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Post-apartheid South Africa: A Need for Genuine Conflict Transformation

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Abstract

South Africa emerged from the apartheid system in 1994 with great hopes for the transformation of the country from a crisis-ridden one to a more united and truly 'rainbow' country that would cater for the interests of the different races and groups that make up the nation. Shortly after independence, the country developed various programmes to transform the nation. These ranged from the creation of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), as well as other measures such as Affirmative Action. In spite of these efforts, both internal and external conflicts have become the hallmark of South African society even after apartheid. There has been a growing crisis of confidence between white and black communities, the poor and the rich, and between males and females. This has led to many violent clashes, which at times have threatened the very foundation upon which the post-apartheid South Africa was built. It is against this background that this paper argues for genuine conflict transformation in South Africa, over and above the conflict settlement and conflict resolution processes that have taken place in the country so far. It is a fact that real conflict transformation has not taken place in South Africa since democratization in 1994, and there is a need for it now if South Africa is to achieve genuine, meaningful development.

Keywords

conflict transformation, conflict settlement, conflict resolution, post-apartheid, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a country that has had serious conflicts in the past, especially during the apartheid era. The conflicts were manifested in many areas of life in the country, then with the black majority led by the African National Congress (ANC) on one side and the white minority led by the National Party, at the helm of the country's affairs, on the other side. The conflicts were characterized by uncompromising stands on the part of the two parties, and these led to deaths, incarceration and deprivation for many people. With a process that started in 1989, the conflicts were settled in 1994 with the first non-racial multi-party elections in South Africa and the handing over of political powers to the black people, as represented by the ANC, in the same year. Non-violent settlement of the conflicts between the black majority and the white minority was achieved in 1994 with the consequent establishment of a 'rainbow' nation. This led to the inauguration of a new constitution in 1996, which has provisions such as affirmative action. The successive events created a belief in the people that the post-conflict South Africa was better for them and transformation in the real sense had taken place in the country. Contrary to these expectations, many prominent issues on the negotiation table during the apartheid era are still with the country today without being resolved. This has brought about people asking whether or not real conflict transformation has taken place in South Africa.

The goal of this paper is to critically examine and evaluate the concept of conflict transformation and whether or not real conflict transformation has taken place in post-conflict and post-apartheid South Africa. This paper will be divided into four parts. The first part will attempt to give conceptual clarifications of conflict transformation, conflict settlement and conflict resolution. The second part will examine the conflict situation in South Africa during apartheid and the efforts of South Africa at conflict transformation after apartheid. The third part will bring out how the efforts of South Africa are devoid of real conflict transformation and suggest ways to go about it. The last part will be the conclusion where all the discussions will be wrapped up.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS OF THEORIES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

There is a need for conceptual clarification with regard to conflict transformation because, according to Reimann (2004: 2), "the terms conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation are often used loosely and interchangeably, in many cases referring to the same strategies" whereas they are not the same. In this section, this conceptual clarification is only with regard to the meaning of conflict settlement and conflict resolution because meaning is often confused with conflict transformation. The paper's focus is mainly on real conflict transformation and how post-apartheid South Africa fits into this.

i. Conflict Settlement

Conflict settlement focuses on the logic of management using a realist power politics paradigm as its backing (Riemann, 2004). It emphasizes differences between the conflicting parties rather than paying more attention to things they have in common. Conflict settlement employs force to "halt violence and gain a quick settlement which is often in the interests of the status quo" (Fisher, 2001: 3). Conflict settlement "should not be understood as a necessary precondition for conflict resolution" (Reimann, 2004: 5). Negotiation and mediation are the essential strategies of conflict settlement. In conflict settlement, a cessation of hostilities is of prime importance while the underlying cause of conflict is often neglected. Advocates of conflict settlement ignore the fact that failure to address the causes of conflict at the early stage of negotiation may actually undermine progress in tackling immediate grievances. Indeed, failure to resolve the underlying grievances might lead to renewed fighting and possible escalation of the conflict situation (Lloyd, 2001: 205).

ii. Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution has to do with "all process orientated activities that aim to address the underlying causes of direct, cultural and structural violence" (Reimann, 2004: 9). When we talk of structural violence, we mean "the social, political and economic structure of a conflict situation when unequal power, domination and dependency are perpetuated" (Reimann, 2004: 9). By cultural violence we mean "the social and cultural legitimization of direct and structural violence" (Reimann, 2004: 9). Louis Kriesberg, Ron Fisher, Herb Kelman and John Burton are strong advocates of the conflict resolution approach in conflict management.

Conflict resolution is different from conflict settlement in the sense that, while the latter does not pay attention to the underlying causes of conflict in the process of negotiating peace, conflict resolution sees "protracted conflict as a natural result of unmet human needs. Consequently, the origin of protracted conflict can be found in the underlying needs of its participants" (Reimann, 2004: 9).

Because conflict resolution "seeks to discover, identify and resolve the underlying root causes of the conflict" (Diamond 1994: 3), consultation and facilitation remain the important strategies of conflict resolution. Conflict resolution lays emphasis on the "intervention by skilled but powerless third parties working unofficially with the parties to foster new thinking and new relationships" (Miall, 2006: 3).

iii. Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation is the "outcome process and structure oriented long-term peace-building efforts, which aim to truly overcome revealed forms of direct cultural and structural violence" (Reimann, 2004: 10). Conflict transformation emanates from a mechanism built into, not outside, the system. Conflict transformation emphasizes capacity building and empowerment at the local level. That is why it is referred to as a bottom-up approach in conflict management. The main distinguishing feature of conflict transformation is that, while "conflict settlement and conflict resolution approaches tended to view (and render) the civilian population and grassroots levels as passive […] conflict transformation will not be primarily the result of third-party intervention as it was under conflict resolution or conflict settlement" (Reimann, 2004: 11).

Conflict transformation sees building domestic peace as a necessary condition for both national and international peace building processes. Consequently, conflict transformation advocates integrating all the strategies of peace building within conflict settlement, conflict resolution and conflict transformation. They should not be seen as distinct but as playing complementary roles in the overall process of peace building in conflict management.

Conflict transformation understands conflict to be an element of political control as well as a propeller for social change. It also sees conflict as a natural expression of non-violent struggle for social justice (Reimann, 2004: 13).

Furthermore, conflict transformation lays much emphasis on the question of social justice, and this makes it reject the traditional aim of conflict management to restore the status quo ante. On the contrary conflict transformation views conflict as a positive agent for social change (Reimann, 2004: 13). This is comparable to the view of Karl Marx that conflict is inevitable if society wants to achieve real progress and development. The major difference between conflict resolution and conflict transformation is that the former focuses more on the conflict itself, and how to resolve the underlying causes of the conflict, while the latter lays emphasis on how the system that brought about conflict could be changed. While the underlying causes of conflict can be resolved through conflict resolution, structural systems – including economic, cultural, military and political ones – cannot be resolved but only transformed. Hence conflict transformation is different and complementary to conflict resolution.

So when we talk of conflict transformation, the real transformation takes place within the systems that give rise to the conflict. It is when the whole system is transformed, especially through non-violent means, that genuine conflict transformation, as distinct from both conflict settlement and conflict resolution, could be said to have taken place. It is against this background that Vayrynen (1991) talks about micro and macro transformations. He also comes up with four distinct but intertwined ways in which real transformation could take place. These are:

- Actor Transformation, which has to do with the internal changes that occur in the main parties to the conflict;
- Issue Transformation, which deals with the change in the political agenda of the conflict (i.e. altering what the conflict is about);
- Rule Transformation, which readjusts and redefines the values and norms that the actors in a conflict adhere to in their interactions with each other, and delineates the boundaries of their relationship;
- Structural Transformation, which refers to changes that may occur in the system or structure within which the conflict happens, more than just the limited changes among actors, issues and roles. (Vayrynen, 1991: 4)

According to Augsburger (1992), conflict transformation is more permeating and goes deeper than conflict resolution in the sense that it transforms not only the attitudes and behaviour of the actors in conflict from negative to positive, but also the conflict itself, through the process of emphasizing factors that make parties in a conflict compatible. It must be mentioned that conflict transformation

requires a long gestation period because its ultimate aim is to transform the structural imbalance and incompatibilities that give rise to conflict in society.

Real conflict transformation encompasses Track 1, Track 2 and Track 3 actors. Track 1 actors are political and military leaders who serve as mediators and representatives of conflict parties. Track 2 actors are private individuals, academics, professionals, and international and local NGOs involved in the conflict resolution. Track 3 actors are grassroots organizations, local and international development agencies, human rights organizations and humanitarian aid groups who engage in capacity-building and grassroots training to transform a conflict (Riemann, 2004: 4). All of them must be involved in the process of peace building. Conflict transformation goes beyond mere peace brokerage, to long-term sustainability of peace in a society. Lederach (2006) emphasizes the fact that conflict transformation goes beyond resolution of issues in conflict, to the restoration of relationships between parties in the conflict. In line with five different levels at which conflict occurs in the contemporary era, Miall (2006: 9-10) has come up with what he calls "transformers of conflict". He talks about five types of transformation that are embedded in conflict transformation. The first is context transformation, which has to do with "changes in the context of conflict that may radically alter each party's perception of the conflict situation, as well as their motives". The second is structural transformation, which consists of "changes in the basic structure of the conflict, that is to the set of actors, their issues, incompatible goals and relationships, or to the society, economy or state within which the conflict is embedded". The third is actor transformation, which encompasses "decisions on the part of actors to change their goals or alter their general approach to conflict". The fourth is issue transformation, which dwells on the reformulations of positions that parties take on key issues at the heart of the conflict as well as the way in which parties redefine or reframe those positions in order to reach compromises or resolution". The fifth transformation has to do with "personal changes of heart or mind within individual leaders or small groups with decision-making power at critical moments".

Conflict transformation shares with conflict resolution the concept of positive peace which "involves the building of structures and processes which emphasize economic, social and political justice for all" (Harris, 2008: 80). The process of achieving this is called peace building. This requires the antagonists to "agree upon and create the political, economic and social structures that will engender positive peace with social justice over the longer term" (Fisher, 2001: 3). Conflict goes beyond a return to the pre-conflict era as this era itself may not be desirable, because if it had been, the conflict would not have ensued. So conflict transformation transforms the past, the present and the future.

Conflict transformation is "a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourse

and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict" (Miall, 2006: 4.). Here, "people within the conflict parties, within the society or region affected, and outsiders with relevant human and material resources all have complementary roles to play in the long-term process of peace building" (Miall, 2006: 4). It is in line with this that Lederach (1995) sees conflict transformation as having a long-term objective of validating and building on people and resources within a society. The people and structures of society are not viewed mainly as problems but as important tools in achieving peace through transformative process.

Rupesinghe (1998) advocates the synthesis of Track l, 2 and 3 interventions in order to achieve a permeating, comprehensive and long-lasting peace in the society. The synthesis includes building peace constituencies at the grassroots level, creating peace alliances with any groups able to bring about changes, such as business groups, the media and the military, as well as engaging in diplomatic intervention. (Miall, 2006: 5). Lederach (2006) talks about four dimensions to a conflict, namely, personal, structural, relational and cultural. He says the four dimensions must be overcome in the process of conflict transformation. The four dimensions cut across all strata of the society, hence they require a short-, mid- and long-term approach.

Conflict is said to be transformed if "parties (in a conflict) shift positions and adopt new goals, new actors emerge and new situations develop allowing for new relationships and changed structures" (Miall, 2006: 7). Conflict transformation encompasses both prevention and post-conflict peace building in the art of peace making. Conflict transformation emphasizes constructive and non-violent, as opposed to destructive, ways of handling conflict. Handling conflict in a constructive way "reinforces the society's confidence in its civic institutions, culture and capacity to manage conflict peacefully. Further, it not only transforms relationships in conflict but it also strengthens the society's system of governance and capacity for conflict handling and peaceful change." (Miall, 2006: 11-12). On the other hand, a destructive way of handling conflict "results in an intensification of damage to the participants in conflict and the bystanders. It further destroys their cooperative capacities, including the system of governance, the economic order and the social relationships of the society, in some cases even the state." (Miall, 2006: 12)

There are four main groups of actors in conflict transformation, namely:

- states and inter-governmental organizations;
- development and humanitarian organizations;
- international NGOs concerned with conflict prevention and transformation;
- parties to the conflict and other relevant groups within the affected societies. (Miall, 2006:12)

Giving the overall features, intention and proposes of conflict transformation, Miall, (2006:17) submits that:

"Conflict transformation is a comprehensive approach, addressing a range of dimensions (micro-to macro-issues, local to global levels, grassroots to elite actors, short-term to long-term timescales). It aims to develop capacity and to support structural change, rather than to facilitate outcomes or deliver settlements. It seeks to engage with conflict at the pre-violence and post-violence phases, and with the causes and consequences of violent conflict, which usually extend beyond the site of fighting."
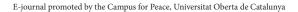
Ramsbotham (2005: 82) talks about descriptive and prescriptive understanding of conflict transformation. Descriptive understanding of conflict transformation "describes the general changes social conflict creates and the patterns it typically follows". On the other hand, prescriptive understanding of conflict transformation means "deliberate intervention to effect change". Conflict transformation "represents a comprehensive set of lenses for describing how conflict emerges from, evolves within, and brings about changes in the personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions, and for developing creative responses that promote peaceful change within those dimensions through non-violent mechanisms" (Ramsbotham, 2005: 83).

Conflict transformation has "the capacity to envision conflict as having the potential for constructive change" (Lederach and Maiese, 2003: 3). Conflict transformation "sees conflict as a valuable opportunity to grow and increases our understanding of ourselves and others" (Lederach and Maiese, 2003: 3). The main objective of conflict transformation is not "to find quick solutions to immediate problems, but rather to generate creative platforms that can simultaneously address surface issues and change underlying social structures and relationship patterns" (Lederach and Maiese, 2003: 3).

Conflict transformation conceives of peace as "a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationship. It is defined by intentional efforts to address the natural rise of human conflict through non-violent approaches that address issues and increase understanding, equality, and respect in relationships." (Lederach and Maiese, 2003: 3).

Conflict transformation intends to bring about changes in the personal, relational, structural and cultural dimensions in the following ways:

- Personal – Minimize destructive effects of social conflict and maximize the potential for personal growth at physical, emotional and spiritual levels;
- Relational – Minimize poorly functioning communication and maximize understanding;

- Structural – Understand and address root causes of violent conflict; promote non-violent mechanisms; minimize violence; foster structures that meet basic human needs and maximize public participation;
- Cultural – Identify and understand the cultural patterns that contribute to the rise of violent expressions of conflict; identify cultural resources for constructively handling conflict. (Lederach and Maiese, 2003: 4-5)

SOUTH AFRICAN EFFORTS AT REAL CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

The ANC-led government under the leadership of Nelson Mandela embarked on three major policies as a way of addressing the root causes of conflict in South Africa while at the same time achieving conflict transformation in post-apartheid South Africa.

First was the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), which had the primary objective of reducing poverty and at the same time boosting employment opportunities. (Lloyd, 2001: 313). The program was a policy framework meant to "go beyond the (Freedom) charter to an actual program of government" (Mandela, 1994: 1).

The second policy was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). This was "a mechanism intended to uncover activities of all parties in the past as a way to understand the hidden truths of the apartheid era, and to set the stage for forgiveness and healing" (Lloyd, 2003: 313). Nelson Mandela himself remarked that "true reconciliation […] has to be based on the creation of a truly democratic, non-racial, and non-sexist society so that everything that leads to racial and ethnic tension in our society is done away with" (ANC, 1996).

The third policy is affirmative action. This policy was designed to redress grievance related to employment. It aimed at expanding opportunities for the black community and addressing decades of injustice in employment practices (Lloyd, 2001: 314).

The three policies did not cover all the root causes of conflict in apartheid South Africa. The focus of the RDP was housing and employment, while the TRC focus was healing and reconciliation in the form of conflict settlement, and affirmative action was intended to go deeper into the problem of employment. From this, we can see clearly that the three policies fell short of expectations as the ingredients of conflict transformation. The underlying causes of conflict in apartheid South Africa went beyond housing, employment and fractured relationships. There were lots of structural, relational, personal and cultural dislocations in the apartheid South African society. What is needed are long-lasting, dynamically evolving and long-term peace-building processes that fit into the conflict transformation model. The fact that RDP was quietly shelved after two years, that TRC did not make the required headway and that affirmative action did not solve the problem expected of it, testify to the fact that the three policies were not in the realm of conflict transformation but in that of conflict settlement, and to some extent conflict resolution (Lloyd, 2001). The only element of conflict transformation in the South African case is that the South Africans negotiated their settlement with support from independent mediators who only facilitated the process.

The top-level approach to peace building believes in the cessation of hostilities and relies on political leadership with a high public profile. With this approach, "the greatest potential and the primary responsibility for achieving peace resides with the representative leaders of the parties to the conflict" (Lederach, 2006: 45). The National Peace Accord represents the middle-level approach to peace building in South Africa after apartheid. The National Peace Accord "was a move toward identifying key people in critical locations who, working through a network, would begin to build an infrastructure capable of sustaining the general progression toward peace" (Lederach, 2006: 51). The overall objective of the middle level approach to peace building is "the development of institutional capacities through the training of a broad array of individuals to respond to the volatile period of transition" (Lederach, 2006: 51). It is important to note that, while the top level approach achieves conflict settlement, the middle level approach achieves conflict resolution. South Africa engaged in these two levels while the third level was completely neglected, hence the lack of genuine and real conflict transformation in South Africa even 20 years after the end of apartheid.

In other words, since the end of apartheid, conflict transformation has not taken place in South Africa as "divergent interests, differing perception and definition of justice, and unhealed wounds remain" (Lloyd, 2001: 322).

CONFLICT SETTLEMENT AND NOT CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

What has happened in South Africa after apartheid is conflict settlement and not conflict transformation. Why? According to Reimann (2004: 8), conflict settlement has to do with "all outcome oriented strategies for achieving sustainable win-win solutions and/or putting an end to direct violence, without necessarily addressing the underlying conflict causes". Here, peace is achieved through compromise while the underlying issues responsible for conflict are left unaddressed. The idea is that parties in conflict have their positions maintained while agreement is reached

for a ceasefire. In other words, the status quo remains unchanged. It is a system of ending a conflict "in which a gain for one party need not necessarily be at the expense of the other" (Reimann, 2004: 8).

In most cases, conflict settlement usually involves Track 1 actors such as political and military leaders. In the case of South Africa, all the processes leading to the dismantling of the apartheid regime were not negotiated by ordinary white and black South Africans but by their political leaders. While Nelson Mandela was released, in 1990, to facilitate the process of negotiation with the white dominated apartheid regime, many members of the black community were in still in various prisons in South Africa as political prisoners. The real causes of conflict between the black majority and white minority were not adequately discussed and addressed. What happened in 1994 was a mere transfer of political power. The conflict of apartheid in South Africa went beyond that. The conflict transcends political power, to land matters, economic empowerment and equal opportunities for all. Even though many public institutions subscribe to the principle of equity and equal opportunity, this is more on paper than in action. The majority of black people have not really accepted white and coloured Africans as their brothers and sisters. Racism is still pronounced in many public institutions and communities. Land matters have remained a contentious issue, while the lack of economic empowerment for black South Africans remains unaddressed. The crux of the matter here is that, even though the transfer of political power was done in South Africa 20 years ago, the real causes of conflict in the country during the apartheid era have not been addressed, hence their resurgence in almost all areas of life in South Africa.

When Auvinen and Kivimaki (2001: 67) submit that "in South Africa the dispute was about the constitution and, more generally, about the distribution of political and, less directly, economic power", this does not represent the actual situation of things at that time. The struggle against apartheid transcends the change of constitution and sharing of political power. The end of apartheid brought about a change in the constitution as well as sharing of political power, with the ANC dominating the political scene. Yet, structural conflict still persists in South Africa. What has been achieved so far has been conflict resolution and not conflict transformation.

Contrary to the claim of Auvinen and Kivimaki (2006: 69) that "in many respects, the South African case seems to be an example of successful conflict transformation" the best that has happened in South Africa is conflict settlement, and to a certain extent conflict resolution. What we had at the end of apartheid in South Africa was political settlements which put an end to armed hostilities and simultaneously opened the door to normal politics (Lloyd, 2001: 307).

Among other factors, the root causes of conflict in apartheid South Africa were the following:

- Economic inequality between the white and black communities, and a perceived blocking of opportunity to achieve such equality;
- A fundamental lack of respect for South Africans who differed racially and culturally from the Afrikaner;
- The refusal of the National party to expand the political and economic system sufficiently to allow other groups enough influence to overcome Afrikaner rule. (Lloyd, 2001: 310).
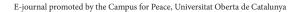
What pervaded South Africa during the apartheid era was what Galtung (1985) called "structural violence", which he defines as a "quiet process, working slowly in the way misery in general, and hunger in particular, erode and finally kill human beings" (Galtung, 1996: 145). So what is needed in South Africa are genuine efforts at conflict transformation. Also, the situation in South Africa during apartheid could be likened to what Azar called "protracted social conflict".

Azar (1991: 93) defines protracted social conflict as "the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation". South Africa is not exempt from this situation, hence the need for genuine conflict transformation and not conflict settlement.

Conflict transformation works within two objective frameworks, namely:

1) To change mutually negative conflict attitudes and values among parties in order to increase cooperation and communication between them.
2) To create a new infrastructure for empowerment and recognition of underprivileged groups, thus fostering and enabling social justice. (Reimann, 2004:13)

These two objectives are missing in post-apartheid South Africa. While some efforts were made with regard to the first objective, nothing tangible could be pointed to with regard to the second objective. Even the first objective was not properly addressed, hence real conflict transformation has not taken place in South Africa. What we have is conflict settlement with many structural imbalances in the society. Conflict transformation focuses on "the analysis of underlying causes of the conflict in order to address the legitimate underlying interest of all parties" (Fisher 2001: 3). In conflict management, conflict transformation is deeper in meaning because it has to do with "transformation of individuals, transformation of relationships and transformation of social systems large and small" (Dukes, 1999: 48). Conflict transformation "seeks to change the conditions that gave rise to the underlying root causes of the conflict" (Diamond 1994: 3). It is in this light that Boates (2003: 5) sees conflict transformation as a form of process of "nation building,

national reconciliation and healing, change agency, and social transformation".

Also, Lederach (2006: 242-243) has come up with four distinct but interrelated issues that must be addressed in a post-conflict peace building exercise if real conflict transformation is to be said to have taken place. These are:

1) Social-psychological issues. These are the issues that have to do with identity, self-esteem, emotion, trauma and grief.
2) Socio-economic issues. These are the issues that relate to providing financial aid, retraining, creating jobs and meaning full development of the society.
3) Social-political issues. This has to do with demobilization of guerrilla soldiers and freedom fighters, their integration into the main national army, disarmament and professionalization of the military.
4) Spiritual issues. These issues pertain to healing, forgiveness, and mutual acknowledgement among contending parties.

The first two were not addressed in post-apartheid South Africa. The third issue was addressed, although with limited success. It was an attempt to address the fourth issue that led to the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

What South Africa needs is real conflict transformation and not conflict resolution because, according to Van der Merwe (1989: 116), "the term conflict resolution does not apply to fundamental social problem in South Africa". Hendrik Van der Merwe should be taken seriously with this statement, because he was a pioneering mediator between the African National Congress (ANC) and the apartheid government in South Africa. He was also quite familiar with how the social and political institutions of South Africa had been infested with an avalanche of injustices and inequalities, hence his conclusion that "fundamental structural change was essential for constructive-accommodation of conflict" (Van der Merwe, 1989: 116).

One of the most valuable elements of conflict transformation is empowerment, and this is lacking in post-apartheid South Africa. Mayer (2000: 110), attesting to this fact, states that conflict transformation occurs "primar-ily through the process of empowerment". Agreeing with Mayer, Schwerin (1995: 6) regards empowerment as the "core concept or value of transformational politics". In his own submission, Lederach (1995: 212) sees empowerment as "the procedural element of validating and providing space for proactive involvement in conflict transformation". Conflict transformation dwells more on "the inherent dialectical process, the ability to transform the dynamic of the conflict and the relationship between the parties indeed to transform the very creators of the conflict" (Boates, 2003: 6). Clements (1997: 8) says real conflict transformation could be said to have taken place only when "violent conflict ceases and/or is expressed in non-violent ways and when the original structural sources (economic, social, political, military, and cultural) of the conflict have been changed". Going by Clements' understanding of conflict transformation, South Africa has not experienced real and genuine conflict transformation because the original structural sources of conflict in South Africa have not been changed. The conflict in apartheid South Africa was "structurally caused by economic, political, indentitive, discursive and other structures" (Auvinen and Kivimaki, 1997: 3), hence the need for real conflict transformation and not conflict settlement or conflict resolution. South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation commission, headed by Desmond Tutu, dwells more on relational reconciliation and what needs to be done goes beyond that.

CONCLUSION

This paper has tried to present a better understanding of the concepts of conflict transformation, conflict settlement and conflict resolution. It has also examined the conflict situation in South Africa during apartheid and the efforts of South Africa at conflict transformation after the end of apartheid. Furthermore, the paper has discussed how the efforts of South Africa are devoid of real conflict transformation. There is a notion that conflict transformation is an ideal, or utopia, which cannot be achieved or practiced in the contemporary world, let alone in Africa, as we expect it to be in South Africa. With the right attitude and the necessary will to succeed, real conflict transformation is achievable in South Africa. ■

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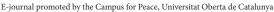http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02589340120058102

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Recommended citation

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