackness' and 'Africanness' within the ambit of BC. Cone and Wilmore (1970) use blackness to identify the people of the diaspora, those who were oppressed in America. This concept was used later in Africa to refer to the colonised. In South Africa it is used to refer to all those who are economically, socially and

politically discriminated against (Biko, 1978). In his analysis of Black theology and African Theology, Tutu (1979) states that Africanness and African culture emerge out of joy. He seems to suggest that African culture arises out of spontaneous joy in being an African responding to life and ideas as one 'redeemed'.

On the other hand, in his analysis of how an African views American Black theology, Mbiti (1979) argues that blackness originates from a situation of oppression that causes pain. It is a response to the history of humiliation and oppression and a cry of protest against conditions that persisted for years. According to Mbiti (1979) blackness strikes a responsive chord and deserves a hearing in a country like South Africa because "African peoples in South Africa are oppressed, exploited...robbed of their land and dignity and are denied even a minimum of human rights" (p.481).

From this perspective it blackness seems to be BC's culture of protest that emerges from the pain and suffering of oppression.

2.3.2. BC *vis-a-vis* racism

Manganyi (1973) and Biko (1978) explain that BC also includes working for the emancipation of blacks from psychological oppression by themselves. 'Black people' are in this context defined as those who are by law or tradition oppressed as a group and therefore identify themselves as a unit in order to free themselves. In his analysis, Biko (1978) refutes any perceptions that equate BC with racism. Expressing racial differences without exercisable powers does not suggest the practice of racism, following the argument proposed earlier. Therefore BC exponents are not racists, as long as they are fighting against domination.

Racism is the use of racial differences to exercise power against the another group, which is perceived to be different and inferior. An example of this is the South African apartheid government formed by white people with condescending attitudes towards black people. Biko (1978) says that BC is "more than just a reactionary rejection of whites by blacks...it expresses group pride and the determination by the blacks to rise and attain the envisaged self" (p.69).

A review of the literature indicates that 'separatism' between blacks and whites should be attributed to colonial racism, which was practised in churches, schools, government and other colonial institutions. Whites have created their own racial prison by according higher status to themselves while placing black people in another prison of 'bondage'. It is these different conditions that develop whites' stereotypes of feeling superior and blacks' inferior. According to BC white people need to free their own people from the construction of superiority that they have harboured for a long time.

Needless to say, solidarity aimed at eradicating the legacy of colonial oppression, feelings of inferiority, and the assertion of a feeling of positive self-regard by black people, does not mean hating those who are excluded. It simply means that since white and black problems are different, the approaches to dealing with those problems are also different.

BC enables black people to organise in the black community and rely on their own resources. Its purpose is to lead and free the black person from all dependency relationships with those perceived as oppressors. The joint reference to 'Africans', 'coloureds' and Indians as blacks, suggests that the solidarity of the marginalised was determined by the colour of their skin, as well as by their common experience, which was dictated by the oppressive colonial environment. So BC, in essence, enables oppressed people to "operate as a group to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude" (Biko, 1978, p.92), rather than by binding them to the racist categories of the oppressors

The following chapter will focus on BC advocates, *inter alia*, Fanon, Manganyi and Biko. The chapter will explore their analyses of the situations in which oppressed black people find themselves and the psychology that impacts on the lives of the oppressed people. The authors' perceptions of BC as a remedy that can be adopted by the oppressed person to strive for the realisation of a positive self-image and self-worth will also be explored.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This literature review outlines the work of three of the significant theorists of BC and attempts to provide some insight into the difficulties encountered by black people in their endeavour to regain their identity.

3.2. FRANTZ FANON

Frantz Fanon was a black psychiatrist born in Martinique who became an Algerian citizen by choice. As the head of the psychiatric service at Blida hospital, outside Algiers, he led a double life, treating French soldiers whilst training revolutionaries in order to fight colonialism in Algeria. His work as a psychiatrist and his personal experiences in Martinique helped him to analyse the situation in Algeria from a psychological point of view.

Central to his work is an attempt to resolve the problems of black identity created by difficult relationships between African, European and 'New World' cultures. Fanon's own subjective experience as a black person is critical in his writings on colonialism and racial oppression. This is confirmed by Kruks (1996) when he says: "there is both a concrete knowing and a depth of passion to this work that rendered it a classic for later movements for BC" (p.127).

3.2.1. Fanon's perceptions of the problem

Fanon (1963) argues that the colonised environment is characterised by social division between the indigenous people and colonialists and he describes the environment as a "Manichean world".

According to Fanon (1967) the Manichean world, is a condition made up of an irreconcilable white area and an area belonging to natives. He argues that the native areas which are places of ill fame, overcrowded by people of evil repute and a place wallowing in a mire is juxtaposed with the settler's strongly built town which is always attractive.

The two social contexts in which these "protagonists" live are "reciprocally exclusive". Fanon (1963) states that

The settler's town is a strong-built town, all made of stone and steel. It is a brightly-lit town; the streets are covered with asphalt, and the garbage-cans swallow all the leavings, unseen, unknown and hardly thought about. The settler's feet are never visible, except perhaps in the sea; but there you're never close enough to see them. His feet are protected by strong shoes although the streets of his town are clean and even, with no holes or stones. The settler's town is a well-fed town, an easy-going town; its belly is always full of good things. The settler's town is a town of white people, of foreigners.

The town belonging to the colonised people, or at least the native town...the reservation, is a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute. They are born there, it matters little where or how; they die there, it matters not where, nor how. It is a world without spaciousness; men live there on top of each other, and their huts are built one on top of the other. The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. It is a town of niggers and dirty arabs (p.30).

The extract above indicates the contrast that exists between the environments where the colonisers and the colonised live. This contrast which, according to Fanon, is the manifestation of colonialism, affects the lives of the inhabitants, where both the colonisers and the colonised are “locked in a deadly combat that affects all aspects of life” (Bulhan, 1985, p.116). The colonisers represent anything human and good and perceive themselves as prototypes of supreme moral standards and judgement, while the colonised are projected as the unwholesome; they tend to start perceiving themselves as lacking moral standards and good judgement. Their colonised situation is a “zone of non-being” out of which nothing can easily be generated.

Fanon refers to these contrasting zones of the colonisers on the one hand and the colonised on the other as a Manichean world. Bulhan (1985) reiterates that “their neighbourhoods, their nutrition, their health, their manner of life and death - all these are in stark contrast” (Bulhan, 1985, p.116). It is this Manichean world which gives manifestation to the colonisers’ superiority complexes and the colonised inferiority complexes. Bulhan (1985) argues that the Manichean world is fundamentally a “caldron” that uses violence to dominate the colonised people militarily and economically. Colonised people are dehumanised according to “polydimensional methods” which include domination of cultural and economic life. For instance, Fanon (1963) makes a scathing attack on colonialism for using guns, cannons and other means of violence to occupy the natives’ land. It is this violence that permeates the

social life of colonised people by inflicting fear and terror, which affect their daily living. Fanon (1963) adds further that

colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, distorts, disfigures and destroys it (p.169).

The above extract indicates that Fanon believes colonialism denigrates values and traditions, attacks culture, and basically shatters the frame of reference of the colonised people while encouraging the adoption of white values as a frame of reference for human development. The oppressed become easily influenced and swayed. This results in the creation of a new value system of the superior-inferior mentality where the coloniser is perceived as civilised and cultured, thus equated with superiority, whilst the colonised are made to feel inferior, thus developing a sense of inadequacy. It becomes easy for the coloniser to maintain the privileged position, and forces the natives into a “permanent state of subjugation”. Fanon (1963; 1967) argues that this experience of the Manichean world by the colonised had psychological effects as well.

3.2.2. Psychological consequences

Both psychoanalysis and socioanalysis contribute to Fanon’s analysis of the impact of colonialism on the colonised. He argues that the form of consciousness of the black person, which is interpreted psychoanalytically, should be understood within a definite socio-historical and cultural context. This is so because history has an impact on the formation of consciousness.

Analysing the black person’s experience, Gordon (1996) argues that “the black body is fundamentally conditioned in the modern world through the lens of racist re-presentation” (p.77). He suggests that the black person who is living in a racist environment that projects the black body as unwholesome, starts evincing him/herself as anti-black. This situation is a form of “absence of human presence” since it denies the presence of human being. The impact of a racist milieu in the determining of the black person’s existence is echoed by Fanon when he says:

I am overdetermined from outside. I am not the slave of the ‘idea’ that others have of me but of my appearances... Having prepared their microtome, they slice away objectively pieces of my reality. I am disclosed. I feel, I see, in those white looks... (Fanon, 1967, p. 11).

The extract shows how consciousness is “saturated” by the “over-determination” of the black person’s existence that Fanon is describing. Over-determination suggests that being-black-in-the-situation constituted by colonialism is to be “constructed” by the restrictions that limit the oppressed blacks ability to develop to full human potential. The metaphor of over- determination demonstrates the force that racism has over the black body. With such pressure, the black body is confronted by what Gordon (1996) terms the “lived-experience of its absence”. This suggests that the black experience should be explained within the context of white racism by which it is over-determined.

The impact of the environment on the lived experience of individuals is also illustrated by Fanon when he employs the term internalisation and objectification to explain the “sociogenetic” approach to psychology. Internalisation refers to the process of assimilation of socio-cultural realities into subjective reality, while objectification refers to the process in which the human being, through action, realises his/her human potential in the environment around him/her. Fanon uses these two concepts to explicate a double process mediating the dialectic between the human psyche and the socio-cultural environment (Bulhan, 1985). According to Fanon (1967), the colonial situation often fosters the internalisation of a negative identity and thwarting self-objectification. As a result of the powerful oppressive environment, objectification is dominated by internalisation and the colonised person is robbed of his/her ability to realise his/her human potential.

With the distortion of his/her own historic and communal values and standards, and the imposition of white standards, the black person attempts to escape the historic reality of blackness through resources of ‘alienated language’ and alienated love. For instance, such a black person feels that if he/she can speak the white language well enough and in the correct accent perhaps there is the opportunity of being white.

Fanon is also concerned about the black body experiencing a false consciousness, which he refers to as white mask neurosis. It is a process whereby oppressed blacks assume a white identity thereby becoming alienated from self and society. This happens when oppressed persons internalise a set of

negative cultural stereotypes regarding their colour, family and the history of their community. It becomes difficult for the black child to make a normal entry into the colonial culture since this entry happens through using a foreign language and entails the internalisation of the set of negative cultural stereotypes regarding his/her skin colour, family and his/her history. To be heir to the colonial culture entails a process of self-negation. Fanon contends that most colonised black people are incapable of “authentic upheaval” (p.10), which suggests that they lack the ability to accomplish personal catharsis. He says that they are victims of a socially produced situation of inferiority which they have internalised. They thus suffer from a “psycho-existential complex” that blocks them from their authentic self and social development. Therefore the black person is characterised by a ‘situational neurosis’: “...a constant effort to run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence” (Kruks, 1996, p.127).

The Manichean world described earlier, provides Fanon with an explanation of the aetiology of the neurosis of the oppressed. The social encounter and confrontation which characterises the colonial situation produce a ‘collective neurosis’ (Ronald, 1996). It is this neurosis that Fanon wants to cure through his analysis, for he holds that the origin of the neurosis lies with the attitudes of white racists to blackness.

Central to Fanon’s analysis are defence mechanisms of, *inter alia*, identification and denial that the colonised used to respond to the expectation invented by colonisers in the Manichean world. Denial means that the black person tries to escape from self as a result of the negative sociological schema that have been attached to black skin while identification suggests that the black person attempts to identify him/herself with white values and standards. Informed by his/her perception of the Manichean world the black person begins to dream about the white world, which is perceived to be an ideal milieu. In the dream the black person expresses white beauty, wealth, strength and virtue as his/her salvation (Fanon, 1967; McCulloch, 1985). Fanon uses the term ‘affective erethism’ to describe the sensitivity of the oppressed whereby the oppressed is drawn toward the white person in a “neurotic search for redemption” (McCulloch, 1985, p.66).

Fanon applies the concept 'lactification' to describe the neurotic wish of black women to lighten their skin colour through proximity to a white man. To such black women, finding a white lover is a salvation from the curse of being black. According to Fanon (1967) this kind of aspiration is a pathology, the motive of which he finds both delusional and repulsive.

Realising that oppression for black people is contingent on skin colour, and realising that the immutable colour of the skin makes it impossible to realise the dream of aspiring to whiteness, the black person becomes further frustrated, bitter and despairing. Fanon (1967) refers to this psychological pain which is inflicted on the colonised as a state of "permanent tension".

3.2.3. BC as the point of departure

According to Fanon (1967), the mind of the oppressed is preoccupied with the fear and the crippling complexes engendered by colonial racism, and the black person is faced with the urgent task of freeing his/her mind from these complexes. In Fanon's programme for liberation, the first step for the black person is the eradication of European values implanted in the black mind that make it difficult for the black person to resist subjugation and dependency. At the same time he suggests that they should learn to accept their blackness and to be proud of it. The adoption of BC by oppressed black people is regarded as a prerequisite for the realisation of their total liberation and, for Fanon, BC should be projected in positive terms.

The dialectic that brings necessity into the foundation of my freedom drives me out of myself.... Still in terms of consciousness, black consciousness is immanent in its own eyes. I am not a potentiality of something, I am wholly what I am (Fanon, 1967, p.135).

Fanon's writings aim at organising the physically and psychologically colonised people to rise up and retrieve their freedom and human dignity and thus resume their rightful place in their society, instead of harbouring paralysing complexes and idolising whiteness as an ideal situation. Fanon (1967) argues that his book is a "clinical study" and "those who recognize themselves in it, I think, will have made a step forward" (p.14). He hopes that reading his books will provide the oppressed with skills that enhance

self-understanding, for “liberation cannot be bestowed from without but must be evinced through an active process of self-understanding” (McCulloch, 1983, p.76). The major analytical focus is the idea that the mind is a repository of the inferiority complexes and the crippling fears of the oppressed.

According to Fanon (1967), black people are faced with the urgent task of liberating themselves from colonised consciousness. He believes that eradication of the colonial values imposed in the colonised mind which make it difficult for blacks to resist the position of subservience and dependency, is the first step of “disalienation”. Following Fanon’s line of thinking, by eradicating the “soporific Western values” from their minds and replacing them with a process of learning to accept their blackness and be proud of it, black people overpower the sense of alienation, thus gaining their sense of dignity and self-worth.

In Fanon’s (1967) view the only solution left for the black person is that he/she must make him/herself known, which appears to be an “authentic” response to racism. According to Fanon authentic- as showing black pride - does not involve submission to racism, but refers to the black person who demands recognition for what he/she is, as a black person. By advocating authentic identification, black people are driven to discover and affirm the meaning of black identity. To Fanon, self-affirmation of black identity offers the source of self- knowledge, self-identity, pride and self-worth. Kruks (1996) argues that consciousness of the self effects a shift in black-white relations, in that whites soon recognise in the blacks qualities that they experience themselves as lacking, “such as closeness to nature and spontaneity”. As a result, reciprocity of recognition emerges. This is evidenced by Fanon's friend when he says:

The presence of the Negroes beside the whites is in a way an insurance policy on humanness. When the whites feel that they have become too mechanized, they turn to the men of colour and ask them for a little human sustenance.... At last I had been recognized, I was no longer a zero (Fanon, 1967 p.129).

During the process of disalienation the colonised minds are emptied of the paralysing Western values and are injected with psychologically free selves whose ultimate goal is the liberation of the marginalised through the process of solidarity against colonialism that subjugates the natives. This indicates for Fanon

that the liberation of the self is an integral part of the national effort to realise the total liberation of the nation and it is a sign that an identity has become consolidated. Fanon assumes that total liberation is successfully executed by the new generation of people who have been “demystified” and “fortified” by the acquisition of the new consciousness.

In his work Fanon (1963) proclaims a new humanism by formally repudiating the degraded European version:

When I search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of murders.... Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth.... For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man (pp.254-5).

The kind of aspiration to the possibility of the creation of a new man, which Fanon articulates in this extract, is congruent with the words of Biko, as expressed in his paper *Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity*:

We have set out on a quest for true humanity, and somewhere on the distant horizon we can see the glittering prize. Let us march forth with courage and determination, drawing strength from our common plight and our brotherhood. In time we shall be in a position to bestow upon South Africa the greatest gift possible - a more human face (Biko 1973, p.47; 1978, p.98).

To actualise this aspiration, Biko (1978) relies on the strength of a communal identity derived “from our common plight and our brotherhood” and in so doing, reaffirms his commitment to the concept of black identity. Thus the concept of identity refers both to the individual and collectivity. The interconnectedness of these two will in due course be seen to be intrinsic to the idea of BC.

3.3. STEVE BIKO

3.3.1. Analysis of the problem

Biko's work on BC as both a cultural and a psychological liberation must be looked at against the background of his predecessors, one of whom was Robert Sobukwe. Sobukwe (1977) argues that the ruling minority has used power to inculcate feelings of inferiority in the marginalised. He maintains that the ruling minority had educated blacks to accept the status quo of white superiority and black inferiority as normal. He declares that: "It is our task to exorcise this slave mentality and to impart to the African masses that sense of self-reliance which will make them prefer self-government" (Sobukwe, 1977, p.546).

Sobukwe further states that, in order to exorcise the "slave mentality", there is a need to reach the oppressed people psychologically; to inform them that they are not inferior and that they should stand tall and be proud. It could be achieved by first 'closing ranks' and getting Africans together in their own organisations, which would be run and managed by themselves. Here they would no longer have to feel inferior and dependent. This would give rise to the group that Sobukwe referred to as non-conformist blacks who would discard the shackles of white rule, through programmes of action. Sobukwe holds the view that once the mind was free, the body of the African would soon be free, a view which had an impact on Biko's life later (Sobukwe, 1977).

Biko's work also shows the remarkable influence that Fanon had on him. Fanon's turn to BC ideology is evident in his abortive attempts to apply his "radical" psychiatry to cure the "Wretched of the Earth". It is sufficient to mention here that Biko recognises the intimate relation between the psyche and the socio-cultural milieu. Like Fanon's work, Biko's writings may be seen as a kind of self-analysis and a way of beginning to rid himself of perturbing impulses. For instance, in one of his articles, *We Blacks*, (1978) he argues that

My friendships, my love, my education, my thinking and every other facet of my life have been carved and shaped within the context of separate development. In stages in my life I managed to outgrow some of the things the system taught me (p.27).

For blacks, racism found expression in daily practices. Blacks encountered domination, *inter alia*, in education and in religion. The fact that it "carved" and "shaped" the individuals' life suggests externally imposed and not self-determined impacts on the lives of people. Biko uses carved and shaped to

suggest that racism has control and power on the lives of people. The fact that Biko managed to outgrow “some of the things” that he experienced in racist situations, denotes and is arguably included to signify the ability to resist adapting willingly to a racist environment.

Biko’s usage of carved and shaped also illustrates objectification of a human being by racism. In his analysis of racism Schmitt (1996) postulates that racism, in its all different forms, is either an instance or means to the end of objectification. He argues further that human beings cannot be turned into things, because they have human freedom. Therefore Schmitt (1996) regards the freedom to choose as an essential feature of humanity, and one that is accompanied by a responsibility for the choices that one makes. For instance, in any given situation a human being has the freedom to choose to resist and this is the freedom that an individual cannot be deprived of. According the Schmitt (1996), objectification works on false premises by pretending that human beings are things, and forcing them to accept that pretence. Working against objectification means reassuring one’s status as someone able to determine the circumstances or conditions of one’s own existence.

Biko upholds the notion that freedom to choose to resist and to make choices should be regarded as an essential human attribute. It is used to regulate what action people are allowed to perform in any given social setting. In his criticism of racism, Biko presents a remarkable distillation of Fanon’s concepts, (in most cases quoting without citing and referencing the author). For instance, Fanon’s (1963) interpretation that racism aims at “emptying the Native’s brain of all form and content...turning to the past...and distorted, disfigured and destroyed it” (Biko, 1978, p.69), is reiterated by Biko in his writings:

It was missionaries who confused our people with their new religion. By some strange logic, they argued that theirs was a scientific religion and ours was mere superstition in spite of the biological discrepancies so obvious in the basis of their religion. They further went on to preach a theology of the existence of hell, scaring our fathers and mothers with stories about burning in eternal flames and gnashing of teeth and grinding bones. This cold cruel religion was strange to us but our fore-fathers were sufficiently scared of the unknown impending anger to believe that it was worth a try. Down went our cultural values (Biko, 1978, p.45).

Central to Biko’s argument is that black people were also deeply religious and cultured and that religion formed an aspect of their existence and development. Analysing religion, Biko (1973; 1978) argues

that religion is intertwined with cultural features of the community and this creates a sense of identification with the religion. Each religion has a specific meaning to the society it serves. For instance, black people relate to one God through their own “community of saints” which Biko regards as one of the fundamental aspects which constitutes an African religion. It was a common belief amongst black people that heaven takes every person who dies. The message of a merciless God and promise of hell were not part of African religion and Biko argues that it is redolent of a socio-political framework based on exclusion.

Biko (1978) denies that any acculturation took place when white people met black people. Acculturation implies a fusion of different cultures with the loss of distinction between different cultures as they become assimilated with each other. In South Africa it appears that this fusion of cultures was one-sided. Biko argues that the white religion and culture had the “trappings” of colonialism and they were equipped for conquest. The missionaries used the Bible to differentiate between the ‘converted’ and the ‘pagans’. They enforced a code of behaviour amongst blacks in terms of education, ritual, clothing and culture, condemned their historic and communal religion as ungodly and their culture as barbaric and superstitious. This method of demeaning communal religion and culture was also advanced by the ‘converted’, “stern-faced” African priests who in their black churches had a tendency to focus on “petty issues” such as drinking, smoking, stabbing and stealing as major sins (Biko, 1978).

Biko (1978) states that white theology had prevented these priests from knowing a greater perspective on sin. It was this western religious and cultural approach which ‘scared’ African people and ultimately inculcated doubts about their religion and culture. As a result of the collision of white religion and culture and African culture, the latter was damaged because it was characterised as being unsophisticated and simple (Biko 1978). According to Biko (1978) the impact of the missionaries’ teachings was that black people began to perceive that all the vices mentioned above are proof that black people are savages. They failed to perceive them as the manifestations of the inhumanity which emits from acculturation and degraded social and communal life.

Biko (1978) launches a scathing attack on both informal and formal education as creating conflict in black children. He argues that the clash between the values and self-perceptions transmitted by the family members to children and the negation of those values once children come into contact with white culture, manifest the conflict. This situation is said by Biko to be responsible for the major disruption of the African culture of respect for one's elders. In showing the differences in Western and African cultures in his argument, Biko (1978) holds that all races possess specific moral and psychological attributes which are "god-given" and represent the hallmark of all races and which are essential for human development. Each race advances according to the parameters set by these features. For instance Dr Kaunda (cited in Biko, 1978) states that an African attitude to life is different from the white person's. He claims that the white person shows an aggressive mentality", he/she "can't live with contradictory ideas" in his/her mind and is "vigorously scientific in rejecting solutions for which there is no basis in logic...he dismisses the supernatural and non-rational as superstition..."(p.44).

On the other hand, the traditional African religion does not identify any "cleavage" between the natural and supernatural (Biko, 1978). In African religion, black people experience the situation rather than regard it as a problem. Both the elements of the rational and non-rational world are allowed to have an impact upon their lives. The African's action should be described as a response of the "total personality" to the situation rather than the result of some mental exercises. The metaphor of collision of cultures is also implied when Biko says that

Children were taught, under the pretext of hygiene, good manners and other such vague concepts, to despise their mode of [sic] upbringing at home and to question the values and customs of their society. The result was the expected one - children and parents saw life differently and the former lost respect of the latter. Now in African society it is a cardinal sin for a child to lose respect for his parents (p.94).

Biko suggests that education contributed to the conflict of cultures. It was the quickest way of destroying the substance of African culture. He says that it has disrupted life patterns, caused disrespect of customs and lack of respect for elders. At schools, children were exposed to an education system which presents African history as a "lamentation of repeated defeats" and their culture as that of "near-cannibals", therefore reflecting unwholesomeness.

On the other hand, white history and culture were presented as the norm and therefore reflected wholesomeness. This is also illustrated by the comics that were used in which any evil or unacceptable behaviour would be depicted in black, while success and progress would be attributed to whiteness. The comparison and the dichotomies between black and white life influences the mind of the child. Thus the child begins to perceive that goodness goes with whiteness, while evil goes with blackness. As a result of exposure to this kind of education, Biko (1978) argues that the black child begins to perceive him/herself negatively because of skin colour. This self-negation and self-denial are taken into adulthood.

Mokae (1992), in his article: *Back to basics*, refers to this situation as “giving a black body a white head” (p.27). As a result of education the black child begins to escape from blackness. She/he does so by denying his/her culture, trying to internalise white values and behaving like white people.

In the article, *Fear - an important determinant*, Biko (1978) situates violence as another face of racism whereby the white racist enterprise is supported and kept viable by means of physical violence by colonial security forces, death squads, imprisonment (for instance for not carrying a ‘dompass’), house arrests, detentions, banning orders, intimidations, interrogations and torture.

In Biko’s (1978) view, there were so many laws governing the lives of black people that it led Biko to say that an average person could not “ever at any moment be absolutely sure that he is not breaking a law” (Biko, 1978, p.75). According to Biko, these racist practices were designed to keep black people thoroughly intimidated and fearful, thus breaking down the resistance amongst blacks. It is this fear, according to Biko (1978), that facilitated control of the oppressed people and ensured the sustenance of racism. This humiliating and tormenting fear has psychological implications, as Biko (1978) says, because it gives rise to an underlying and “immeasurable rage that often threatens to erupt” (p.76). As the white person was associated with police brutality, intimidation and general harassment in and out of townships, Biko suggests that rage began to build up within the black person, causing the white person to be perceived as a problem. This had psychological implications, which will be discussed in the following section.

3.3.2. Psychological consequences

According to Biko (1978) black people are subjected to many different faces of racism, such as denigration of their values and religion, and violent experiences that humiliate, torture and torment them. This situation is sometimes experienced without being conceptualised as unjust because of internalised white values, which justify the situation. Therefore, the oppressed black person endures the situation willingly and passively.

According to Biko's perspectives, education and the church were primarily responsible for the trauma that the black child experiences. For instance, the black child is traumatised by the clash between values and self-perceptions that are transmitted in early years at home by the family members, and the negation of those values once he/she comes into direct contact with white culture. The exposure of the black child to white education through games, comics and magazines that project whiteness as progress, success and health, creates a desire to explore whiteness. According to Biko (1978), since white education damned family values, the black child began to develop hatred of blackness which involves hating him/herself because of his/her pigmentation. In psychoanalytic terms the black child responds by applying a defence mechanism of denying his/her very blackness and identifying with whiteness. This is evidenced by the way he/she struggles to speak in his/her "white folk's accent" (Biko, 1978) when speaking English and the songs he/she sings which are loaded with white values. When the black child realises that his/her pigmentation makes impossible the attainment of the aspiration to whiteness he/she becomes frustrated and despairing (Fanon, 1966; Biko, 1998 ; McCulloch, 1985).

In his writing, Biko (1978) stresses the importance of the "authentic cultural" aspects of black people. Biko is understood as implying that humans have some god-given characteristics which are essential for the development of the particular race, while at the same time he holds that the advancement of humanity is dependent upon the contributions of all races to a national culture. Without setting the cultural debate about characteristics being God-given or not, it should be said that it is not the specifics of such characteristics that are the issue here. What is at issue is what happens when that which is

attributed to a dominated group (whether it derives from it or not), is denigrated. Biko criticises colonialism because when it

sets in with its dominant culture it devours the native culture and leaves behind a bastardised culture that can only thrive at the rate and pace allowed it by the dominant culture (Biko, 1978, p.46).

It is really the fact of dominance rather than the issue of what is or is not authentically and originally black or African that is at issue here. What is African or true African values, is probably contestable. What is not contestable is that colonialism set itself against the construct of black values, whatever the new specific contents.

Biko (1978) holds that racial institutions project African culture as barbaric and superstitious. Therefore the African often comes to view his/her own cultural style through the derogatory perspectives of the European, and since he/she embraces it, he/she begins to perceive him/herself in negative terms. He/she comes to accept his/her condition as caused by his/her own failings, and therefore assumes a burden of guilt for his/her own sufferings (McCulloch, p.122). Consequently, he/she arrives at despair and self-hatred which characterises the “colonial personality” (McCulloch, p.123). Central to the “colonial personality” lie guilt and inferiority complexes which provide the impetus to the desire to “flee” from the self and to be suddenly white. Realising that the colour of the skin makes that realisation impossible, according to Biko (1978) the black person experiences despondency and frustration.

The racist violence, which is directed in various forms, perpetrated by white domination, breaks the back of resistance among the oppressed blacks. In Biko’s perception, the physical torture of arrests, being beaten up by security police, unemployment, overcrowding and poor health treatment that black people are constantly subjected to, has psychological implications as well. This violence was seen by Biko (1978) as eroding the black person’s spirit of resistance and inculcating a feeling of insecurity .

As reflected in his writings, Biko’s perspectives seem to employ both psychoanalysis and socioanalysis. For instance, Biko maintains that the violent environment to which the black person is constantly subjected engenders fear but also inspires rage in the ‘victim’ against white rule. This fear that

dominates the minds of the oppressed blacks and ultimately “cows them down”, will dictate their response to violence projected by racism. By implication, the oppressed person’s response is a reaction formation, a defence mechanism in a language of psychoanalysis. This is a defence against a threatening drive (rage), which involves keeping it repressed by developing contrary characteristics.

In terms of the psychoanalytic approach, the defence mechanism of reaction formation is often regarded as inefficient and thus “neurotic” because constant efforts are needed to protect the individual against anxiety which is liable to explode at any given moment. This mechanism is referred to as neurotic and Biko (1978) argues that there is an interaction between the fear injected by white racism and the reaction by the oppressed which “then sets on a vicious cycle that multiplies both the fear and the reaction” (Biko, 1978, p.77). If, as Sibisi (1991) asserts that defence mechanisms are neurotic because they do not allow the development of a “healthy balanced ego, in touch with, and adapting in a healthy manner to, reality.” (p.133), then the reaction formation that Biko mentions in his writings is no exception. Thus a black person will not adapt in a ‘healthy’ way in a violent racist environment.

The continuous attacks upon the black person’s integrity resulted in the destruction of the individual’s sense of self-worth. Biko (1978) perceived the oppressed black person as

Reduced to an obliging shell...has become a shell, a shadow of man, completely defeated, drowning in his own misery, an ox carrying a yoke of oppression with sheepish timidity (Biko, 1978, p.28-9).

The attitudes which are nurtured by this situation made it difficult for black people to act as self-respecting people. This is reflected by Buthelezi (1973), who refers to this state of mind as colonised “humanity”, a black person who is an object of dominating colonialists, whose selfhood is “crushed by external forces and circumstances or subject to pressure from outside to direct itself in such a way as to serve others’ interests other than those of self” (p.12).

This may imply that human beings in unjust communities perceive their existential environment as the inevitable product of forces which they are unable to change. Biko (1978) suggested that the major factor tormenting black people in South Africa was that they were showing signs of being a “defeated

nation”, as if they had given up the struggle (Biko, 1978). This feeling of defeat was what Biko was fighting against so that black people would stand up against the hardships of life in a racist society. He proposed that they should instead confront the situation and seek for a new sense of humanity, or true humanity. What this entailed is discussed in the following.

3.3.3. BC as a point of departure

Essential to his work, is Biko’s (1978) attempt to elucidate how a “false identity” adopted by a repressed black person affects his/her life, and his suggestion that the adoption of BC by the black person is the path to healing.

An overview of his work on “black life” indicates that in the early stages of his political orientation Biko was preoccupied with the need to define the problem in new terms, with this endeavour initiated by black people who were involved in the struggle for freedom against racial domination. BC philosophy, in Biko’s terms, is motivated by the desire to seek an independent voice, in contradistinction to the voice for black people as paternalistically represented by so-called white liberals. Biko felt that liberals could bring about profound changes in the face of problems of oppression experienced by the blacks. He believed that since liberals did not have experience of the racist oppression that black people were subjected to, they were unable to prescribe meaningful solutions for the marginalised, and they were also unable to ‘give’ black people their liberation, which must be taken up as a project by blacks in order to overcome psychological oppression.

Biko’s attachment to BC is motivated by a concern with the way in which racism has not only shaped black people, but also determined the course of black resistance. Biko views BC as a significant attempt to create the possibility of a strong black identity to challenge the dehumanisation of the black person. It is in this sense not only a political project, but also a psychological one. BC, which embodies the quest for recognition of self, provides an opportunity for analysing the means to discard the shackles of oppression and search for the possibility of an envisaged egalitarian social order based on equal opportunities to have a sense of self-esteem and belonging. In his analysis Biko attempts to show the

challenging predicament of defining the situation of the self within the South African political context which was created by the racist regime.

Biko (1978) maintains that BC has a worthwhile role to play in the black person's search for identity. Following his argument, the black person should embark on a cultural renaissance which has an important and progressive role in preparing the ground for political challenge to racism. Central to the philosophy is its rallying principle of blackness, which views an individual as its starting point for the need for a form of attitudinal introspection. According to Biko, self-reflection leads to the expression of the self in a positive way which inevitably prepares the foundation for a reflexive political agenda which represents the reciprocity between the self and the nation, i.e. black solidarity. This is argued by Biko when he says "... we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage. We want to attain the envisioned self which is a free self" (Biko, 1978, p.49).

According to Biko, this mutual relationship is to a certain degree mediated by an understanding of the uniqueness of certain fundamental cultural aspects of the black community. The reciprocity between the assertion of a positive identity and the subsequent benefits of relevant political action, leads to a new political culture propounded by BC philosophy. This enhances the confidence of the black person.

Fundamental to the philosophy of BC is the conscientisation of the black person, which alters perceptions of the nature of the underlying problem of oppression by means of methods designed by the very people who are victims of injustice and political oppression, and with a view to asserting a positive identity. To Freire (1970), conscientisation involves the comprehension of a human being as a conscious being that exists in and with the world together with other human beings:

Only men, as 'open' beings, are able to achieve the complex operation of simultaneously transforming the world by their action and grasping and expressing the world's reality in their creative language (Freire, 1970, p.51).

The reference to BC in the process of conscientisation suggests that it embraces the idea of transforming black people to their full potential. Such people must come to an awareness of their own existential experiences of oppression by using their own resources. This will raise their the level of self-

understanding, knowledge of the oppressive situation and their role in the society as Biko (1978) argues that black people cannot be aware of the situation and yet remain in captivity and understanding of how oppression has been seen as fundamental to the liberation from oppression. Having analysed the oppressive situation, black people need to take what Biko refers to as “drastic actions” in order to remove the elements that maintain oppression.

To Biko, the mind of the oppressed person is the essential weapon in the hands of the oppressor. Therefore, the prerequisite for any political action, is a formidable force formed by BC so that blacks can “take their minds back” and learn to assert themselves. First, according to Biko (1978), the black person should learn to achieve self-identity. He must “pump back life into his empty shell; to infuse [himself] with pride and dignity” (Biko, 1978,p.29). This inward-looking enables the black person to begin shaping his/her identity and to begin to put ‘flesh around that identity’. This is BC which Biko defines as “attitude of mind and way of life” (in Mzamane, 1991, p.50). It aims at articulating group pride and the commitment of the people to stand up and realise their envisaged self. Thus the notion of self-identity and self-assertion is linked with the notion of group-assertion. Achieving his goal of true humanity, Biko (1978) relies on the strength of a communal identity derived from “our common plight and our brotherhood” and believes that action reaffirms blacks’ dedication to the fundamental concept of black identity.

Historically the BCM initiated several community programmes, called Black Community Programmes (BCP), with the aim of conscientising black people (Ramphela, 1991). Thus it was intended that black communities become conscious of their own oppressed situation as a community, and take action to change it so that it could give room for self-assertiveness and nation building, which revolved around the plight of common humanity. Ramphela (1991) states explicitly that one of the goals of the BCP was an enhancement of self-reliance in the black community, which is achieved by taking charge of the stages of initiating, developing and controlling the community development programmes.

For Biko, the process of BC needs also to address the reconstruction of the past, which has been distorted and disfigured by the colonisation practices. This is because Biko (1978) believes that the

effect of the colonial culture on the minds of blacks provides an image of intense psycho-cultural breakdown. Biko's interest in the past involves the benefit of discovering a history of heroic resistance that would reinforce the conceptualisation of the self in a positive way, thus restoring a positive self-image amongst black people. Therefore, the purpose of BC was conceived as seeking to revive the black heroes' history, which according to Biko (1978) forms the core of African history. His argument is that "a people without a positive history is like a vehicle without an engine. Their emotions cannot be easily controlled and channelled in a recognisable direction" (Biko, 1978, p.29 -30).

The black person's consciousness of an identity as black and the feeling of black solidarity can be anchored if he/she has a history that can enhance resistance to imposed white values the aim of which is to subjugate and dominate. Biko implies that in essence African culture is characterised by some aspects which are essential to an African life. For instance, communalism which emphasises community-oriented actions rather than individualism, which regards the love of mankind as a whole as the priority, is central to African culture (Biko, 1978).

Black theology was another avenue which, *inter alia*, Cone (1969; 1973), Biko (1973; 1978; 1979), Buthelezi (1973), Motlhabi (1973), Ntwasa (1973) Moore (1973), Pityana (1973), Small (1973), Adam (1979), Tutu (1983) and Hopkins (1991) explored. Common to them all is their criticism of a false identity which is adopted by black people. Cone states "To ask them to assume a 'higher' identity by denying their blackness is to require them to accept a false identity and to reject a reality as they know it to be" (Cone, 1969, p.117).

Like BC, Black theology takes the suffering and humiliation which constitute the life of black people, as the point of departure of "all God-talk which seeks to be black-talk" (Cone, 1969, p.117). Unlike the Christian doctrine of God which precedes the doctrine of man, Black theology takes for granted that black people have their own perspectives of viewing God, perspectives

which encompass the torture of white racism. Black theology as a 'system of being', provides a sense of self-expression and assertion of humanity and self-awareness.

Cone (1969) reflects that Black theology is a religion which seeks to relate to the experiences of black people in their white racist society. Black theology as an interpretation of Christianity, while mediating between the black person and God, operates within the given context of the black person's existential experience. Its goal is first to eradicate problems that may affect the relationship between God and a person, and the sufferings that preoccupy the black person and which make the relationship strenuous. A concern of these authors is that the task of Black Christian Theology is to analyse the black person's conditions in the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

Black theology's purpose is to create a new understanding of black people, and to provide the necessary soul in them that should empower them to confront oppression. It calls on black people to start defining themselves in their own terms. This provides a cure for the neurotic defence mechanisms that blacks resort to when they are unable to face the realities of life and try to escape to whiteness. Inculcating a love of the self and others, and internalising black values and accepting the blackness of the self as real, means adapting to the realities of life.

3.4. CHABANG MANGANYI: THE BLACK CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Chabang Manganyi is the first black clinical psychologist trained in South Africa. His work illustrates his attempts to contextualise psychology in South Africa. His main concern has been to use the discipline to address what he refers to as "the black experience" in South Africa (Couve, 1984). Manganyi's work is profoundly influenced by BC. The key elements of his work will be reviewed in this discussion. What is interesting about BC in this context is the assumed and unprecedented emphasis placed on the political necessity of addressing directly the psychological and cultural denigration suffered by blacks on both an individual and a collective level.

3.4.1. Analysis of the problem

Manganyi's (1973) argument is that there are great similarities between the body image of healthy black subjects and paraplegic black subjects. He builds on the idea that healthy black subjects exhibit the same internal psychological malady as hospitalised paraplegics. This includes body-images with diffused boundaries, usually associated with passive-submissive and non-coping life strategies.

The aetiological locus of this psychological disorder is attributed to the level of the racist socialisation of the black body.

3.4.1.1. Dialogue and relation

According to Freire (1972), dialogue is a means of communication and a goal towards which communication strives. In the light of Freire's definition of dialogue, Manganyi (1973) argues that existence is dialogue and he has taken dialogue as the guiding principle in this theme. Manganyi (1973) recognises the body as having a central position in existence because he assumes that individuals make approaches to the world through their bodies. "The body is a movement inwards and outwards" (Manganyi, 1973, p.6) Therefore individuals are in dialogue with the environment because they exist in the environment. According to Manganyi (1973), "the individual person, if he should be healthy, is a dialogue" (p.28). Manganyi states that existence is a dialogue-relation which has been different for blacks and whites. He mentions that dialogue may be established in structures. For instance, an individual relates him/herself to the environment through the body as an existential feature, and so establishes relationship with another fellow individual and with objects/material culture.

The following are the different levels of a dialogue:

3.4.1.1.1. The body

Of central concern here is Manganyi's recognition of the body's position in existence. He believes that we come about in the interface of our bodies with the environment

It is the physical body which makes it possible for an individual to be given a name, to tell all sundry [sic] who he is...the body is the nexus of all fundamental relations

(dialogue) which an individual person develops with others, with objects.... If the integrity of the body is violated, as it has been in the case of black people, the other existential relationships also become distorted (Manganyi, 1973, p.52).

Since the body is the nexus of almost all essential relations which an individual develops with others and the world, it can also be said that it is intrinsic to the experience of either being-black-in-the-world or being-white-in-the-world.

In his theory, Manganyi (1973) hypothesises that an individual develops a personalised or mental concept of his/her body, which he terms the "individualised schema". It is through individuation that an individual knows him/herself. "Under ideal conditions of the good body, the body becomes for the individual" (Manganyi, 1973, p.29). In this situation the individual schema dominates the sociological schema. Concerning the development of the sociological schema Manganyi (1973) states that

in the African experience there has been over time developed a sociological schema of the black body prescribed by white standards. The prescribed attributes of this sociological schema have, as we should all know by now, been entirely negative. It should be considered natural under these circumstances for an individual black person to conceive of his body as something which is essentially undesirable (something unattractive); something which paradoxically must be kept at a distance outside of one's self so to speak (pp.51-2).

According to Manganyi, the legacies of colonialism have resulted in the development of a dichotomy relating to the body. According to white standards, the white body was projected as a norm of accomplishment and the black body was projected as being inferior. This resulted in the development of two sociological schema of the body based on white standards, a distinction which affected the texture of interpersonal relationships across the colour line (Manganyi, 1973). Therefore the sociological schema of the black person is projected as unwholesome and in turn it manifests in a negative self-evaluation by the black person.

Since negative attributes such as inferiority, unwholesomeness and unhealthiness have been attributed to the black body, the black person will adopt a negative sociological schema towards his/her body. Thus, he/she begins to experience his/her body as though it were outside him/herself. According to Manganyi, in black communities the individual schema has become a sociological schema traumatised as a result of the unnatural predominance of the sociological schema which is prescribed by white

standards. In this situation the individual schema of who one is ceases to be the point of relation to the world. Manganyi assumes that a balance between the individual and sociological schemas of the body is mandatory for individual psychic balance, competence and positive self-steering behaviour. Needless to say, since the body constitutes the existential nexus of personal existence, the black body with its negatively prescribed features has been unable to generate positive self-evaluation.

It is a socio-cultural factor of a particular community that ensures the healthy body and this becomes the 'pillar' of the individual's dialogue with the world. "A socio-cultural assault on the bodies of a whole people is perhaps one of the most vicious tragedies that can befall a people" (Manganyi, 1973, p.52).

For instance, according to Manganyi (1973), the body is the nexus of the basic dialogue with which one develops with the environment and this gives the body a foundation which Manganyi (1973) terms integrity of the body. He argues that if the integrity of the body is violated, as in the case of the black person, the relationships with the environment becomes distorted. Thus the black person experiences the body as not his/hers.

Manganyi (1973) argues further that when both individual and sociological schemas are projected negatively, an "unhealthy objectification" of the body occurs whereby the individual experiences his/her body as an object, as something outside him/herself. For instance, the black person attempts to develop attributes of personality and behaviour which insulate him/her from the tragedy of being black and therefore, the black person is artificially driven into the social and cultural environment of white society. All the efforts to make him/her feel at home in the European world, by wearing a white mask, are frustrated by his/her sudden realisation of his/her skin pigmentation. He/she becomes hopeless and develops a hatred of his/her own damning colour. This 'pathological' black person, unlike the healthy person, begins to experience the body as alien and as an object, something outside him/herself.

3.4.1.1.2. Individual in society

In this theme Manganyi focuses on the family and community relationships. The forms taken by these relationships are culture-bound. The colonial conquest in South Africa resulted in the eradication or at least devaluation of certain African cultural features, such as communalism which reflected an extended family kinship systems and secondary group processes which were characteristic of relationships. This destruction was also achieved by stifling and suppressing black leaders who could have reinstated a community feeling. As a result, black people had to relinquish important aspects of their ontology. The traditional African approach to society was replaced by individualism and materialism. Manganyi (1973) comments that “the rise of the individualistic and materialistic ethic is something which is essentially alien to being-black-in-the-world” (p.31).

Manganyi does not acknowledge that individualism and materialism have been a global development which was also alien to European ethics during their inception.

3.4.1.1.3. Being-in-the-world-with-objects/things

According to Manganyi (1973), the dialogue-relation which is being-in-the-world has been different for blacks and whites. He states that attitudes towards objects or culture are basically determined by the cultural ethos of a community, that is, individualistic, capitalistic or communalistic. Manganyi (1973) assumes that the distortion of the dialogue between the individual and community affects the value systems of the community.

Manganyi (1973) maintains that whites, with their emphasis on individualism, have lost their ‘spiritual’ dimension and thus invest material objects with values they do not possess. In the light of this, Harilall (1988) provides an example of a poet who may be accorded lower status than the tycoon who drives a BMW car. Cultural hegemony has resulted in blacks losing their ‘aesthetic-utilitarian’ relationship with objects. Consequently, black people who internalise white values may emulate whites by idolising objects, with the difference that they are deprived of the economic means of actualising such aspirations. Black people begin to compare themselves according to the objects they possess.

This explanation also illustrates that Manganyi's interest, from a psychological perspective, lies in the exploration of what he terms false consciousness, a condition whereby black people assume a white identity and consequently become alienated from self and their community. The process whereby the black person assumes a false identity is illustrated (Manganyi, 1977) in a psychotherapy session where Mashangu explains the psychological strategy by which the black person is imprisoned and colludes with imprisonment.

...I was thinking of repudiation. You know what I mean? Repudiation. I was looking at my life since the days at the Mission School. It has been one big battle repudiating, negating something or other - myself, my culture, even my people. You see, we're forced to speak only English on certain days at school. Mind you, not only to enable us to read Milton or Shakespeare at a later stage but to prepare us...to create in us a readiness to repudiate everything which was native to us. Can you visualise that...each of us carries a double...a kind of replica of self that is always in conflict with the mask that faces the world. To protect this mask from its double, one cherished an illusion and nourished it - the illusion that the future depends upon a negation of the past both individual and collective (Manganyi, 1977, p.20).

Manganyi describes the experience of the black person whose identity has been lowered by a sociological schema prescribed by racism. The oppressed person is preoccupied with socio-cultural factors of the colonial domination in his/her social environment. The assimilation of white culture provides the black person with what Manganyi refers to as a false identity because it requires the substitution of his/her African culture for white culture. Furthermore this substitution is unequal because it does not yield what it promises, but, having accepted the white culture, the black person becomes trapped in a culture that assigns him/her inferior status (Manganyi, 1973; 1977). Manganyi himself seems to be preoccupied with, and deeply distressed by the legacies of colonial domination which are the paralysing inferiority complex of black people and their abject idolisation of whites as their role models.

Manganyi (1973) hypothesises that a regeneration of community-feeling and the active promotion of creative, experiential and attitudinal values which do not support individualism and materialism, should be the cornerstone for the development of a meaningful man-object relationship.

3.4.2. BC: the point of departure

Manganyi (1973) states that the black person's experience of being-in-the-world has been determined by the sociological schema of the black body . This schema has inculcated a negative perception about blackness. Therefore BC starts from the existential experience of a black body whereby black people are being called upon to be conscious of and to experience their bodies in a revitalised way.

Manganyi (1973) declares that the call for BC and solidarity should be considered as a way to provide a medium for the creative development of individual and community dignity because the BC philosophy comprises the experience, thus the understanding, of having been underrated both culturally and psychologically. It thus encompasses the awareness of such negative traits in the black mode of being. Consciousness of the negativity yields the condition for the transcendence of such drawbacks. Manganyi (1973) states that BC becomes relevant because it ensures that black people resume their rightful place in their community. This is possible if black people themselves assume responsibility for removing the negative sociological schema that bedevils the black body.

3.4.3. The black psychologist: healing of black identity

In this theme Manganyi focuses on the question of re-definition, a cornerstone of BC. He argues that

The psychologist is an active producer of a set of ontological mirrors whose specular reflection combats a negative black identity by restoring a positive identity (in Couve, 1984, p.99)

The extract indicates that Manganyi's psychological programme provides the ontology which is directed towards redefining black identity in a positive manner, thereby combating negative identity. This 'curative' programme is also central to the phenomenon of BC. This means that by virtue of being black and having been subjected to colonial domination for a long time, each black person has a testimony within him/herself of the experience of any other black subject, that is, black people mirror within themselves the story of colonial domination.

Manganyi states that a massive and creative campaign organised by the black person is needed to alter the negative sociological schema of the black body so that it becomes a realistic sociological schema with appealing attributes defined and developed by black people. BC should be able to return the individual to the community where he/she belongs to make meaningful contributions to the

...regeneration of community-feeling; the active promotion of creative, experiential and attitudinal values which are not consonant with individualism and materialism.... It seems to be logical for black people to adopt a posture of positive, creative 'isolation'. Group introspective analysis - an inward look - is mandatory for us in any attempt at restructuring our value system (Manganyi, 1973, p.32).

On the other hand, Manganyi (1973) views the "African personality" as a "psycho-cultural" concept. It is not a "collection of fixed personality traits" obtained by applying average statistical tendencies, or a racially determined concept. Manganyi (1973) argues that the African personality is a sum of the cultural values common to the black world which encourages the appropriate medium for the restructuring of the 'dialogue' between the black person and the world, that is, for the experience of the world. These values are black solidarity, communalism, sharing and communication, common to blacks universally. This is in opposition to the attributes of the white mode of being which is characterised by "individualism, atomization, profiteering and exploitation" (Couve, 1984, p.101).

Furthermore Manganyi's (1973) analysis of African philosophy is that it encourages the holistic conception of a human being. In addition to this definition, Mbiti (1970) defines African philosophy as understanding and the attitude of mind that impact on the way African peoples think and behave in different situations of life. According to Manganyi (1973) African people possess a spiritual dimension and he argues that this spiritual dimension of Africanness was denied by Africans themselves, or was lost as a result of the imposition of racial colonialism's materialistic ethos, but it can be restored with the insertion of a more spiritualist philosophy marked by the life force which emanates from and ends in God. Manganyi (1973) holds that though the spiritualism has been eroded, it is still present among black people. "It manifests itself in the recourse of Africans, even those who are educated, to traditional healers" (Couve, 1984, p.101). This is evidenced by the resilience of traditional beliefs in the field of health. Manganyi asserts that restoring the spiritualist dimension helps in healing the moral decay of the West and its grotesque materialism:

This development is itself sufficient to support our view that Western civilisation is post-menopausal, decadent and sterile. Something may yet come from the black world to inject new vitality into this beautiful post-menopausal old lady (Manganyi, 1973).

3.4.4. The black: the combat of white aspiration

In his book *Mashangu's Reverie* Manganyi (1977) explains how the black person develops a false identity, and in so doing becomes alienated from the self and the black community. He also outlines how this false identity can be combated.

Central to *Mashangu's Reverie* is the emergence of the black person from “white masks” through what Manganyi (1977) refers to as the “symbolic murder” of the white man who represents the internal mask which kept the black person in “prison” for a long time. This murder is equated with the undoing of the black person’s captivity dating from his/her childhood when white culture was an affirmation which entailed the denigration of his/her blackness, the past and his/her origin. Furthermore, Mashangu's resistance to his imprisonment is exacerbated when his African document of identity is not renewed, for no apparent reason. The protagonist becomes violent at this point. Consequently, he rejects psychotherapy, the realm of the symbolic *par excellence*. He says:

What I've come to know is that my own revolutionary possibilities, those of my people, are at their highest at this point... I am suffering as I do and have done...not from neurosis, metaphysical anxiety, but from a negation of the rebellious impulse in me. What I need is not analysis...the verbal and symbolic realm. Action... I need to do things. It's not inside the skull that work needs to be done but out there in the realm of social and historical action (Manganyi, 1977, p.44).

In this extract, Mashangu uses socio-analysis to explain his state. He maintains that his present behaviour can be attributed to the impact which the social environment has on his mind. Thus he views psychotherapy as an ineffective method in a political situation and he believes in confronting the situation personally and directly since it is the primary cause of his ‘psycho pathology’.

Manganyi holds the view that BC entails an awareness of the negative stereotypes of blackness. The consciousness of this negativity provides the condition for the transcendence of such negativity.

3.5. ADDITIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON BC

Different perceptions of the phenomenon of BC have raised arguments and nagging suspicion amongst black people whom the phenomenon intends to affirm. Even among those who accepted the phenomenon as their philosophy of life, there are different perceptions. For instance, in their introduction to *Bounds of possibilities*, Pityana, Ramphele, Mpumlwana and (1991) suggest that BC goes beyond the political organisations which seek to appropriate the phenomenon as their political philosophy. To them BC cannot be reduced to political rhetoric because it is an attitude of mind and a way of life. This view is also held by Sono (1993) who states that an attempt to appropriate the phenomenon has distorted its purpose. He argues that BC “no longer comports with the vision of...Biko...” (p.2). Those who in their existence endeavour to appropriate BC are deprived of knowledge to understand what a ‘way of life’ is

It posed a challenge to all those traditionally excluded from full citizenship in South Africa to realise that liberation was central to consciousness of the self... (Pityana et al., 1991, p. 9).

Similarly, Wilson (1991) attests that BC is a different attitude that, having been adopted by black people, enables them to analyse their living conditions by realising that they can be their own liberators. As a consequence of this attitude black people might be empowered to discover their “true identity by refusing to live the lie” (p.23) and it was working first for psychological liberation from psychological oppression brought by these inferiority complexes and then from physical oppression.

In his analysis, Sibisi (1991) holds that, from the perspective of BC, psychology and liberation are “uneasy bedfellows”. As a psychologist he uses psychoanalysis and links it with material conditions in analysing the psychological conditions of black people. Central to this argument is the defence mechanism of denial that black people use to respond to their oppressive experiences. Since whiteness is associated with success and beauty, it makes sense that the denial of blackness by the black person shows itself by efforts to apply skin-lightening and hair-straightening procedures. This kind of behaviour is an attempt to avoid the experience of intense anxiety or pain, leading to experiences of “psychic ill-health”. Fanon (1967), Manganyi (1973) and Sibisi (1991) refer to this experience as neurotic and suggest that it is likely to express itself in the consciousness of the black person. This neurotic life is an obstacle to the development of a healthy

balanced ego, in touch with and adapting in a healthy manner to, reality... There is no healthy way of adapting to apartheid or exploitation! Those who try to adapt end up being devoured... (Sibisi, 1991, p.133).

According to Biko (1973a; 1973b), adopting BC which signifies 'inward-looking' will help the black person to heal this psyche. In her analysis of the impact of community projects on the marginalised, Ramphele (1991) argues that black activists were heavily inspired by Julius Nyerere's *Arusha Declaration*. The Declaration which was adopted on 5 February 1967, committed Tanzania to *ujamaa* (familyhood) as a development philosophy that stressed the use of local ideas and resources (Hyden, 1980).

Instead of continuing to pursue conventional developmental wisdom and seek private investment, industrialisation, Western-style education, and so on, Julius Nyerere insisted that the ultimate aim was to attain freedom which he described as a question of consciousness among all the people of the nation so that they could be free (Manzo, 1995). With his *ujamaa* approach, Nyerere's general aim was to remove black Africans from European control and influence and inculcate a sense of self-reliance which was congruent with the capacity of blacks to initiate, manage and evaluate development efforts in the light of their own perceived needs. Therefore, *ujamaa* was perceived by BC activists as the vista in which they could see the realisation of self-help and self-reliance. The notion of *ujamaa*, the approach of which to life was person-centredness, attracted BC exponents.

The idea of community-based autonomous development and co-operative decision-making also seemed consistent with the South African concept of *ubuntu* (Ramphele, 1991; Manzo, 1995), which, to Africans, is characterised by good behaviour, respect and communalism. To Ramphele (1991) *ubuntu* is a person-centred approach to life which could be easily accommodated and extended to a wider social system to incorporate components of socialism. According to BC analysts, black South Africans, as a result, *inter alia*, of poverty, were perceived as recipients of charity from white organisations. Consequently, the dependency attitude impacted negatively on black people. Dependency was a problem to BC exponents because it "wrought havoc on the self-image of black South Africans, who lost self-confidence as a people" (Ramphele, 1991, p.156). Dependent persons'

'centres of gravity' lie not with themselves but with others and they submit to and comply with what others prescribe. Dependent personalities tend to denigrate themselves and their accomplishments.

BC activists in South Africa were willing to heed the *ujamaa* call. They did so by adopting the strategy of community projects to free the black community from the situation of dependency in which they found themselves. A final aim of these projects was "a normal society where man is nothing else but man for his own sake" (Biko, 1978, p.21). Sono (1993) asserts that in the latter part of 1971, Black Community Programmes were started by SASO which involved, *inter alia* literacy, adult education, employment, primary health care and self-help.

3.6. FANON, MANGANYI AND BIKO AND THEIR RADICAL IMAGERY

The literature reviewed on these authors sets out a comprehensive theory of a detailed Utopian vision but they advocate their vision of progress and in a manner that is a remarkably powerful normative statement. Because their thought is dialectical they are able to envisage a new humanity as a sequence and conclusion of the struggle against racism. In Fanon's (1963) words: "When the nation stirs as a whole, the new man is not an *a posteriori* product of that nation; rather, he coexists with it and triumphs with it" (p.250). For instance Fanon shows that while the struggle should be directed toward "the veritable creation of new men" the new humanity is not the inevitable outcome of an historical process. He insists that

There has been no waiting until the nation has produced new man; there must be no waiting until men are imperceptibly transformed by revolutionary process in perpetual renewal. It is quite true that these two processes are essential but consciousness must be helped (Fanon, 1963, p.246).

Fanon, Manganyi and Biko give some idea about the nature of the new man in the struggle but they do not specify the full and precise meaning which they attach to the phenomena, new humanity, African history and African culture in the context of the final synthesis in the struggle against racism. Nonetheless, given that these concepts refer to a future synthesis, logically the precise nature and consequences are unknown. However, these authors assume that synthesis is transcendence of false consciousness. In this case it is a humanity which is characterised neither by the oppressor nor

oppressed. Although it may seem to be far from that envisaged goal, these authors tend to refer to BC as a process for advancing and measuring both physical and psychological progress.

CHAPTER 4

4.1. METHODOLOGY

The meaning of being black in South Africa is so deeply politically embedded that it is not possible or meaningful to give an account of any personal experience without relating stories about the context in which they are lived. For this reason this investigation used a qualitative method capable of accounting for psychological experience in social context. The question posed by the present investigation sought to explore and describe the experience of self-identity and thus to understand the experiential world of two research participants who have adopted BC as a philosophy of life. The proposed qualitative approach (which is exploratory in nature) was thus used to investigate the psychological role of BC in self-identity.

Since the purpose of this study is to develop better ways of understanding the meaning and the role of BC in shaping the identity of blacks in South Africa, the grounded theory suggested by Glasser and Strauss (1967) and grounded hermeneutic research approach were used. According to Kelly and van Vlaenderen (1996), a grounded theory approach is useful in situations where there is not a well established or a coherent body of existing theory to guide the researcher. These approaches allow the researcher to intertwine the questions raised, data collected and the emerging interpretative account. In the process of doing the research these issues reciprocally inform each other and develop together until the description of the lived experiences of the participants after embracing BC reaches a 'saturated' point.

This method is characterised by some elements of phenomenology (Kruger, 1986; 1988) which stress that a human being should be systematically understood in terms of human rather than mechanical or theoretical structures. While stressing and accepting the subject's explications of his/her own experience, the method still strives towards a rigorous and systematic exposition of this experience in terms of a structure of experience (Stones, 1986). Since, according to Valle and King (1978), the psychological meaning of the experience can be understood when it is placed into context, phenomenology with its emphasis on the inter-relationship between the individual and his/her world is employed in this research.

This approach was adopted because it asks the participants to describe their experiences, understanding that experiences are a reflection of realities. So the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences as members of BC family enabled the researcher to explore the role that BC plays in their experiences.

On the other hand, a hermeneutic study allowed questions to arise during the research process with the purpose of developing a full understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Elliot (1989) contends that a hermeneutic approach is exploratory, discovery-oriented and theory-generating which includes a reflective process of engaging with data "during which the questions guiding the research are re-examined and reformulated" (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller and Argyris, cited in Kelly and van Vlaenderen, 1996, p.1237).

With the progression of the research stages, the research questions which were originally formulated in mind became reformulated and refined and were used during the stages of the research process. I decided to use an open-ended model in constructing research questions, as suggested by Packer (1989) and Addison (1989). This model leads to results that are not answers but are theory-generating, being exploratory and investigative. This also allowed for extra meaning in the interpretative research.

As a consequence of this procedure of obtaining information (explained above), a better understanding of the phenomenon was achieved.

4.1.1. Recruitment of research participants

Initially it was difficult to decide how to select subjects whose experiences are influenced by the adoption of BC. Knowing that the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) embraces BC as its philosophy for black people, the researcher decided to phone the national office of AZAPO in Dobsonville, Gauteng. Later the researcher went to the national office with the purpose of obtaining their approval of the research, suggestions, advice and permission to select some of their members for the research.

Concerns were raised as to whether the topic under study would be accepted (with success) at the institution where the research was going to be done. The concern was based on the assumption that the institution is predominantly white and may have a negative attitude to the phenomenon under study. The assumption was also based on the perceptions that are generally held by some black people about white institutions. It was stated that the mass media and literature indicate whites' negative comments and lack of support for BC.

Nonetheless, the AZAPO national offices authorised access to its members and further suggested that the researcher could select any BCM members. It was also agreed that, if the need arose, the researcher should consult the office in future. With the help of the AZAPO office, arrangements were made to meet Grahamstown BCM members in the Eastern Cape for further discussion about the research.

Though it was decided to conduct interviews in Gauteng for reasons of practical convenience to the researcher, discussions in the Eastern Cape provided a continuity which had a kind of snowballing effect. This effect was important because access to the participants through others meant that those who had the required characteristics would be likely to know of others who had similar features. Furthermore it was helpful to have access to other members who could help in the further philosophical and psychological understanding of the phenomenon and of the literature reviewed and its interpretation. These discussions, presumably, helped both AZAPO and the researcher to minimise doubt and suspicions. This could in turn build confidence and trust, which could help participants to talk openly and freely.

A meeting was organised with the Political Commissar of AZAPO who later came to Kwa-Thema to have more discussion about the research and the subject under research. Having discussed the research, the researcher decided to adopt the following criteria for selection of participants:

- Appropriate subjects in terms of their long standing as members of BC;
- The perception that their work in the black community reflects an understanding of BC;
- Their willingness to participate in the interviews would depend upon their availability.

4.1.2. Pilot study

For this research, it was decided to do a pilot run of the proposed study, for Addison (1992) hypothesises that “the world of interviewing research takes one along strange paths or through dangerous places” (p.29). This approach allows the researcher to gain a preliminary understanding of a text or text-analogue (Packer, 1989). Firstly, the researcher needs a point of access to the phenomenon and the initial task of the research is to develop preparatory ways of thinking about the phenomenon to be researched. The researcher is allowed to explore the interviewing processes and the complexities of the interviewing relationship before he/she can engage in greater detail in the research process. The preliminary questions of the research, as suggested by Kelly (1994), provided an important access to the phenomenon under research by providing a starting place for enquiry. The pilot run provided the researcher with the opportunity to ask more meaningful and useful questions. As a result of this procedure the researcher was equipped with better ways of thinking about the phenomenon (BC) under research.

4.1.3. Selection of participants

Selection procedures for participants in this research had to be conducted with caution.

- First, the participants had to be BC-orientated since the researcher intended to investigate its meaning in their experiences.
- Second, they had to be black in terms of the definition of black by the BCM, (Appendix for this definition). This was to ensure that their awareness of blackness was a consequence of adopting BC philosophy.
- They should be able to describe their experience before their adoption of BC. The data helped the researcher to understand the participants’ experiences before they adopted BC. They also had to feel free to describe their experiences after they adopted BC. Such data helped the researcher to understand the experiences of the participants after their adoption of BC.

Comparison of these 'before' and 'after' life experiences helped the researcher to understand the role that BC play in their psychology of being black.

Two black adults who subscribe to the BC philosophy were selected.

The chosen participants were consulted individually by the researcher so that he could explain the nature, goals and the method of the research study. Each participant was told that the work would be used for research purposes, in the interest of the development of thinking about BC, and that a tape recorder would be used to record the interviews. The participants were told that it would not be a problem if they were unwilling to participate in the study and were told that if at any stage they wished to withdraw from the research they could do so. The researcher assured the participants that confidentiality would be guaranteed. Each participant was told that after the interview they would be able to have the tape to listen to and later a copy of the transcribed interviews. Participants were assured that the interpretative section of the thesis would be available for them to study the interpretation.

4.1.4. Data collection

It was agreed that the interviews would take place at the participants' work places and at times suggested by the participants. Both participants agreed to use English during the interview since it would not be a problem for them. Both subjects indicated good communication skills in the language when describing their experiences. This command of English might be attributed to their exposure to education up to university level. This helped the researcher to transcribe the interviews verbatim without translating from one language to English which would involve tampering with the actual words of the participants. Unlike translation, transcribing verbatim in one language did not affect the meaning of content because the words were transcribed exactly as they were uttered by the subjects.

A structured interview schedule was constructed which sought descriptions from the subjects. The three separate interviews suggested by Seidman (1991), which were conducted with each subject, also determined the pattern of questions as follows:

- What biographical factors are seen as being important prior to becoming black conscious?
- How did the person come to realise his self-identity as problematic?
- How did the process of adopting BC change his self-identity?

These questions helped in forming an understanding of the research topic, which allowed the projection of questions and responses to questions appropriate to the objectives of the research.

Participants were interviewed separately in their offices of work at appointed times of their choice. Each of the three interviews with each respondent lasted for about 90 minutes although, in some cases, the interviews went beyond the suggested time. The researcher could not interrupt by suggesting that the participant should stop for fear of missing input, the relevance of which might come out later.

A tape-recorder was used to record each of the three interviews with each subject. Tape recording and transcribing were the primary method of creating a text from the interviews. In addition, the tape-recorder could preserve the original data for later use by the researcher. Having tape-recorded the interviews of the two subjects, the tapes were listened to and transcribed. Following this procedure of listening and transcribing, the researcher was able to understand the material better. The transcript reflects the interview as fully as possible by being verbatim.

4.1.5. Data analysis

Data analysis was done by generating two general structures, one from each participant, which then could be read in relation to each other in order to elicit a descriptive structure. This analysis was chosen because it applies the “standard interpretative procedures” of phenomenological analysis developed by Giorgi (1985). To gain access to the descriptive structure for each participant, a method of analysis had to be developed.

4.1.5.1. Holistic grasp of data

The first step was to play the tape over and over in order to get a picture of the interviews. The taped interview material from each participant was transcribed and read repeatedly in order to grasp the participant's descriptive experience prior to and after adoption of the BC philosophy.

4.1.5.2. Organisation of data into discrete descriptive events

While studying the material, the researcher had the following question in mind: 'Where in the data is the discrete experience of being black conscious being described?' To delineate the description of discrete experiences of BC, the transcriptions were annotated. Each time a discrete transition in meaning was perceived, a note was made, so as to identify separate units of the meaning with regard to the meaning of being black conscious. This happened by breaking down the interview content into segments, which reflected the experiences of discrete descriptive events of being black conscious. The breaking down of research protocols is the standard step in phenomenological research (Giorgi, 1985).

4.1.5.3. Reduction of interview data

The reduction of interview data was more reflective and exacting. The discrete descriptive events of being black conscious were extracted from the redundant data in which they were situated. They were then rewritten and transformed to the extent that they were summarised and some of the repetitions and contextual details were eliminated, with care taken to retain the sense and the context of the meaning.

Idiosyncratic expressions were interpreted into common-usage terms, according to the researcher's contextual reading of what the participant was explicitly trying to describe about his experiences. This stage intended to reproduce the sense of what the participant was trying to convey in a summarised form. Therefore it was a summary rather than an exercise in giving meaning. Words of the participant which were not easily rendered into non-idiosyncratic expressions, or words of the participant which would have lost their richness and meaning if summarised, were retained as quotations in the text.

4.1.5.4. Compilation of descriptive categories

The participant's experiences of the same descriptive event which reflected a common theme were extracted and clustered together. The data assembled were not yet collated according to types of descriptive experiences. The specific 'types' (Giorgi, 1979) had not yet been identified.

4.1.5.5. The development of descriptions of the participants

The reading guide method proposed by Brown *et al.* (cited in Packer and Addison, 1989) was used in order to analyse the descriptive categories and to make them relevant to this research. The reading guide method is a way of structuring the process of interpretation, from reducing the data to the discussion stage. Through the use of this method, data was reduced by developing a reading guide, which is a set of questions through which the data were to be read. In this way, the features of the text are highlighted and the text interpreted as meaningful in terms of the questions asked. It is an important principle of phenomenological as well as hermeneutic research that the data does not speak unless questions are asked.

As a preparatory step to the construction of the reading guide, each of the two sets of descriptive experiences was studied to find relevant ways of categorising the experiences of each participant. A preliminary reading guide was prepared by scanning the material and assigning headings to words that conveyed a similar theme. When it began to be clear what types of data were present, the reading guide was constructed. This reading guide consisted of a preliminary set of questions which were to be used for transforming the descriptive categories into what amounted to a descriptive form of situated structure (Giorgi, 1985). The reading guide was edited, changed and developed to the point where it reached sensitivity to the topic of the research.

This involves a procedure of returning to the theoretical notes and reflecting upon the descriptive material so that the questions which finally emerged were appropriate to the overall intentions of the study and relevant to the kind of data that had been collected. There were inevitably questions of interest to the overall context of the study which the data could not answer, both because the data were not sufficiently comprehensive and because of the limitations imposed by the type of data obtained.

The reading guide was then applied to the descriptive categories. The application of the reading guide required reading the descriptive protocols from the point of view of each question or set of questions and this resulted in the gathering together of the descriptive categories into groups, or types, according to the questions of the reading guide.

Each individual descriptive structure was then rewritten according to the categories and types developed through application of the reading guide. At this stage repetitious detail was omitted and only the essential details that describe the fundamental categories of the descriptive experience for each were retained.

Categories with similar meaning for each participant, were gathered into clusters. These were subjected to a final stage of analysis in which the central themes present in each cluster were identified, listed and discussed.

Using the themes, as identified above, an extended description, or meaningful synthesis, of the descriptive experiences from both participants, was written (Chapter 5). This provides a general and condensed summary of the experience of being black conscious.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1. OVERVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDY

The results of this enquiry will be presented separately for each of the participants. Thereafter, a summary will be presented which looks at some of the issues raised at a more interpretive level; that is, across the two cases.

Although it is not possible to generalise across two cases (and this is not the intention) it is possible to use the different contexts (including the different contexts within cases) to elaborate an understanding of the nuances and shapes which a theme takes in different situations. It is possible in this way to detect anomalies from theoretical expectations, and to explore emergent themes from one case study, to see what form they take in another study. To this extent, this study pretends to be no more than exploratory, and aimed at developing ideas about the phenomenon in question, and challenging established ideas.

For the presentation of the two separate cases, three major headings will be discussed. These are:

Experience of becoming black conscious

Understanding of the precursors to the experiences of becoming black conscious and the conditions which lead to the adoption of BC philosophy and practice.

The significance of the process of becoming black conscious

Understanding of the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious.

Continuing importance of BC and its practice

Understanding of the continuing importance of BC in the lives of those who have become black conscious, and the forms of practice which entail being black conscious.

These headings emerged as central interpretive categories in studying and trying to make more sense of the two cases following the methodology outlined in Chapter 4.

5.2. PARTICIPANT: A

5.2.1. Experience of becoming black conscious

Central here is the understanding of the precursors to the process of becoming black conscious and the conditions which led to the adoption and maintenance of BC philosophy and practice.

5.2.1.1. The experience before the awareness of race and oppression

The findings of the present study regard social environment such as relationships between family members and the community as an important influence on the perceptual development of participant A from his early childhood. The participant's early perception played a determining role in his awareness of race and oppression later.

5.2.1.1.1. Family and community

Participant A's experience of family cultural life from childhood created a foundation for him to develop positive images of his origins. He comes from a rural area and describes his family as having "lived a rural life". Furthermore, his family had status within his community. In his words:

I was born in the village called Folovhodwe. My surname means that we are people who look after Folovhodwe, which is the area. My family was charged with the responsibility of running Folovhodwe. In other words I come from what is referred to as the 'royal family'.

This sense of having come from a family which had a strong and positive social standing seems to have been important in creating a positive image of his origin. He emerged from childhood as a person with a strong sense of belonging in the world and as having a sense of place both in terms of family and place of abode.

A sense of belonging is also indicated by the fact that he mentions that he grew up in quite a "large family" in which his father had three wives. His family was 'extended' with the arrival of a Mozambican who became his brother-in-law by marrying the participant's sister. His account of his family is expansive, in that his concept of family seems to merge with his concept of a community. Both are

integral to his childhood sense of place and belonging. Of particular importance is that the participant's early awareness of his extended family provided him with a feeling of community origin. Such a community feeling had inculcated in him a foundational sense of belonging and this seems to have provided a foundational base for his appreciation of the concept of community later in his life.

The participant reported that older members of the community had a responsibility to discipline the youngsters, irrespective of relationship, and it was the youngsters' responsibility to respect the elders:

...any member of the community who was old had a responsibility on us which stretched all over the community. It has no boundaries. For instance, if I was older than you and I found you doing something wrong, I would give you a lash.... The older ones would look after the young ones.... I could be corrected, I could be sent to the shop and I would run. We used to depend on them even on stories. We would come and sit down and listen at those little animal stories from rural areas which parents used to pass from one generation to another.... That's how I grew up.

This shows that the participant grew up in a family/community context which had a very clearly delineated social structure in which he knew his place. So he had the sense of a functioning community with a clear structure. The somewhat authoritarian and hierarchical nature of this community does not appear to be problematic to him as he looks back on it. Furthermore, the actual structure of this community has not become a model for him in the sense of something he believes in, or which he should replicate in his current life, as a proponent of BC. He does not particularly subscribe to hierarchical form of community. But the general idea of community has been strongly retained, as has the feeling that individuals are given a role, place and purpose by their surrounding social environment.

Also, in the light of the above extract, the participant indicates a sense of having come from a social structure characterised by responsibility, formed by his immediate family and his rural community. Having grown up within this social environment, he feels he had been endowed with a sense of responsibility that he could exercise as an older member of his community. He appears to have developed this sense of responsibility from the images he has of the structure of his childhood community.

5.2.1.1.2. Experience of religion

The participant had a strong experience of having come from a family with a strong religious foundation. His awareness was nourished by his belonging to a community based church under the “auspices of Christian gospel as related to him by an African independent experience”. He attests:

My father was a Christian of the African Independent Churches called Joint United Christian Church. It was a kind of Zion Church. So I grew up knowing it as that. The teaching at home was that of the Christian God, but there were still people in the rural areas who did not believe in that Christian God. So my father was just one of those and he had quite a sizeable number of followers. I grew up under the auspices of a Christian gospel as related to us by African independent experience. We used to beat drums in my father's church. We never played guitars, trumpets and we used to praise God in the manner which is more towards what the Africans like to do.

The above shows that the participant had early religious experience which was later to be recognised as having a specifically non-Western aspect to it, which would come to be treasured by the participant. Early experience shows that he felt integrated into the church. He describes his experience as being participatory (“we used to beat drums”) and his early religious experience was characterised as having been closely touched by his family and community life. His later experience of the religious experience of others was always to be underpinned by his own experience of having had a positive religious experience, the Africanness of which was later to be identified by him as consistent with emerging BC beliefs and practices.

5.2.1.1.3. Experience of education

The participant’s exposure to informal education, as a member of the community, enabled him to learn some social practices which aided his development of skills of competence. Concerning informal education, as a child the participant was introduced to tilling the land, hunting, herding cattle, killing birds, playing hide and seek, learning to swim together across the river, and other things that were seen to be of value in overcoming adversity and danger.

Of particular importance in this sub-theme is that the participant regards himself as highly efficacious in those social activities that he had learnt in his childhood and he takes pride in having been part of that rural community. It appears that his early learning experiences equipped him to feel competent in dealing with the daily challenges of life as well as providing solutions to problems. One might say that his early

experience left him with the experience of being empowered in his own environment. He felt that he had access to the means to overcome the challenges imposed by his environment.

5.2.1.2. Developing awareness of race and oppression

The participant's awareness made him perceive his community as coherent, but as he began to see it set in juxtaposition to other communities, he realised that society as a whole was not coherent. He began to realise that his community was in a disadvantaged position in the broader context and that the plight of his community was far from unproblematic in the society as a whole.

We should not infer from the above construct that the participant had an idyllic childhood. It will be seen that in his childhood he had some expectations which he could not realise, and this led to frustration. It seems that such frustration, which induced aggression in his early childhood, was something of a seed in an otherwise placid life, which might have contained the germ of his later adoption of BC.

5.2.1.2.1. Becoming aware of the white community

Central to this sub-theme is that the participant recounts how from his early childhood, he experienced the world around him in a way which impacted on the development of his awareness of the dichotomies of living in a world which was 'divided'.

Whereas his primary experience of community, as shown above, was characterised as having integrity and coherence, he gradually began to realise that his family and community were at odds with and divided from the surrounding context:

They remained white community. There were few farmers who were living just across the river. If you cross the river, you would automatically end up in a place, which was fenced. So if you cross the fence, you would be in trouble. You have to ask if you wanted to go in.

The participant's encounter with the problem of boundaries between his community and the white community made him increasingly aware that his primary sense of home was actually a place of exclusion. He reclaimed the distinctiveness of his own and the other community through not being

allowed to cross the river with his mother to play with white children. Therefore, he became aware that it was not only a different world out there, but a world that excluded him.

The experience of his mother passing between the two communities is expressed in his description of her as a domestic worker who used to cross the river to do washing and ironing for the white people. Though at times he crossed with his mother, as it was his desire to go to the other side of the river where white people lived, he was not allowed to play with white children and he personally never got to know white people intimately.

The participant's description of his father as a worker (dipping inspector) is in contradiction with another statement he made that his father was self-sufficient and that his father had made a declaration that he would not work for the white person. His father did indeed work for a white person but was deeply ambivalent about this. His statement that he would never work for the white man could be taken to refer to his ambivalence. The participant was aware of this ambivalence and remembers realising that his father used to be supervised by a white person who worked together with him. He would always ride a bicycle while the white person drove a van and as a child the participant found it strange that this would happen even if they had to go to the same place. As an adult the participant viewed his father as submissive to the system that he (the father) thought was treating him unjustly, but it is clear that this thought was already forming in his childhood.

This perceived submissive approach was confirmed for the participant when his father decided to look after a young white person who had epilepsy. The white person who was a Christian depended on the participant's father for help from epilepsy. Sometimes the white person would cross the river in order to sleep at the participant's home. Though the participant did not see the accommodating of the white person as a problem, he perceived white people collectively as part of the problem. Already then, the participant saw the contradictions in the system as problematic. There were many examples of this. A further example which led the participant to realise the inequalities of the system was seeing that a younger and less experienced white person supervised and earned more than the participant's father:

...he was an Afrikaner's boy....he was still my father's boss when he was younger. My father had been in that job for years. Ordinarily, my father would have supervised him. But in South African situation you have to be supervised by a white person irrespective of his age, knowledge and skills.

All of these experiences laid the foundation for a developing appreciation of the situation as being not only strange but also a 'problem' to be overcome.

He began to understand his own environment on the basis of these perceptions of difference. As a consequence of his personal experience he began to link his exclusion from the white community with skin colour differences and came to understand that he was excluded on the basis of his skin colour.

5.2.1.2.2. The experience of oppression and hardship

Although the participant does not seem to have been a direct victim of oppression psychologically, facets of his life such as education and thinking have been fashioned within the context of oppression. Whilst he did not have academic problems, he had difficulties in being moved from one school to the next. At one time he lost one year because he could not find a school to attend. Thus he did not do his standards 3 and 4 in an officially registered school but he was tutored privately at home by a teacher who volunteered to help him. Then he left home and stayed with relatives who stayed more than 150km from home. He stayed there until he finished standard 6.

This shows that, although the participant was very young, his struggle to get a school to settle, and having missed a full year of studies, were a bitter experience for him. The realisation that his aspiration of continuing with education was blocked appears to have led to frustration which made him later to turn to BC for some kind of security.

On the other hand, the fact that he was tutored privately seems to suggest the availability of an atmosphere free of government intervention which helped him a lot in the early formulation of his ideas which again seems like a precursor to his later adoption of BC. Although the teacher might not be the representative of the system, but all the same, he appears to have had an approach to the participant which was sort of provocative and challenging, and thus enabled the participant to begin to see, in a

sense, the totality of white racism. This helped him to develop an attitude which later was directed at white racism as a problem.

5.2.1.2.3. The participant's part-time work experience

In his account the participant describes his part-time work as child, in order to get money. He states that instead of being given money as payment he and the other children were paid in kind where, for example, they were given a basket of mangoes as payment.

The participant had an expectation of getting paid by money when he did a part-time job. It seems that when he was paid in kind his expectation of getting money was blocked and thus he became bitter and frustrated and had a direct experience of economic injustice, which in many respects he has devoted his life to avoiding, both in his own life and in the lives of others.

5.2.1.2.4. Awareness of the dichotomies of the religious domain

He describes his family as religiously-oriented and his father being the leader of one of the African Independent Churches called Joined United Christian Church, sometimes referred to as the Zion Church with many followers. The participant grew up in the family church "under the auspices of Christian gospel as related by African independent experience". He says:

We used to beat drums in my father's church. We never played guitars and trumpets... when the time of praying came all of us prayed. We shouted whatever we shouted and thereafter my father who would be preceding would sort of quell down the shouting and then later he closes up the prayer.

It seems that the church had provided the participant with the atmosphere which was free from any constraints which helped him to learn and accept the practices of his family church. When he went to the Lutheran Church and Anglican Church he was provided with another atmosphere which enabled him to learn something different from what he had already learnt at his father's church. He discovered that there were practices that were in direct conflict with what he knew from his father's church:

When I went to Lutheran Church I found only one person praying for everybody in the congregation. I started to question myself at that stage: 'How come you have one God but

when you go to pray this God, you have different way of talking to the same God?’ Later I visited the Anglican Church as part of schooling and I found yet another problem. Small boys had altars with smoke going up.

It appears that the exposure of the participant to different churches gave him a great deal of time to learn practices in churches. This learning experience enabled him to identify that practices of other churches were different from those of his father’s church. This helped him to formulate his ideas which later made him question the ‘dichotomies’ that existed in various denominations. Being familiar with his home church he had a sense of a functioning church with clear procedure which he viewed as the correct one.

Here, as in many areas of his life, he shows that he is acutely aware of dichotomies of a social life which set what he knew as his own in a problematic broader context. The dichotomy in each case is organised around the concept of a home culture which was discovered to be at odds with that which was more generally accepted in the society as the acceptable and prevailing norm. As he grew up he gradually began to interpret this dichotomy and in his later discovery of BC he was given a hermeneutic framework for understanding his early perceptions that a racial dynamic of exclusion lay behind the dichotomy.

5.2.1.2.5. Steps towards becoming black conscious

It has already been said that the participant gradually became aware that whereas he perceived his community as coherent, his community was set in juxtaposition to other more powerful and dominant communities, and he began to see that ‘the whole’ (the society) was not coherent. He thus began to realise that his community was placed in a disadvantaged position in the broader context.

He had only seen traces of this previously, for example, in the contradiction of his father saying that he would never work for a white person. Now he began to realise that such statements and other small incidents as mentioned above were part of a larger or macro problem. Thus, as he began to glimpse the world beyond the horizons of his own immediate experience, he began to realise that what he cherished was actually under threat in the societal context.

Evident in the findings is the participant's feeling that he was a product not only of his own immediate social and familial context, but he was also the product of a broader social context of which he had relatively little understanding. He gradually began to realise that his individuality was mediated socially and politically. This gave him a sense of belonging that extended beyond his own immediate importance. This helped him to develop a meaningful understanding that he was part of history and in this process he began to realise that he was not alone in seeing the tension between his immediate context and broader society and he should expect support from significant others in thinking what he was beginning to think:

At school I had already known what I wanted to do. The fact that I grew up in those circumstances, of living as a black person, made me actively participate in the activities of SASO. That time I had already made my mind that there was something wrong. This world I am living in is a different world for white and black people.

In the light of this, he had progressively become aware that his community had its own sense of identity and that it was set in juxtaposition to the white community he perceived not to be his own. The consciousness of his perception that the exclusion and undermining that he shared with significant others, was progressively raised, and this had projected the sense of identification of himself with others who had similar perceptions relating to his place and culture in the society.

Of particular importance is that the adoption of BC by the participant was preceded by his becoming aware that the ideal context was set in the larger context of racial division. He now became a member of the community of blacks (that is, the concept of being black gradually began to be more important to him). Whereas his primary sense of community was established by way of identification with familial and cultural practices, now his sense of identity was less to do with identifiable characteristics and more set in a context of difference. Now he became 'this' through not being 'that', which added another dimension to his sense of identity.

5.2.2. The significance of the process of becoming black conscious

This theme focuses on the participant's experience of the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious. The participant had always had a sense of being part of a specific social group, which was initially his family and immediate community and later the community of black people.

But he also had early experiences of questioning his identification with social categories that he had, so to speak, found himself already embedded in by virtue of his social context. This questioning took on both a psychological and socio-political dimension in his adoption of BC philosophy.

5.2.2.1. Becoming a member of the movement

Of particular importance in this theme is that the participant reflected a growing sense of belonging by joining SASO because he believed the organisation helped him to assert his identity with black students. His description of his involvement with SASO reflected a sense of identity because he feels SASO, which embraced BC, had inculcated an awareness of the search for self and place within a context organised according to exclusivity, that is, constituting black people only. According to the participant, transformation can only be achieved if relations of power are balanced and would usher in positive change. The present study reveals the need for the new political discourse which allows the expression of the selves of the black people, as opposed to the selves of black people being organised or determined externally. Essential to these claims to ownership of discourse and expression of the self is the need for the expression of an identity which had been denied by the over-determination of oppression.

He recounts that he joined SASO when it was inaugurated and Bantu Biko was elected its first president (at the participant's institution) and he witnessed this event as a first-year student. The fact that the Turfloop SRC president was elected the deputy president of SASO seems to have injected a sense of self-worth in him. This indicates evidence of a feeling of belonging to the movement and having a direct stake in it. It was as if he was affirmed in the affirmation of his own immediate socio-political context. In the light of this event, he felt special that he was part of the inauguration and was amongst the few that saw Biko being inaugurated as SASO president, and that gave him a feeling of self-pride and fulfilment.

The participant's involvement with SASO and the SRC indicates his keenness to participate in student politics. He became a member of the 1971/1972 SRC which resisted the expulsion of a black student by the university:

I entered the campaign to the SRC and I won...in 1971 to 1972. That is the SRC that caused 'troubles' when one of the BC students was expelled. The SRC called the university to order. So all black universities were up in arms all over the country. We got expelled from the university. The whole SRC was kicked out of the university together with others who were seen to be the support system of the SRC.

He mentions that on joining SASO, he was exposed to banned material that would inform him about the history and culture of his community. In the light of this, he developed an urge to read more because he believed that BC helped him to combine his particular perspective of the self with a larger and historical view of the marginalised. He began to think that the relation between the self and history was an important condition for human development:

At the university you have time to go to the library on your own to research what had happened. And when I went to read I found some contradictions and I became aware that there is a distortion of history and culture. I accumulated enough evidence against the status quo. I broadened my scope that it is not actually whites per se as human beings that are the problem but it is the attitude and continuous activities which militate against the other human beings that actually must be crushed.

As a consequence of joining SASO, as a hallmark of BC philosophy, he was provided with an atmosphere where he felt he was able to identify inferiority amongst black people and he was not going to be part of it. This was illustrated by the black solidarity of the student movement through resisting the expulsion of a black student at the university.

The participant feels that by joining SASO he was able to have access to reading material which provided him with the need for incisive redefinition, and as a result, his consciousness was raised. He feels that he was able to re-identify and reappraise the black totality in the context of racist environments. This gave him a sense of pride or belief in his own strength and worthiness because he believes he understands the significance and the importance of his own value systems in the socio-economic, political and cultural spheres.

5.2.2.2. A form of identity

The participant had always had a sense of being a part of specific social groups, particularly those groups characterised by the presence of black people. But he had an early experience of questioning

his identification with social categories that he has, so to speak, found himself already embedded in by virtue of his social context. This questioning took on both a psychological and socio-political dimensions in his adoption of BC philosophy.

By consciously adopting this philosophy he achieved the psychological feat of both defining himself as a member of a group, and also rejecting enforced categorisations. The latter tendency to reject received or enforced identifications, has been shown above to be already a feature of his early consciousness of social experience, as was his early cultural identification. This dual achievement appears to be a central feature of his experience which incorporates both a psychological dimension (need) and a social dimension; a psychological need to feel that he belongs and a need to reject his enforced categorisation as a member of the broader society. His concern is both with individual and group identity and becoming black conscious fulfilled his needs in both areas. It affirmed his psychological identification and his rejection of all that was imposed upon him and which gave him an identity on a socio-cultural level.

The present findings indicate that the participant's exposure to a BC milieu helped him to know the significance of BC as an attempt at creating the possibility of a positive identity, which simultaneously gave him an urge to challenge a situation that sought to undermine him as a black person. He saw the need to come to terms with blackness because it signified an imposed identity. There is no doubt that he felt BC had transformed his blackness in a positive way that made him feel free and the conscious adoption of the category black became synonymous with freedom which gives him a positive rather 'imposed negative' identity.

There is some irony in this, because the adoption of the category black was the adoption of an enforced category. Yet he adopted it in an affirmative saying, "Yes I am black, and happy to be so". In so doing he undid the quality of exclusion that the society had imposed on him. One might even say that his exclusion became its own exclusivity as he proudly adopted the category that in its own way excluded those seen as oppressors, at least in the early stages. Assisted by positive childhood experience he was

able to become proudly black and thus regained a sense of defining himself, rather than being defined from the outside by oppressive others.

There is a considerable amount of evidence that SASO for him exemplified the search for self and the home within a national context which organised and provided a context for identification of the self with those he felt had similar perceptions relating to his situation and culture in society. This thus enhanced his sense of belonging, and placed himself not only in a personal identity struggle, but in a national one. His struggle was not only an individual one, it became also a social struggle in a social arena.

5.2.2.3. Self-esteem and self-efficacy

The participant believes that BC has provided him with capabilities to confront the challenges of oppression thus projecting a sense of 'self-efficacy'. His recounting of his experience in prison reveals his perceived self-efficacy, which refers to a tendency to be able to have a determining and effective influence on events that involve him. When he went to prison in 1974, he observed that black prisoners were separated from white prisoners and were subjected to impoverished conditions.

We fought a lot in Robben Island. We were on hunger strike over poor food, to sleep in bed, over studies. At times they did not want us to raise our fists when we met our comrades. We maintained that greeting until we got out. When they punished us for raising fists, we said, 'ag foetsek' man, this is what we are going to do. We refused to be told, 'stand up!' and 'attention!'.

This suggests that the adoption of BC, which signifies an awareness and commitment to action, provided him with abilities not to view himself as an 'object' of someone else or to see himself as the victim of circumstances. It provided him with the tools to act, to 'do' something. He believes that BC has provided him with an awareness that put on him a responsibility to act within a particular framework or with a particular attitude. In the above instance, the attitude of action was such that it brought recognition of black prisoners as 'human beings' rather than as 'objects' of the prison warders. Under the circumstances these actions were an attempt to adopt agency, to have a determining role in circumstances.

The action was aimed at reversing victimization or being a passive recipient. It was about taking the circumstances and trying to insert agency into them. This is an extreme example, as the prison experience is designed to disempower action and in these circumstances BC represented a refusal to be defined by the action of repressive orders. It provided a mode for him of taking hold of his circumstances even in the most adverse conditions. The study shows a correlation between self-efficacy and self-esteem because as the participant regards himself efficacious in resisting the prison warders, he takes pride that by resisting orders from the warders, he defended his human dignity.

5.2.3. Continuing importance of BC

The experience of the participant indicates that BC as a call for black solidarity implies that in order to play a positive role in the struggle for liberation, black people must employ effectively the concept of group power and thereby build a strong base from which to counter racism. This political project is one that demands identification of one's own personal predicament with that of the community of black people. The liberation of oneself requires the liberation of black people, because the oppressive force of the category black is socially organised and liberation, even personal liberation, can only be achieved when the socially oppressive conditions of blackness are replaced with liberated black identity. The statement "I am black", in itself, is a statement that links the self to social identity. Any individual project adopted out of this identification is inherently related to the social conditions of blackness.

The study reveals that the participant's understanding of BC gave him a sense of purpose and meaning which was both individual and social in import. Of particular importance is that the participant views blackness, the organising principle, as the starting point for psychological reassessment of the self, which at the same time prepares the groundwork for a political programme. He feels his own identity and happiness are bound up with the extent to which he is able to empower or uplift black people as a social group in their struggle against oppression. Following, it will be seen how this look shape his life in a number of ways.

5.2.3.1. As a member of AZAPO

The findings indicate that as a member of AZAPO the participant is involved in the organisation's projects such as workshopping, seminars and congresses where he feels that his theoretical understanding of BC is heightened. This understanding is translated into practice in his involvement with the People's Agricultural Development project, which he is running. "I read a lot. I sharpen my mind from time to time but I don't allow that go away from practical.... I meet with communities". He advises in strategic planning and participates through planning processes.

This involvement of the participant in the broader social programmes such as AZAPO and community project indicates a deep sense of responsibility which he carries with him, almost as part of the image of who he is; that is, his identity and self-concept. He views himself as someone who is able to initiate and give practical effect to community development which is a deliberate strategy for capacity-building in his black community.

5.2.3.2. A sense of community responsibility

The importance of BC is implied in his daily activities with the black community with the aim of improving their quality of life. When he was released from prison, he voluntarily joined a union and acted publicly in relation to the material conditions workers found themselves in. "I was trying to improve the quality of life of the workers". He recruited workers to join the union and taught them to organise and improve themselves as workers. He was involved with community development projects in which he feels he inculcated a sense of self-help to the members of the community, an intention in concordance with BC philosophy. He did so by teaching labour studies. He has this to say:

I have no other interests except freeing black people. I feel unhappy because to date there are black people who still aspire white values. Black people have got values and norms which help towards forming black identity and BC plays an important role in this regard.

The connecting of his own happiness and identity with the freeing of black people reflects the merging of his personal and social aspirations. What seems to be important is that the participant has a sense of awareness which puts on him a responsibility to initiate and to give practical effect to community upliftment as a strategy for the psychological empowerment of the oppressed. The findings imply that the participant views community development as a strategy for liberation. Fundamental here is the

participant's tendency to link community development with the psychological liberation of black people. This act provides him with a sense of confidence because he believes that his active participation in the community, has effectively contributed to the psychological liberation of the community.

5.3. PARTICIPANT: B

5.3.1. The experience of becoming black conscious

This theme revolves around the understanding of themes associated with the process of becoming black conscious, and the conditions which led to the adoption of BC philosophy and practice.

5.3.1.1. The experience before the awareness of race and oppression

The study indicates that the participant had various experiences in his early socialisation which might be seen as precursors to the experience of becoming BC.

5.3.1.1.1. The reconstruction of family and community experiences

Participant B grew up in a family where most members were politically-inclined and he believed that his father was a member of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) who later became a devoted "born again Christian". All his family members grew up in church where they formed a solid family choir in which the participant was "deeply involved" until his adulthood and he developed a sense of belongingness that seems to have instilled a positive self-image.

The participant's early recollections of his family is 'broad' in the sense that he seems to merge it with his concept of 'community'. The family environment in which he grew up was politically and religiously grounded and as a result of political involvements his family was "always" subjected to police raids, a situation which was familiar to other members of the community in his social environment.

The participant's relationships with the community was strengthened by his interest in politics and was consolidated by the fact that he felt that the members of the community allowed him to attend their political discussions and they entrusted him with political tasks. He comments:

These guys used to meet and they used us youngsters for messages amongst themselves. We would gather with them outside at a street corner because they did not have houses to close themselves, and they would talk about a number of political issues. It was in 1960s when PAC was launched. They would talk about recruiting membership and other things that I didn't follow quite clear.

Growing up in the social environment with such a strong political standing, seems to have inculcated a strong feeling of space for him to develop politically within the family and the community at large. He feels that members of the community cherished him and used to look upon him as one of them and this enhanced his identity with them.

It seems that both family and community provided the participant with an atmosphere in which he could enhance his self-image through identification; and as a necessary means of effective communication, the participant learnt to assume the roles and attitudes of others with whom he interacted. These assumed attitudes conditioned not only how he responded to others, but how he behaved towards himself. It seems that the collective attitudes of the significant others gave him a sense of self. His self is shaped, developed and controlled by his anticipating and assuming the attitudes and definitions of the significant others towards him. To that extent the participant became a member of his community: its attitudes, values and norms became his. Therefore his image of himself was structured in these terms.

According to the study, the participant's family is embedded in the network of mutually interdependent relationships with the black community and the wider society. A key consideration in all of this concerns the mutually interdependent relations existing between the family and its members, on the one hand, and the family and the black community, on the other. It may be that, *inter alia*, the nature of the relationship of the family to the black community was the key factor in the development of the participant's self-image.

5.3.1.1.2. The impact of the religious domain in the participant's life

The participant comes from a religious-oriented family which formed a foundation for his development and this facilitated his commitment to church from his early childhood. As a result of his early experience of the church he became deeply committed and thus felt integrated into the church. Being a "devoted

Sunday school boy who grew up in the church”, seems to have inculcated a sense of belongingness which influenced him into wanting to change his name at school:

I remember when I had to register officially and one of the questions I was asked was my Christian name. So being a little Sunday school boy I thought about my name Nkwenkwe, no, it was not a Christian name. English name is Vincent and it is not in the Bible. Then I thought that my parents did not do things the right way. Other guys are Moses and Matthew. So being a Sunday school boy I thought, Ha! The person I really like in the Bible is Daniel because lions could not do anything to him when he was taken into the lion’s den.

This extract indicates the degree to which the church impacted on the participant’s sense of identity. But more importantly it illustrates an early identification with an image of courage in the face of adversity and shows that he thought of himself in positive terms as being able to withstand adversity through his belief in higher principles.

It might even be said that this early experience reflects a kind of prototype of experience that was later to take the form of seeing himself as struggling against the oppression of his people. It might be said that whatever he was to become and whatever social forces made him what he was, as an individual, even as a child he had a self-efficacy, endurance and winning over.

The participant shows himself full of zest and confidence whenever he describes how his involvement with the church had helped him to use his creative abilities and to be responsible. The first play that he wrote and the song that he composed were performed at the church, showing that the church, as a place which provided a sense of community in combination with the belief in higher principles, was the place which drew out his creativity and self-expression. The idea of fulfilling in a context which is both community oriented and led by a sense of higher purpose became a part of his imagination from an early stage.

Finally, the church is described as an atmosphere that helped the participant to develop his creative abilities which facilitated him being recognised by his community and that in return made him feel responsible for the community. This process of interacting with the community inculcated discipline and a sense of belonging and purpose.

5.3.1.2. Developing awareness of race and oppression

His community experience shows that his early socialisation with his social environment involved good experiences and on the other hand experiences characterised by hardship. Furthermore, the theme rests on the assumption that the participant shows a sense of aspiration and expectation to fulfil his dreams and when the attainment of these expectations and aspirations are blocked the participant experiences frustration which in turns leads to aggression, which needs to be understood in the process of understanding how he became part of the BCM.

5.3.1.2.1. Awareness of colour differences

The participant's early recollections include recognition of colour differences between blacks and whites. His encounter at a park played a significant part in his understanding of racial oppression later in his development. According to the participant:

I had gone to town with my old man. We used to have a park which was white. I wanted to go and play on the swings. When I got to the entrance a black man who was in charge of the security told me that I was not allowed to enter the park. In the meantime I was looking to white kids, at my age, and some younger than me were sitting there and enjoying themselves... I would say it was one of the things that, as a young kid, you would not understand why you were not allowed to enter and play where other kids were playing. Maybe there were no black kids that were playing there but there were black people inside. There were black maids who were accompanying white kids and the black guys who were in charge of the park.

What stands out in this extract is that the participant became aware of some forms of unfairness of the park incidence but as a five year old he was unable to interpret it as racism. He could observe that children who were allowed into the park were white. There is an indication that such an incident had not left him and later with the adoption of BC, reminiscence gave more meaning in terms of the marginalisation of black people by white racism. But the early foundations of this were already laid down in the childhood realisation that he was not allowed into the park because he was black and became conscious of his skin colour as the reason for him being oppressed.

This distressing incident at the park, as it is reflected by the findings, throws light on environmental provocations of racial prejudice and how this pressed on his participation in politics later. The study indicates that when, on account of his skin colour, he was treated with humiliating contempt by the park

security person, this provoked a sense of discomfort, recognised as unfairness, but which he did not fully understand to be able to express.

5.3.1.2.2. Awareness of religious contradictions

The participant was full of zest and youthful confidence when he described his observations of discrepancies within the church which helped him in the formulation of his ideas about and later that made him want to challenge the church:

I couldn't understand why they were building a four roomed house for a black priest who had four children while the white guys were living in massive houses in Florida and Houghton, especially with the 'born again Christians' who regard ourselves as children of God and are equal according to the Bible.

Although there is no clear evidence to understand why the participant was inclined to discern dichotomies in the church during his early childhood (where others did not seem to make as big an issue of it), the findings show that the participant's early experience of the church created in him the foundation for him to develop an awareness that made him notice that there were discrepancies within the church. As he was growing up in the church he progressively became aware about this aspect of the church, and that inspired and encouraged him to challenge the church.

There were mixed feelings in relation to the fact that in his realisation of the dichotomies he stood up and questioned the church, which led to his excommunication. On the one hand he had an intention of challenging the church from within. So his excommunication might have blocked him from achieving his goal and that might have resulted in him being frustrated when he realised that what he had aspired to could not be achieved. On the other hand, there is a sense of contentment because after the excommunication he had the support of the youth behind him and that might have instilled a sense of belonging in him as well. So in spite of having misgivings he acted on principle, again showing a strong tendency towards principled thinking, which in this instance was strong enough to prevail over the loss of community (his church which was so much a part of his family) in favour of identification with the broader struggling black.

5.3.1.2.3. Reconstruction of part-time working experience

The participant recounts that at times he had to do gardening as a part-time job for white people and he was also caddying on the golf course for pocket money. At work he observed white children of his age who did not do gardening:

They went out with their parents to play cricket or rugby. You look around and you see all boys who are doing gardening are black boys who came from the ghettos. And the white boys are going with their mothers for shopping.

This extract indicates that as a child the participant did not clearly understand why only black children were working for white people while white children accompanied their parents. As a child he might have had an expectation of either working together or going together to do shopping. Realising that this was not going to be possible he became frustrated and that might have created room for aggression in future. It seems that this experience did not leave him and later with the adoption of BC its 'nostalgia' gave more meaning in terms of his oppression as a black person.

In different ways the participant shows a sense that not only did he become aware of disparities as a child but that he experienced this as 'unfair'. This aspect of unfairness was emotionally described by him as 'frustration'. This may have laid an emotional base to his conviction and determination.

5.3.1.2.4. Reconstruction of experiences in politics

In his reconstruction of his family and community experiences the participant describes that his family and community were raided by security police for their involvements in political activities. He describes his family and community as members of the PAC . He states:

There were raids at nights, I mean they would raid the whole street or they would select those houses they thought had a possibility of harbouring anything like dangerous weapons. And my home was one of those raided and by the same token, my uncle was one of those who were raided and these guys would come in and look between the corrugated irons of the house roof.

From this perspective it seems appropriate to say that family and community provided an atmosphere which nurtured the political development of the participant as he was growing. His political involvement raised his consciousness and this made him understand that the raids by the security police were

directed against his community. He gradually began to understand that his community was targeted because it was black and the concept of blackness became the focal point in the liberation of his community. The concept of blackness gradually began to be a way of understanding his frustration and a guiding principle in his life.

5.3.1.3. Steps towards becoming black conscious

The participant shows that his early experience put him in a position of needing to find a new discourse which speaks the selves of the black people and makes sense of the puzzling issues that he became experientially aware of as a child, without really being able to make sense of them. Essential to this need was a need for expression of an identity which had been undermined by an over-determined oppression. By joining SASO later the participant realised the need to assert his identity with black students and here he began to find a new ideological home. Excommunication from his church had left his strong tendency to have a sense of believing in a higher principle, bereft of something to identify and believe in.

The participant recounts that immediately after the PAC was launched there were gatherings at street corners in which he witnessed and began to take part in political debates and discussions. The study shows that the participant was eager to learn and had an interest in political discussions. This earned him respect and one instance he recalls was coming to know that South African Republic Day should be boycotted by blacks because according to the participant black people were not yet liberated. This seems to have had an impact on the participant's political understanding and it was further influenced by the realisation that African states such as Kenya had achieved their liberation. He began to identify with the broader course of liberation and with the idea of resistance.

It seems appropriate to say that it was partly his interest in politics, his optimism, and the excitement of various African countries' independence, that increased the participant's interest in reading political literature. He needed an exploratory context, an ideological framework, and increasingly politics became appropriate.

Joining SASO, which reflected a search for the self and black solidarity, provided the participant with an opportunity to reinforce an emerging identity which had to do with being black. He expresses a sense of pride in the fact that prior to the formation of SASO in his area, people had already formed a black organisation in the township in which the participant was the vice president. The organisation's aim was to help solve problems experienced by black students in the participant's area. So Daniel in the lion's den again had a direction and prides himself on his initiative which even preceded his joining SASO.

Data from the study show the participant's attempt to find a position for himself within the ambit of a broader political framework. He was a strong individual with a strong sense of community and he seemed to bind these strong tendencies together by developing his ideas. According to the findings the participant "would probably do his damndest to get hold of" banned materials for reading, and he managed to get them from the "hidden library" of his principal who was PAC activist. "We were first guys to run copies of *Black like me*, by John Griffin". This book reflects a white person's "horrible" experience when he painted himself black because he wanted to experience what it is like to be black. The participant got access to *The invisible man* and anything else that he could get from African writers. For instance he read about Arusha Declaration of 1967 by Julius Nyerere of Tanzania which committed people of Tanzania to *ujamaa* as a development philosophy. In embracing BC he feels he was equipped with value systems that produced confidence as he possessed a direction in life that was valued by significant others and that he could use to confront the oppressive system.

Of great significance in this respect is the fact that the BCM provided the participant with an atmosphere for him to develop his capacity. He was exposed to resources that equipped him in a process of conscientization, a process by which he was brought to a critical consciousness of his situation, and then helped him to gather with the significant others into a greater community, to articulate their needs and to organise to effect transformation.

Equipped by this process, he reflects a sense of self-reliance because he is convinced that now he is an active agent of history, and that grounding political practice in local histories, knowledge, and experiences is preferable to being oppressed. He feels that, through his commitments to community

development projects, he can offer a way to break the psychological chains that prevent the oppressed black people from assuming control of their own destiny.

5.3.2. The psychological significance of becoming black conscious

Central to this theme is the participant's experience of the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious which equipped him with a sense of self and helped him at the same time to be part of a particular social group which became the community of black people. Early experience of questioning his identification with social categories that he found himself already located in, by virtue of his social milieu, took both a psychological and socio-political dimension in his adoption of BC.

5.3.2.1. The form of an identity

This sub-theme involves the participant's identity which seems to be grounded in a specific social category, blackness, which he feels gives an identity to oppressed people. Black identity for him affirms the assumption that all cultural value and meaning should flow from oppressed society. The participant feels that blackness fulfils a sense of responsibility about who he is, his destiny and his particular community. By naming himself as black he feels that he claims an identity that gives him a sense of belonging, and that what he is doing extends beyond his own immediate framework of meaning. It gives him a sense of affirmation that he has a role to play in the broader program of social transformation.

The realisation of his identification with others who embraced the vision of BC gave him confidence because he felt that he is not alone in the struggle and that he should expect support from significant others who identify themselves with blackness. Daniel in the lion's den was, after all, not alone, and needed the support of BC to affirm and develop his emerging thoughts. The study shows a developing consciousness on the part of the participant, banding towards an identity which seemed to lead to political commitment.

The study reflects the participant's need to come to terms with blackness by way of self and group identification. Through the adoption of BC the participant was able to respond to his environment by rejecting anything, that by his standards, was considered non-black, so that he gradually became involved in a world of blackness. His 'preoccupation' with blackness made him feel that anything

associated with blackness is good. This is reflected in his devotion to black literature and his overwhelming attachment to black people, and his excitement and joy in being part of a black milieu. He is not only interested in engaging in a black lifestyle, but also engaging his intellect in a cultural analysis of a black lifestyle.

In summary, it seems that the participant's self-identity was frustrated by what he perceived as the misconception of him by 'others' and he felt the need to re-affirm blackness by way of self and social identification which he claimed is beyond the power of others to grasp and understand. He did not want to be understood or interpreted by others and his own black lifestyle and analysis thereof helped him to feel free of oppression in the form of denigration of self and community by mis-appreciation and misunderstanding on the part of white ideology. There is a tendency for the participant's view of blackness as an organising principle to manifest also at the level of the individual, and this led to him needing to psychologically reassess himself. This psychological reassessment of self laid the foundation for a political programme which represents the relationship between the self and black society.

5.3.2.2. The sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem

The findings of the study reveal the tendency of the participant to judge himself in terms of his capabilities which dates back to his early childhood. In the description of his experiences even from childhood, he regards himself to be highly efficacious in the confrontation with what he viewed as oppression. He attests that his involvement with scouting as a boy had enabled him to acquire the skills that enable him to view himself in terms of self-efficacy which gives him a sense of self-worth or self-esteem.

5.3.2.2.1. In scouting

The involvement of the participant with scouting at an early age and the various activities in which he was involved, enabled him to develop skills that gave him a feeling of growing competence. What should be noted is that scouting, ironically a tradition invented by the British during the Boer war, assisted to raise the participant's self-efficacy. It provided him with an early context in which to become a leader.

It would seem that the participant's childhood social circumstances had an impact in his ability to be innovative, forming goals and planning how to achieve the goals. As a result of his being able to express himself well, he ended up being the leader and the conductor of the group. "I think being a *groot bek* I tended to find that I did most of talking and so invariably I was noticed."

The participant's involvement in the scouting movement seems to have equipped him with abilities which enabled him to discern which of the actions would enable him to achieve his wishes and avoid discomforts. Through experiences in the scouts within his community he learnt to distinguish which activities are permissible and rewarding and which are not. One of the major findings is that subtly as well as in obvious ways, the scouts helped in shaping the participant's confidence in his experience. The encouragements that surrounded his experience contributed to his confidence in himself.

In this context he was affirmed in a micro-social milieu which gave him images of being able to mobilise people and lead. Thus, in this area, the foundations were laid for his later development. The point is that although both contexts could easily be criticised from a BC perspective, he developed capacities in these contexts which were later to be harnessed towards other ends, even the end of resisting institutions like these.

5.3.2.2.2. In prison

During the participant's term on Robben Island as a prisoner he experienced living conditions that were not good for prisoners and the spirit of revolution in prison was low:

When we got to the Island guys did not greet each other because they belonged to different sections. The warders did not allow prisoners from section A to greet those in section G and vice versa.... We got there and said, 'Bull shit!' So you just saw angry black fist going up, 'Power!' And believe me when we raised fists some of the guys who were in prison before BCM, in 1960s, did not know what to do. They looked around to see if there was any war. I guess they did not understand BC. They met two exponents of BC before our arrival in prison, but they probably looked at them a bit strange. But when the influx came and got to meet more of the leadership and some of the youngsters who just came in as a consequence to 16 June 1976 uprising. I mean the prison warders acted like bosses and these prisoners were timid. When we arrived in prison we couldn't accept that. We could not understand why revolutionaries could be cowered down by mere warders. So these are things we found there. I guess we changed. It was not easy.

This extract also reveals the participant's consciousness about the adversities that prisoners were subjected to and that he felt that the conditions in prison were dehumanising the prisoners. He believes that BC had heightened his consciousness so that he was aware of himself. There he could not allow himself to be taken into bondage for he also believed that BC, through its capacity-building mechanisms, equipped him with capabilities to defend his humanity and that made him have a sense of self-efficacy. He felt he had confidence in his ability to confront the difficult conditions in prison. This was buoyed by his BC ideology, but it cannot but be said how reminiscent it is of the precursor to his political resistance, in his wish to be named Daniel.

The participant was aware of the prison warders treatment of prisoners as dehumanising. Therefore, adoption of BC had heightened the level of critical consciousness which enabled him to struggle in prison in order to defend his humanity and that infused him with pride and dignity.

He was not dehumanised and here again it was his analysis, his understanding, which had been fed by BC, that prevented him from being a passive recipient and from actually being dehumanised.

5.3.2.3. Black theology as a form of religious domain

This sub-theme revolves around the participant's contextualisation of religion which was clearly influenced by his political involvements. His differences in understanding of religion with his father, is reflected in his argument with his father about whether he should continue with Christianity, or whether he should focus on the 'religion' that is defined by the struggle of liberation from white oppression. He recounts that as youth they would use Saturdays to run Black theology seminars and workshops where politicians used the Bible to justify violence against racism and the struggle for the liberation of black people. Black theology became the badge which assisted him to reconcile his otherwise divergent ideological direction.

The research shows that with the adoption of BC the participant was provided with an atmosphere that enabled him to equate Black theology with political theology. Through this, the encounter of black people with God took an historical turn and involved ethical judgements and decisions having to do with liberation from white racism. It seems that the participant began to see the hand of God in social and political deliverance.

5.3.3. The continuing importance of BC

This theme stems from the participant's experience of the continuous importance of BC in his life and the forms of practice which entail being black conscious.

5.3.3.1. The need for purpose

This sub-theme indicates the participant's description of his experience as a BC proponent and through which he views himself as having embodied the quest for recognition of the importance of both self and the society in making up a person. BC gave him a sense of purpose and meaning as a social being.

Finding purpose revolves around the participant's tendency of wanting to clarify his existence within the ambit of BC. The participant's understanding of the purpose and commitment to BC enable him to give direction to the marginalised towards their adoption of BC and also to personally have a sense of belonging.

5.3.3.2. Developing BC

The findings indicate the participant's growing pride and sense of 'peoplehood' which he feels that the community should also develop. He feels it is of critical importance to assess the status of black people in terms of group unity, identification and a sense of peoplehood. The participant believes that BC, through community development projects for the black community, develops black norms by which black people should define themselves, and set forth new values, and goals to organise around. With his involvement in community development projects, he views himself as supporting the norms and values of the larger society and he observes the need for collective and mutual support on the part of black people. He feels that development for the black person would be toward group solidarity and the sense that being a black person has a positive value.

5.3.3.3. The feeling of civic responsibility

After the participant was released from Robben Island he continued with initiatives and involvement in his community projects because he viewed his well-being as part of, or contingent upon the well-being of the oppressed. His form of practice within his own community reflects a kind of cognition which involves an awareness of how racial dynamics work in a situation of oppression. The

important thing to notice here is how the participant views himself as an agent of change who was able to help his community to come together as a community, to develop a critical consciousness of their situation, then to articulate their needs and to organise to effect change. The interviews indicate that he started the civic association in Daveyton where he became the chairperson of the residence committee. This was after his realisation that the association would give direction to people in Daveyton as to how they should manage and improve their own living conditions in the township:

When I got out of prison I realised that there was no direction in Daveyton. I was instrumental in the formation of Daveyton Residence Committee of which I became the chairperson . Through this committee we interacted with the youth as well. During that time we faced an unpopular situation where some elements within the liberation movements were using children to fight the struggle by getting them out the classrooms. It was nasty because you were told that you are not the right person to lead the committee because they thought that you were against the struggle when you encourage youth to go back to classrooms. My response would be that the struggle belongs to individuals rather than the organisation.... We set up Daveyton Project Committee started by volunteers whose aim was to raise funds in order to address the needs of the community. Consequently, we set up Thabong Educare Centre where we trained child minders and pre-primary school teachers.... I am chairperson of these projects because the community elected me... We in BC do not talk. We go out to the community and assess the needs together with the community and come up with the solution and implement those solutions.

The participant's involvement with community projects reflects his realisation of the self-help idea which is intrinsic to BC thought, and reinforced the community feeling that BC had inculcated in him because of his early involvement in SASO community projects. This shows his understanding of the continuous importance of BC in the lives of black people. Since he feels that he upholds BC principles he sees his well-being as contingent upon the well-being of the black community.

The realisation of his own adoption of BC made him feel that the philosophy had an impact on how he began to view things and how to listen. The fact that BC had raised his awareness was reflected in his practical involvement with his family and broader social organisations that represent what he believes in.

The view that BC liberates black people both physically and psychologically had inculcated an understanding that BC is continuously important in the lives of the marginalised. His continuous

involvement in the social transformation of his community in practice, reflects being BC-oriented. Consequently, he feels a sense of self-affirmation in that he feels he has a role to play in the programme of social transformation.

5.4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

There are three major themes which came out from the interviews. They are:

- C Understanding the precursors to the experiences of becoming conscious and the conditions which lead to the adoption of BC practice.
- C Understanding the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious.
- C Understanding the continuing importance of BC in the lives of those who have become black conscious, and the forms of practice which entail being black conscious.

5.4.1. Understanding the precursors to the experiences of becoming black conscious

Both participants recount their life experiences from their early childhood. The descriptions of their childhood experiences show that both participants had strong experiences of coming from extended family backgrounds. In addition, it seems that the participants' upbringing was nurtured within a context that could be said to be a precursor to the kind of attitude inherent in BC. For instance, participant A describes his father as a self-sufficient parent who had livestock and fields to cultivate and who declared a long time ago that he would not work for a white person. Most of participant B's relatives were members of PAC, who used to discuss political issues that developed his interest and willingness to participate. Later, he had an impression that his father had a keen interest in politics.

Of particular importance in this theme is the fact that the participants' upbringing occurred within a family and community circle which had very clearly delineated social structures in which they knew their place. So they had a sense of functioning communities with clear structures. It had been indicated that

structures of these communities had not become models for them in the sense of something they believe in, or which replicate in their current lives, as advocates of BC.

Also the findings show that the upbringing of the participants within the circle of BC-oriented families and relatives was nourished with the realisation of being-black-in-the-world and thus the process was able to develop. They were able to perceive the contradictory realities, i.e. being-black-in-the-world and being-white-in-the-world. Thus growing up in such conditions they had acquired experiences that impacted on their consciousness: the participants became aware of their respective social realities that needed to be fought against through the experience of growing up in a poverty-stricken environment, rather than specifically through explicit political activity or thinking. Whereas the latter led both the participants to understand their own thought developments, it is their experience of thoughts such as they have described, which were already in place as a result of their experiences, before their experiences came to be reflected on or understood.

The findings show that both participants reflect a sense of having come from family and community settings which had a strong and social standing which had been important in the creating a positive self-image. Both participants emerged from their childhood with a strong sense of belonging in the world and as having a sense of place in terms of families and places of abode.

There is an implicit understanding in the study that the uniqueness of the development of the consciousness of the participants can be attributed to their home and community backgrounds. For instance, the qualitative steps that they experienced such as the declaration made by the parents of participant A and the commitment to political activities that had been demonstrated by relatives of participant B, are actions which are congruent with the expectations of BC. There is a feeling of contentment from both participants that such steps were consistent with BC because they were aimed at a rejection of the exploitative values of racism that aimed at humiliating oppressed people.

5.4.2. Understanding the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious.

The focal point in this theme is that the participants look back on their early life experiences and the qualities of family, community and education as something of world of the goals of BC. From this perspective it seems appropriate to say that both participants had a solid foundation of positive experiences of self and others on which to build in becoming proponents of BC.

This perspective suggests the interrelatedness between the social structure of the participants and their psychology. Their family and community structures seemed to have a potent force in determining their psychology.

5.4.2.1. The security of BC

Both participants attempted to find a position for themselves within the ambit of a broader political framework in their communities because they viewed themselves as advocates of BC which signifies a search for self and a place within a social context of their community. The study indicates that, according to the participants, BC symbolises an attempt at creating the possibility of black identity which challenged the apartheid definition of black. This view which created the fundamental sense of the self and community origin is coherent, continuing and fulfilling, set in juxtaposition to the community of difference inhabited by white community.

Of particular importance is the participants' perception of blackness as their organising principle at the individual level and taking it as a starting point in the quest for a form of psychological re-assessment. The study delineates that both participants have a feeling that it is this psychological reappraisal of the self which prepared the groundwork for a political agenda and which presented the relationship between self and community informed by a consciousness of the uniqueness of a cultural heritage. In their view, they are not victims of the circumstances of oppression because, as a result of adopting BC which reflects the underlying practices of resistance, they see themselves in great measure as responsible for the creation of their own circumstances of liberation.

5.4.2.1.1. The concept of identity

Both participants indicate an interrelationship and overlapping of personal identity and social identity. Personal identity provides a framework within which the participants can regulate and evaluate their role and relations to others, and it also consolidates their position in a social group. It does so by providing a positive self-perception and confidence which are necessary factors for self-reliance and self-worth in the social category. On the other hand, social identity helps in the shaping of the sense of belonging which enhances personal identity.

The participants' descriptions of their experiences which elicit personal identity suggest that their personal identity involves a cognitive schema through which life events and personal experiences are interpreted. The schema involves expectations about what the participants are capable of doing and how others will respond to them. The nature of the schemata has important consequences for the participants' emotional states. For instance, both participants exhibit a sense of self-worth and contentment with their lives and their places in the society since their schemata provide them with the basis for meeting their needs and for making favourable evaluations of themselves and their capacities.

The participants' sense of self-image seems to be motivated by their strong belief that BC as a response to white racism builds an unbreakable psychological wall around them thus protecting (the destruction) of their local wisdom from destructive racism. The study shows that the participants are aware of the meaning of their blackness because they believe that BC, which had equipped them with self-awareness, made them know the self which is equated with blackness. The knowing or consciousness of their colour reveals that the participants know that their blackness is the reason for their oppression. It seems that the focus on skin colour, blackness, is an appropriate way to account for the white oppression against blacks. Needless to say, it seems that BC heightened the participants' capacities to make sense of their social world and this enhanced their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Although the participants hold the view that members of the oppressed black communities generally perceive themselves negatively, from the descriptions of their own experiences both participants did not experience a negative perception of themselves. The descriptions of their experiences suggest that even before they started to embrace BC, they were aware of the social factors that affected their social

relationships. With the adoption of BC, they developed a conception of what it is to belong to black solidarity and community structures, what the goals and proper activities of black people are, and what the rights and responsibilities towards other communities are. Both participants have shown a strong sense of social identity, which made them feel themselves to be members of the oppressed black people which have a mission to liberate the marginalised from both physical and psychological oppression.

5.4.2.1.2. The commitment to the plight of humanity

This theme revolves around both participants' descriptions of their experiences after adopting BC, which reflect a sense of pride and self-worth. For instance, in their description of experiences of imprisonment both participants feel self-fulfilled that they defied the oppressive machinery "successfully" by "struggling", "raising fists", "engaging in hunger strikes", since the white system was bent on dehumanising them as black prisoners. Their resistance to the South African security forces in prison was perceived as an appropriate response against racism to defend their dignity, and consequently their humanity was enhanced.

Both participants show a tendency to rely on the strength of black solidarity derived from the plight of black people and in so doing reaffirm their commitment to their conception of black identity. Their involvement with black communities which is viewed as an attempt to restore the respect and dignity of these communities, reflects a quest for humanity. This also shows the need for collective and mutual support on the part of black people, particularly at the level of family and local community, and suggests that the 'healthiest' line of development for the participants would be toward black solidarity and cohesion and the sense that being a black person has positive value. Needless to say, both participants reflect a strong sense of judgement that enables them to recognise the need for blacks to assert their own sense of community and togetherness.

5.4.2.1.3. The experience of religion

Essential in this theme is the participants' expression of religious freedom in the context of BC which states that religion should confront issues which are a part of the reality of black oppression. The findings show that the significance of their religion is found in the conviction that the content of Christian gospel is liberation. This signifies that talk about God that fails to take seriously the righteousness of God

as revealed in the liberation of the oppressed people is not Christian gospel. Participant B's experience of religion suggests that Black theology is a political phenomenon because the encounter of black people with God embraces the sphere of history and includes responsible judgements and decisions that have to do with freedom from political domination, social discrimination and economic exploitation.

From this perspective it seems that Black theology equipped the participants to be radically critical of the racist environment and of their own political strategies for change. Both participants developed an interpretation which led them to a sense of self-expression and an assertion that Black theology adds significance to people who are seeking methods for the expression of humanity and self-consciousness.

5.4.2.1.4. The impact of community development projects

The focal point in this theme is the participants' involvements with programmes aimed at empowering black people against oppression. Their methods of initiating and popularising their projects indicate that the adoption of BC had activated them into thinking seriously and positively about the social, economical and political problems that affect all black people and they have solutions that also liberated them from oppression.

The findings reveal that as a result of having become BC the participants have a heightened sense of awareness and encouragement to become involved in the political, social and economic development of black people.

It appears that with involvement in community development projects, the participants were equipped with critical consciousness of their social situation, helping them to rally black people as community, to articulate their needs and to organise the black people, in order to effect transformation.

5.4.3. The continuing importance of BC

The key point is that the findings seem to suggest that BC is concerned with the issues that relate to the black people's suffering, joy, their perceptions of themselves and their social realities. There is a general perspective that the participants have a great feeling that the significance of their blackness and of being-in-the-world is articulated well through BC. This is to say that both participants, through BC, have been made aware of the meaning of their blackness in the context of white racism. They have become aware that their colour is the defining factor of their movement because it is the controlling symbol of white limitations placed on black existence.

Both participants had a tendency to describe their blackness in positive terms within the context of BC. The participants reflect a great feeling of self-image, of having become aware of the significance and importance of their value systems. This is so because they believe that BC has provided them with the stimulus to redefine themselves and their systems in positive terms and they were able to heighten the level of resisting deprivation and racial discrimination.

The importance of self-reliance is implied throughout the findings. It seems that BC as the call for cohesive black solidarity, impacted on the acceptance and realisation of the participants; that in order to play a positive role in the struggle for liberation, they as black people must employ effectively the concept of 'group power' and thereby build a strong base from which to encounter white racism. As the study indicates that oppression had psychological implications for the oppressed, BC is directed towards the elimination of all the stereotypes that subject black people to feeling inferior.

The study shows that dealing with the psychological consequences of white racism, at both individual and the collective levels, will be part of the process that BC is faced with.

From this perspective it seems that the significance of BC is that it inculcates a sense of group pride and solidarity which will in turn effect true liberation that entails a recognition of the human dignity of each individual. It seems that it is a process which requires that all people should acquire human dignity for

themselves and affirm it for others. For the participants in this study it has meant that people can only appreciate and live with the strengths and weaknesses of their fellow human beings if they are at peace with themselves.

CHAPTER 6

6.1. DISCUSSION

This chapter explores a further methodological step in which core features of the meaning of BC in the experience of the two participants described in chapter 5 are elaborated and interrelated. The objective of this process is to clarify the findings of the study in relation to issues raised in the literature reviewed.

6.1.1. Psycho-socio-analytic method

As noted repeatedly in relation to the literature reviewed, blacks are spoken of as having attempted to escape the historic reality of blackness by aspiring to whiteness (Fanon, 1963 ; 1967; Manganyi, 1973 ; Biko, 1978 and Sibisi, 1991). Du Bois (1905) describes this process as double consciousness, a peculiar sensation whereby the colonised person has a “sense of measuring one’s self soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity” (p.3). Fanon (1967) refers to this double consciousness as pathology originating in the process of assimilation and acculturation perpetuated through institutions of racism. He therefore argues that the psychological problem of black people cannot be explained through psychoanalytical interpretation alone. Thus Fanon (1967) employs what he refers to as sociogenetic explanations that are orientated to the social origins of human problems which had already been explained in the literature reviewed.

Of particular importance is the relationship between the psychological and the sociological factors proposed by Fanon (1967) in his analysis of problems of the colonised. Although Fanon applies psychoanalysis which seeks to discover human psychology through genetic or intrapsychic reductionism, he maintains that the psychological ‘makeup’ of the oppressed black person should be looked at within a socio-historical and cultural context. This approach was influenced both by his personal experiences of the massive weight of an oppressive social structure as well as by his observations of its effects on other black people in similar social contexts. In his analysis of the psychology of the oppressed, Bulhan (1985) attests that social structure is “a dynamic and potent force, which at once is a determinant of human psychology and a result of collective praxis” (p.195). The above authors resort to BC as an expression of the self which will benefit the social environment.

6.1.2. The precursors to the experiences of becoming black conscious

6.1.2.1. Analysis of the colonial / oppressive environment

The present study finds that both participants were brought up in an environment where they were able to perceive inconsistent realities, that is, being-black-in-the-world and being-white-in-the-world. Participant A recounts that he grew up in poverty in a rural area and just across the river was a white community, in an area where he was not allowed to go freely to play. On the other hand, participant B describes his experience of discrimination at the park and the church. Growing up in oppressed societies as black people, they observed the psychological debilitation that many blacks experienced as a result of white racism. They maintained a degree of emotional contact with the oppressed and their work reflects the degree of their consciousness as oppressed blacks.

The participants' personal experiences of the weight of an oppressive social structure as well as their observations of the effects on other black people in similar social contexts, are in accordance with the situation in a colonial environment as explained in the literature reviewed. Fanon (1963; 1967), Manganyi (1973) and Biko (1978) had first-hand knowledge of what it meant to be black and downtrodden in what Fanon terms a Manichean world. According to Fanon (1963) the native areas which are places of ill fame, are overcrowded by people of evil repute and a place wallowing in a mire, and they are juxtaposed with the settler's strongly built town which is always attractive.

The effect of the Manichean world on the oppressed is to rely on it for individual and collective identity where they feel inferior and their self-worth is undermined. This study finds the participants describing their respective broader social environment as characterised by dichotomies which were believed to be the manifestations of white racism. But it seems their family and immediate community settings provided them with stimuli that made them develop a solid foundation of positive experiences of self and others on which to build in becoming BC exponents. There is little evidence of poor self-esteem and in fact it seems that a solid foundation of community and family affirmation was the precursor to them not becoming victims of oppression. This anomaly may not hold generally true, but is true of these participants. Maybe this is a distinguishing feature which made them activists, rather than as needing to be activated. If so, then there is a need to further theorise how they were able to escape the self-

esteem damaging experiences which they were clearly exposed to, but which never broke them down. Exploration of this would need to look to the coherence and functionality of their primary community affiliations, including family relationships.

6.1.2.2. Developing awareness of race and oppression

In the present study both participants' descriptions of their experiences highlight the degree of perception of the unjust practices that was common to their respective social realities. This underscores the extent to which perceptions were shaped from their childhood.

In his explanation of perception Allport (1955) states that the way the individual tells the story accentuates his/her interpretation of the story. Thus, perception is the way that an individual understands reality. Allport (1955) states that perception is related to our awareness of the objects or conditions about us. "It depends to a large extent upon the impressions these objects make upon our senses" (p.14). Perception is understood to be the way things look to us, and to a certain degree, it involves an understanding, an awareness, a 'meaning' or a 'recognition' of these objects. Thus, the definition of perception includes an awareness of the environmental situation. Allport's view of the construction of perception suggests that the social environment has an impact on an individual's consciousness. In the literature reviewed, it becomes clear that the prime point of racial domination was an attempt to enforce a low status identity on the oppressed group (Manganyi, 1973 and Biko, 1978). The general assumption that preoccupied these authors is that white racism injected a sense of insecurity and lack of confidence.

The findings from both participants are inconsistent with the literature under review. Both participants show that they were not instilled with a feeling of insecurity and lack of confidence from their early childhood. With their acquired world view, the participants seemed to be able to transcend a sense of insecurity, self-doubt and negativity which the literature ascribes to the black person living in a racist and oppressed society. The study shows that the participants' lived experiences enabled them to develop awareness of their respective social realities that needed to be fought against through the experience of growing up in their poverty-stricken environments.

Fanon (1963, 1967), Manganyi (1973) and Biko (1978) express a view that suggests that the unjust practices meted out to the black communities have a psychological effect that engenders a sense of inferiority and the abject idolisation of whites as role models. Although the participants grew up in a racial environment which they perceived as unjust, their immediate social context had an impact on their upbringing which developed a solid foundation of positive experience .

From this perspective it seems appropriate to say that the participants' social environment provided them with an atmosphere that enabled them to develop a firm ground of positive experiences of the selves and others which were a cornerstone for them to become BC proponents later. Therefore, growing up in such situations had facilitated experiences that made an impact on their consciousness.

What seems to be exceptional about both participants is that they projected an uncommon interpretation of the oppressive reality they observed in their situations. Their interpretations of reality are revealed by their perceptions of dichotomies between the white church and the black church and what they perceived as unjust treatment by the oppressive system. The unwillingness to accept the oppressive situation passively should be attributed to early positive foundations of experience and community life. This implies that although their education, thinking and living in general were planned within the context of racial domination, the participants seem to have managed to outgrow things such as inferiority complexes that white racism may have otherwise inculcated in black people, that would rob blacks of their human dignity and render them hopeless.

As evident from the previous chapter, both participants became aware of the possibility that their perceptions of exclusion and undermining were shared by significant others. Therefore they felt rewarded within their own communities for the kind of awareness that they harboured, that is, being excluded and undermined. Further, the study reveals that the participants came to understand that not everyone in their community thought and felt the same way. Therefore, they perceived themselves as different and thus felt special. The feeling of self-esteem was quickened by their self-pride and fulfilment.

It seems that their immediate social structures of family and community provided them with an important (healthy) line to develop toward group solidarity and cohesion. This had inculcated in them a sense of security which led to a sense of self-confidence that enabled the participants to confront the oppressive challenges of racism from their early childhood. The findings of the study render Fanon, Manganyi and Biko's analysis of pathological black person less pertinent in the context of the participants.

Whether the participants were or were not once caught up in the 'social orbit of the oppressor' is open to question. But data from the interviews claims that this was not the case with the participants. This includes the description of their experiences even before they embraced BC. Instead the study shows that the political consciousness of the participants' parents, relatives and community in their immediate environment had an impact on their consciousness.

The study shows that from his childhood, participant A lived his "conscious life in the framework of institutionalised separate development" (Biko, 1978, p.26) in Venda, while participant B lived all his life in a black township. Although data revealed that both participants grew up within the oppressive environment and attended its schools, there is no evidence which proves that they assumed a double-consciousness described by Du Bois (1905), which subjected them to alienation. The findings of the interviews reveal the realisation of both the participants through their descriptions that they lived in their respective rural and urban areas with a sense of satisfaction, self-worth and pride particularly when they realised that they did not become psychological victims of racism. Instead the material conditions under which they grew up as black people, for example, living in squatter camps, created questions in them right from the start. These are the questions which led them to adopt BC through SASO and which led them to understand themselves better and through the process of conscientisation, they were able to affirm themselves and their communities in positive terms.

The literature reviewed illustrates that Fanon, Manganyi and Biko were convinced by their personal experiences and observations that the causes of the black people's shared frustration and anguish were not inherited but rather nurtured by a specific social environment. An assumption made by these authors is that any black person who is subjected to a white racist environment is unlikely to escape the manifestation of racism which has negative psychological consequences such as alienation and inferiority

feelings. Bulhan (1985) attests that living beings in oppressive social milieus are abused and mutilated. The above view seems to be partly true concerning the findings of the study. As an example, participant A had indicated that he wasted one year when he did not continue at school. As another example, participant B indicated his unhappiness when he was not allowed to go into the park and play with other children.

It seems that the participants' past experiences included aspirations and expectations of getting money rather being paid in kind, and playing with other children, which hindered and therefore caused frustration which might have led to aggression. This view is in consistent with Dollard et al (1939) who attest that the theory of frustration-aggression rests on the assumption that individuals are motivated to achieve certain goals. When the attainment of these goals is blocked, the individual experiences frustration, which in turn produces aggressive energy.

6.1.2.3. BC as the point of departure

This theme addresses the issue of whether adoption of BC had meaning in the psychological being of the participants which were interviewed. This process can be understood, against the background of the definition of BC which had already been elaborated in the previous chapters as:

The realisation by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers and sisters around the cause of their operation...and operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude (Biko,1978).

Essential in this definition is the fact that BC encompasses awareness, action and reflection which are cardinal in raising the consciousness of the black person. The literature shows that one should be aware of his social conditions. Then follows the action which is to reject value systems that undermine their humanity and start redefining their own value systems.

Another aspect of action is the call for cohesive black solidarity in order to play a role in the struggle for emancipation for they cannot be conscious and yet remain in bondage (Biko, 1978). This is followed by reflection, in which black people deliberate on their action. The literature reviewed implies that this

process emphasises that for black people to know themselves they should be able to evaluate themselves, and in addition there is an assumption that self-knowledge enhances self-image, thus providing a sense of pride and confidence.

The study show some distressing incidents for both participants in their early childhood that throw light on the social environmental provocations of racial prejudice and how these pressed on their participation in politics later when, on account of colour, they were treated with humiliating contempt.

6.1.3. The psychological significance and the continuing importance of the process of becoming black conscious

Relating to the results of the study it is evident that the participants had always a sense of being part of specific social groups, which were initially their families and immediate communities and later the broader social group of black people. Interestingly, they have had early experiences of questioning their identification with social categories that they have, so to speak, found themselves already embedded in by virtue of their respective social contexts. This questioning took on both a psychological and socio-political dimension in their adoption of consciousness philosophy.

The participants' experience illustrates various points about BC which have emerged in this research as the important impact this philosophy has on identity, culture, religion and community development and commitment to the plight of humanity.

6.1.3.1. Blackness in the context of BC

The literature reviewed shows that black people had been made to see themselves as just a mass, "one of a mass without any sense of responsibility about who you are, your destiny and your society" (Wilson, 1991,p.26). It is blackness that has been something that needed to be expunged from reality and Cone and Wilmore (1979) states that as there was an ontological basis for white racism there is an ontological ground for black pride and the black people's struggle against the "latent but frighteningly real possibility of genocide" (p.466). This suggests that the structure of white racism attempts to equate blackness to 'nothingness'. Of particular importance is that the concept of blackness gives an identity

to the oppressed people. Wilson (1991) argues that oppressed black people in the racist environment chose the concept black which gives them an identity.

On the other hand the findings indicate that the participants viewed BC as a response to white racism and the best psychological programme to counter white racism by building an impenetrable psychological wall around them and their communities. Thus the participants see themselves as living a life beyond the perception of the others. By idealising their blackness as unknowable to others, they separate themselves from others' judgement and they believe that one has to be black in order to perceive reality.

Grounded firmly in the study is the idea that the participants believe that the most appropriate description of blackness is the concept of BC, which is to say that they, as black people, are aware of blackness in the context of whiteness. The participants believe that their blackness determines their existence because it seems to be the controlling symbol of white limitations placed on black existence.

6.1.3.2. Formation of black identity

As noted from the results, data of the exploratory study show that both participants attempted to find a position for themselves within the ambit of a political and BC-oriented framework. They believe that the philosophy which embraces the quest for recognition of self provided them an opportunity for analysing ways to jettison the restraint of repression and the search for the possibility of an envisaged egalitarian social order based on equal opportunities. For instance, they would do their "damnedest to get hold of banned materials for reading" and made sure that they "read a lot to sharpen their heads" about their social history and culture. That made them understand themselves and their community better and thus provided them with a sense of identity that enhanced their sense of belonging and self-esteem. This understanding of themselves is in accordance with Biko's (1978) explication of BC which he says infuses the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, "their value system, their culture, religion and their outlook in life" (p.49).

This shows that the participants' standing within the BC-oriented organisation had been important in creating a positive image of themselves which might have injected a strong sense of belonging and having the sense of place both in terms of family and place of abode.

Viewed from a different perspective, there is an assumption that the participants were provided with opportunities for examining the attempt to overcome the deprivations and restrictions of white racism. Thereafter they felt that they could investigate the possibilities for an egalitarian order, which gave them a sense of self-concept because their black identity was grounded in their description of experiences and relationships with families, organisations and their communities coming from the marginalised. In addition, they made the assumption that blackness provided them with an identity that they longed for, furnished them with a feeling of security and contentment, and thus they show a sense of belongingness and confidence.

It should be noted that the results discussed above are consistent with Biko's (1978) argument that behind BC philosophy is the desire to seek an independent voice and expression of the self of the oppressed black person so that he/she reclaims an identity which is important for securing the conditions of real social transformation. This view is reflected in the self-descriptions of the participants which make a large contribution to the conceptualisation of identity, both personal and social, with the need and desire to come to terms with blackness by way of self and group identification.

As noted repeatedly from the results on black identity above, the participants show a propensity to regard themselves as blacks and thus identify themselves with other black people. The perception of the participants in terms of black as a social category is based on the fact that they, like other black people, are oppressed because they are black. This suggests that as a result of the process of categorisation they feel that they have positioned themselves as members of the black community while excluding those who are not black and this seems to have enhanced their self-concept.

According to Manganyi (1973) and Biko (1978) the question of redefinition is central to the BCM and it aims to restore a positive identity. In addition, Couve (1984) states that the restorative programme is intrinsic to the concept of BC. By virtue of being black and having lived under racial oppression, each black person has a testimony within him/herself of the experience of any other black subject.

Although the study claims that the participants did not necessarily assume a negative black identity before they adopted BC principles, both participants expressed a feeling that BC has inculcated in them a need to redefine themselves in terms of their mode of being-black-in-the-world, in a more specific way. For instance, their direct involvement with, amongst others, community projects and political activities makes them feel a sense of identity and thus enhances their feeling of pride that they are inculcating self-help in black people. The reference to themselves as black suggests that the participants perceive it as a category into which they belong. It seems that with the adoption of BC, which makes the black person become more positive, more self-prompting, more self-reliant and creative, the participants tend to perceive blackness as having high status. Therefore by identifying with it, they project a positive sense of identity.

6.1.3.3. The sense of self-efficacy

The relationship between self-efficacy and self-esteem are an issue of concern for Bandura (1986; 1997). While self-efficacy is concerned with judgements of personal capacity, self-esteem is concerned with the judgement of self-worth. Bandura (1997) argues that although these concepts are changeable, there is no fixed relationship between beliefs about one's capabilities and whether one likes the activity or not. For instance individuals judge themselves inefficacious in a given activity without any loss of self-esteem, because they do not invest their self-worth in that activity. Conversely, individuals may view themselves as efficacious in the activity but take no pride in performing it well. On the other hand people shape their capabilities in activities that give them a sense of self-worth.

As has been explained above, the results of the present study are in accordance with Bandura's (1997) last explanation which indicates the limits of correlation between self-efficacy and self-esteem. In this study, the participants seem to have invested their self-worth in their capabilities to get involved with their communities development projects.

One of the major findings is that the participants have an propensity as they both regard themselves efficacious in their 'duties' because they believe that BC has provided them with capabilities to confront the challenges of oppression. The study reveals the participants' belief that their efforts for liberation of the black people would develop a belief proceeding from a strong sense of efficacy. Interesting is the fact that both participants tend to judge themselves in terms of their capabilities which date back from their early childhood. In the description of their experiences even from childhood, they regard themselves as highly efficacious in confrontation what they viewed as oppression and this enhanced a sense of self-esteem, thus a feeling of self-worth.

6.1.3.4. The impact of BC on cultural values

The theme of culture invokes Biko's (1978) perception that BC has a worthwhile role to play in the black person's search for cultural identity. The upshot of various formulations of racist theory was the denial of the black people's capacity for cultural creation. The general attitude was that oppressed blacks were not regarded as truly human beings because of their alleged incapacity for cultural development. The reduction of black people to inhumanity is well documented even in former apartheid government publications which need not be mentioned again in this thesis. It is therefore no wonder that state repression rendered African culture neutral in the 1960s. Mzamane (1991) contends that most writers and artists of the BC era had been youngsters during the Sharpeville massacre (1960) and there was a lull in the cultural scene in South Africa until the rise of the BCM with, among other things, its emphasis on literature and culture as an expression of political and cultural oppression and resistance.

A notable finding in this study is the participants' consciousness of the importance of their own value systems, that is, social, political and cultural values. Implicit in this appreciation of their value systems is the need to reject those value systems perceived as foreign. The study suggests that with the adoption of BC which is directed towards redefining black identity in a positive manner, the participants were able to seek new value systems and a fresh outlook on life.

From this perspective it seems that the participants have entrenched a stable foundation of positive experiences of themselves that enabled them to struggle against white racism with its attempt to make them, who are black, into 'non-being'. Consequently, they express a sense of positive self-worth

because they believe that BC as a humanising force had equipped the participants with a culture of resistance which made them affirm their 'being' against the power of white racism that worked to dehumanise them.

This view is compatible with Biko's (1978) argument that in a country like South Africa where blacks are oppressed, actions such as defiance, self-assertion, group pride and solidarity become the culture of BC, a culture that emerges from a situation of common experience of oppression. Further Nengwekuhulu (1981) agrees with Biko when he says that the challenge of BC for any black person is the need for a new and incisive redefinition: re-identification and reappraisal of the black totality. To Mzamane (1991) the modern culture becomes the important instrument for communicating the desire to transcend an oppressive situation.

This suggests that as a consequence of oppression black culture emerged from the black experience of the pain of oppression. The findings imply that this black culture may be characterised by the feelings of sorrow, bitterness, anger and hatred that made them turn to the BC philosophy for security.

The expression of this modern culture is reflected in the participants' commitments to community projects and defiance that they demonstrated inside and outside prison. The hope that the participants express in the interviews concerning the direction of liberation that they are taking, suggests that there is a presence of faith that has been restored by embracing BC as a modern culture of protest against oppression. In addition, the study implies that, as a consequence of adopting BC, participants have a feeling of being enriched with the quest for cultural identity. This, furthermore, prepares the ground for a political challenge to racial oppression.

6.1.3.5. The impact of BC on religion

The significance of the results is that both participants' black experience of oppression and exploitation provided the epistemological 'lens' through which to see Christianity and Black theology as the instrument liberation. White churches are perceived as the extension of the missionary ideal, being rooted in white racism and dominated by white priests. Both participants show that basically the Christian churches which were racist-oriented focused on white values as standards rather than fighting against racism which the participants believe was 'anti-Christ'. Participant B indicates that through his actions in the church, he wanted to translate its teachings so that it worked for the liberation of people.

The study shows that both participants believed that Black theology should review the broken black culture and examine the traditional African forms of worship which made them view themselves as having been infused with a new found pride. This view does not alter Pityana's (1973) perception that the church should go back to the roots of African civilisation and examine African forms of worship, marriage and sacrifice. The church should discover why such practices were meaningful to the traditional African community.

The study shows the participants' strong belief that Black theology seeks to fathom the black condition in the light of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, and they see the gospel as tantamount with their achievement and of their black humanity in general. The participants feel that, as black people, with their adoption of Black theology they are affirmed because it is the 'gospel' of 'blackness' that emancipates black people from white racism.

6.1.3.6. The experience of community development

A strong emphasis on the significance and the importance of community development emerged from the study. Capacity building has been the chief objective of community development which enables the participants to assume maximum responsibility for their lives as individuals and members of the community.

As noted repeatedly, the study delineates that the participants have developed an awareness that made them think seriously and positively about the socio-economic and political problems that they experienced as black people. They feel that their involvement in community projects run by the BCM heightened their sense of awareness and they were encouraged to become involved in the political, economic and social development of the marginalised.

Being involved in SASO, they view it as a training ground which empowered them as future leaders. Thus they feel self-efficacy in their responsibilities to initiate and give practical effect to community developments. This gives them a sense of worth because they have been able to realise the aim of community development, defined as leading black people to cast off the psychological yoke of dependency that destroys initiative and originality of the people thus inculcating a sense of self-help in the black community.

There is no doubt that the results of the study are compatible with the literature where Nengwekhulu (1981) attests that the main aim of the community development projects is to build a sense of self-reliance, initiative and solidarity in black people which is important in the drive to free themselves from oppression.

Of particular importance is the perception that community development, *inter alia*, heightens the consciousness of black people. They thus feel confronted with the realities of their oppression. The participants hold that it is only in this way that it will be possible to redirect black energies towards liberation.

6.1.3.7. The commitment to the plight of humanity

The plight of humanity revolves around the participants' view which shows that human beings have recourse to human rights that entail moral principles such as upholding the dignity and worth of human beings. The participants' descriptions of their experiences reflect a feeling of dignity because they believe that BC as the liberation force had heightened their consciousness which made them expand their efforts to raise their human dignity.

In their quest for humanity the study shows that the participants have undertaken much interaction in terms of community projects and political organisational involvements (representing significant movements for social transformation), which in these cases were inspired by BC. In this process a serious socio-political analysis of realities and involvement in political and social struggles are seen as vital elements of BC philosophy in its role as critic. The participants seem to have noticed the creative force of culture in bringing black people together and giving them an identity within their struggles. The study tends to show that critical cultural action would destroy old illusions and produce new images in continuity with the cultural treasures of the past.

The involvement of the participants in political activities and commitment to community development indicate their need to free the oppressed from oppression and this injects a sense of self-efficacy which enhances self-esteem. Such commitment to a strong solidarity suggests that the participants have come to the belief that in order to achieve a kind of balance, powerful racism needs to be countered by a strong black solidarity. According to Biko (1978) the realisation by the black person of the need to identify him/herself with the marginalised and to fight oppression in black solidarity is the essence of BC.

From this perspective it seems appropriate to say that BC equipped the participants to know the aspiration of the oppressed toward full humanity and strengthen their efforts to overcome the obstacles to the truth of their humanity. The participants feel there is still a need to continue the search they have already initiated; and to keep alive their efforts toward BC that speaks to black people, they have to continue deepening their understanding of black people's realities through active involvement in black people's struggles for full humanity. They believe that BC should be the torchbearer to transform the black community in which they live so that it may increasingly allow all people in South Africa to experience what it means to be fully alive.

6.1.4. Insights gained in this study

Before the encounter with the theory and findings of the study the researcher uncritically assumed that an individual becomes black conscious only if he/she affiliates to the organisation which has BC as its guiding principle. After exploring the literature and case studies, it became obvious that BC is a way of life and exists independently of organisations.

The findings of the study indicate that BC is not an event that is just punched into one's head but is a process of consciousness that involves awareness, action and reflection. This implies that people continue developing within BC by becoming aware, then acting and reflecting. This process is repeated, thus raising the level of consciousness and engagement.

6.1.5. Problems of the study

One problem associated with the study was the reliance on memory as a source of information for the research. There was a tendency on the part of the participants to recall memories to describe their childhood experiences. The nature of the content of memory cannot be the same as that of real childhood experiences. As a result of using memory, there could be a tendency to use current existing BC experiences and project them onto their childhood experiences.

There were two main opposing views that the study encountered in trying to understand BC. There were those who viewed the phenomenon's exclusivity in positive terms and those who viewed its exclusivity negatively. The researcher was confronted with the task of either satisfying one party at the expense of the other or try to reach a compromise position for both parties. Nonetheless, the research is not about satisfying but about thinking and working out what is a factor, and the findings of the study provided the guidelines for the researcher to take any position that has been adopted in this exploratory study.

6.1.6. Limitations of the study

Basically the study conducted within a brief time frame is itself characterised by limitations. Among other limitations are:

- C A weakness of the study involves the selection of two educated black males of similar background. The study overlooked variations (of other confounding factors) such as: gender, age, religion, education and race. Since both subjects are educated males these factors have influenced their response in the study. It would seem fair to assess the meaning of BC through a range of factors and it is likely that the responses would be different. Nonetheless the study was useful in

that it identified cases which were in terms of the literature, exceptions to the rule, and was thus useful. Also in defence of the study, it was intended only to be an exploratory study.

- C A tendency by both participants to be philosophical about the phenomenon rather than describing their own experiences as was required by the research.

- C The findings show the fact that the study did not adequately cover all the incidents of racial practices that the participants went through, or adequately probe them. Consequently it was difficult to establish whether the participants were ever really 'victims' of racism, so that the role of BC in healing their identity could be assessed. The study showed two individuals who throughout their lives showed a tendency to empowerment rather than being victims.

CHAPTER7: CONCLUSION

7.1. IMPLICATIONS

The experiences of two black adults were explored in the study, focussing mainly on their perceptions of the meaning of BC. The aim of the study was to acquire a deeper knowledge of the meaning of BC in black experience. Generally both the literature under review and the interviews reflect common attitudes concerning the impact of BC in participants' experience.

The findings of the study were discussed both in relation to psychoanalysis and socioanalysis, an analysis which Fanon (1967) terms sociogeny. The findings of the study reflect the positive role that BC plays in the carving of the participants' perceptions, which enables them to interpret their social realities according to values which they identify as their own, and which correspond to elements of their early environments.

During the interviews that were conducted for this research, it was mentioned that it was not as a result of adopting BC philosophy that the participants became aware that there were realities that needed to be fought against. Their awareness of anomalies between their home communities and their broader context led them to have questions which BC revealed in their political dimension as needing to be fought against.

This study shows that the participants grew up in family and community contexts which had a very clearly delineated social structure in which they knew their places; so they had a sense of a functioning community with clear structures.

Having noted that the participants adopted BC philosophy, the study looked at the understanding of the psychological significance of the process of becoming black conscious. This indicated that the participants had a solid foundation of positive experience of self and others on which to build, in becoming proponents of BC.

It was indicated that the participants' BC interpretations of the perceived social reality enabled them to experience a sense of self-efficacy, identity and self-worth. However, the foundations for this which were built upon in this process, were already part of their experience before they ever became aware of tensions within the broader society. The adoption of BC shifted their perception of reality and the exploratory framework became a political one, focusing on the exclusion of blacks from society. Being black then became the vehicle for resisting this exclusion. By taking pride in the qualities that set the parameters for the exclusion was a first psychological step in empowerment; that is, it was empowering not to feel trapped by blackness, and blackness became the liberating concept.

BC is a process of enquiry which comes to a black person in the form of a 'mirror' that a black person can use to reflect him/herself. Once adopted, it alters an individual's negative interpretations of experiences.

In their descriptions of experiences the participants state that their families made declarations which reflect their tendency to maintain their human dignity and that was consistent with the expectations of the BC philosophy: Black man you are on your own. This qualitative step, which was taken by people who did not belong to an organisation, implies that BC is an attitude of mind and a way of life adopted by any black person. Therefore, adopting an attitude does not necessarily mean belonging to an organisation, although the solidarity in belonging to the latter reinforces the move at a social and political level.

7.2. CONCLUSION

The argument that BC is racism still prevails, despite the concerted effort by Biko (1978) to confine the definition of racism to domination of one group by another with the intention to subjugate, and his statement that black people have no intention to subjugate. Both the literature review and the findings of the study indicated that the exclusivity that is entailed in BC does not equate the phenomenon with racism because this exclusivity is based on affirming blackness in a positive way, thus enhancing self-image. In this context, this definition negates the notion that the phenomenon of BC is characterised by 'racism'. BC is defined as an 'attitude of mind' which a black person should adopt.

It should be noted that BC means thinking and acting as solidarity in response to external forces such as white racism. This implies that this process involves either surrendering individual freedom and sovereignty in order to conform to group values and expectations, or the imposition of the collective identification of the group on the individual, therefore suppressing the individual's rights to choose. Probably, research needs to be done to find out if adhering to BC does not happen at the expense of the individual's freedom and sovereignty.

Come, then, comrades, the European game has finally ended; we must find something different. We today can do everything, so long as we do not imitate Europe, so long as we are not obsessed by the desire to catch up with Europe...For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man (Fanon, 1967, pp.249-255).

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APPENDIX**SASO POLICY MANIFESTO**

Saso is a Black students organization working for the liberation of the Black man first from psychological oppression by themselves through inferiority complex and secondly from the physical one occurring out of living in a white racist society.

We define Black people as those who are by law or tradition, politically, economically and socially discriminated against a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realization of their aspirations.

SASO believes that:

- South Africa is a country in which both Black and white live together.
- The white man must be made aware that one is either part of the solution or part of the problem.
- In this context, because of the privileges accorded to them by legislation and because of their continued maintenance of an oppressive regime, whites have defined themselves as part of the problem.
- Therefore, we believe that in all matters relating to the struggle towards realizing our aspiration, whites must be excluded.
- This attitude must not be interpreted by Blacks to imply 'anti-whiteism' but is merely a more positive way of attaining a normal situation in South Africa.
- In pursuit of this direction, therefore, personal contact with whites, though it should not be legislated against, must be discouraged especially where it tends to militate against the beliefs we hold dear.

SASO upholds the concept of Black Consciousness and the drive towards black

awareness as the most logical and significant means of ridding ourselves of the shackles that bind us to perpetual servitude.

SASO defines Black Consciousness as follows:

- Black Consciousness is an attitude of mind, a way of life.
- The basic tenet of Black Consciousness is that the Black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity.
- The Black man must build up his own value systems, see himself as self-defined and not defined by others.
- The concept of Black Consciousness implies the awareness by the Black people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically and hence group cohesion and solidarity are important facets of Black Consciousness.
- Black Consciousness will always be enhanced by the totality of involvement of the oppressed people, hence the message of Black Consciousness has to be spread to reach all sections of the Black community.

SASO accepts the premise that before the Black people join the open society, they should first close their ranks, to form themselves into a solid group to oppose the definite racism that is meted out by the white society, to work out their direction clearly and bargain from a position of strength. SASO believes that a truly open society can only be achieved by Blacks.

SASO believes that the concept of integration cannot be realized in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust. Integration does not mean an assimilation of Black into an already established set of norms drawn up and motivated by white society. Integration implies free participation by individuals in a given society and proportionate contribution to the joint culture of the society by all constituent groups. Following this definition, therefore, SASO believes that integration does not need to be enforced or worked for.

Integration follows automatically when the doors to prejudice are closed through the attainment of a just and free society.

SASO believes that all groups allegedly working for “integration” in South Africa...and here we note in particular the Progressive Party and other liberal institutions...are not working for the kind of integration that would be acceptable to the Black man. Their attempts are directed to allow Black into white-type society.

SASO while upholding these beliefs, nevertheless wishes to state that Black Consciousness should not be associated with any political party or slogan.