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KWAZULU-NATAL ELECTIONS:
RESULTS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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INTRODUCTION

KwaZulu and Natal has been an area of focus in the previous years. This has been complicated by the number of deaths in political violence taking place in KwaZulu-Natal. And the level of economic development has been of great concern in the KwaZulu-Natal region. Complicating politics with the highest rate of illiterate people, healthy services that were (are still) on the brink of collapse, poor educational facilities etc. It is around these conditions that the history of KwaZulu-Natal has been risen. With political violence has been an ethnic identity manipulated in the political contest by political parties for political positions. This we argue as significant because of the role that is played by the economic conditions play a very important role in the formation of strong ethnic identities politicised. The successes made by political parties manipulating ethnic identity have mainly been based on economic difficulties but in a more overt way manipulating the traditional institution - (the monarchy) -. Zulu ethnic identity as a social construct has been politicised. Political contests in KwaZulu-Natal and the interpretation given by the different political actors directly affected the results of the elections. It is through those historical formations that KwaZulu-Natal has ended up with the present structures of governance.

A Brief Historical Background On Politics in Natal/KwaZulu

In the historical development of the KwaZulu-Natal, a dominating feature has been political violence[1]. A critical attention needs to be paid to the role that the then IFP played. This is significant for reasons relating to the IFP being in the majority in the Provincial parliament. We assert that it will play a decisive role in shaping relations with the national government.

We then in this section, undertake to briefly discuss the IFP's philosophical character in relation to the wider social and political transformation programme. This was resembled in the control of the semi-autonomous components; for instance the male president of Inkatha Freedom Party as the very president of the Women's Brigade. It could be argued that the following statements denote the ideological complexities in the IFP's philosophy. Also in the unilateral and central control of all tiers of the KwaZulu government in the province. It is this control that has enabled the IFP with much power to control discourse construction. This is well demonstrated in the statement of its President, when he says;

"God has given you the gift of intuition. That

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[1]. In this case we refer particularly to previous political motivated violence and events, such as: (a) the University of Zululand student massacre in the early 80's; and (b) political violence that erupted on the position and the role of the monarchy in a democratic South Africa (before the elections).

> special something that has caused so many quarrels between me and my wife in the 30 years we have been married", (M.G. Buthelezi 8 October 1983). (Hassim, 1992: 10-11)

It goes further to say:

> "I am appalled by squabbles in some of our areas and all squabble are bad, but women squabbles for some reason tend to be more acrimonious than those of men", (M.G. Buthelezi 20 October 1984). (Hassim, 1992: 10-11)

The youth was also being taught along the following lines, all to ensure that the ideology is sustained throughout the coming generations. This was done through the shaping of the syllabi utilising Ubuntu Botho[*] at primary and secondary level of schooling. The following quote serves to indicate the above.

> "In order that everything go accordingly at home, we children must do everything that is required of us. Therefore remember it is the father and the mother and all elders at home who have the authority to control family affairs" (Mdluli, 1987:7).

The above make a point about the systematic marginalisation of women and the youth from playing a central social and political role in the society. It is our assertion that the social transformation programme in South Africa has to be measured through tangible issues relating to empowerment. These could take the following dimensions: participation of the marginalised (youth and women) in decision in the private and the public domains. The acquisition of skills in the form of literacy and education is central in the realisation of their empowerment. This could lead to the total amelioration of total living conditions.

Having argued above, it could be interesting to disaggregate (unpack) the election results in the KwaZulu-Natal region. This, as an exercise; to capture 'political party allegiances' amongst the youth and women in the context of marginalisation?

Elections in the KwaZulu-Natal Region

The complexity of the election processes in KwaZulu-Natal could be fully conceptualised on three related but different periods. These being the pre-election, during and the post-election periods. Nonetheless, we choose to focus on the election process. This will partly involve the post election

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*. Ubuntu Botho is subject to different interpretations. In this context it applies to a less critical acceptance of the (a) authority and (b) respecting your elders.

period.
The primary emphasis being on the events that define the (im)partiality of the election process and results.

The results as they appear in TABLE I below cast some light on the pattern that the elections in KwaZulu-Natal took. They provide a series of indications on issues of crucial social and political importance. Those being the divisions along rural and urban; and the areas that once fell under the jurisdiction of the KwaZulu Government and Natal.

There were reported events of intimidation. It appears; to us, that there is a correlation between those reports and the kind of election results in those specific areas.

The reports are as follows:

Ixopo Station - Mhlabashane No. D3428

The KwaZulu Minister of Agriculture, Chief L. G. Dlamini arrived at the station on the 28th of April 1994 at approximately 09H30 and stopped the voting. He addressed people and told them that no one was going to vote if they did not vote the IFP. (compiled as a court case evidence by the ANC Natal Midlands).

TABLE I:

	AREA	ANC	IFP
RURAL	IXOPO	21072	43031
	PAULPIETERSBURG	5000	48455
URBAN	PIETERMARITZBURG	180824	93621
	DURBAN	258331	145706

IEC Election Results Figures (Province Order)

Paulpietersburg

The IEC monitors and that of the ANC party agent reports agree on that there was active campaigning inside five polling station in the district, this affects four polling stations, namely, Alton School, Khiphunyawo School, Phondweni School and Mnyameni School. In all these polling stations named Inkatha officials and members allegedly campaign inside the polling stations for their political party.

On the basis of the above we argue that the KwaZulu-Natal elections were not substantially free and fair. They were marred by problems ranging from intimidation, to violence, party campaigning in the polling stations. This is well captured by Reynolds when he states that;

> "The worst irregularities, and possibly the best case for the invalidation of an election, came from the conflict torn province of KwaZulu-Natal. The Weekly Mail of 06 May 1994 reported that in some of areas of northern KwaZulu-Natal ballot boxes, when opened, contained nearly stacked piles of ballot papers with exactly 2,000 votes for IFP and only a handful of the ANC. There are reports of pirate voting stations in IFP controlled areas, accounting for anything up to 500,000 votes; the forced removals of IEC and ANC polling monitors from stations; and the issuing of the voters card on a widespread basis to the children under the age of 18. However the ANC's hands were not clean in the region either, as thousands of ANC supporters in the Transkei were bused over the Kwazulu border to vote in the neighbouring provincial election[3]" (Reynolds, 1994: 211).

What interested us in KwaZulu-Natal elections was that the areas that experienced problems of the voting material not arriving were in the rural communities. And most notably were the political events (such as intimidation, pirate polling stations, rigging of elections) that took place in the rural areas of KwaZulu-(Natal).

The political control of areas by the KwaZulu Government/IFP in the province prevented other political players from being active in terms of mobilising, holding meetings and so on. This is related to the way in which the so called 'tribal authorities' were strategically controlled by the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly. And that was further entrenched by a construct of who was the legitimate information amplifier. In this the so called 'tribal authorities' were (are?) the sole source of information. (see Mathenjwa, 1993).

Political Players

(i) Inkatha Freedom Party

The IFP's late entry to the elections was a major source of

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[3]. What is interesting for us, would be to provide an analysis of these assumptions. Let us assume that the number of disputed ballot boxes (from the pirate and informal polling stations); and votes from other provinces casted in KwaZulu-Natal were to be discarded - what will be the result of that process. It would also have a meaning for the national results.

confusion. Not only did this disadvantaged the electorate a chance to know about the procedures of the democratic elections. But the action also introduced a controversial method of stickers. The non-availability of stickers in certain ballot papers created spaces for the IFP to have 'justified' complains. Furthermore the nonexistence of voter education programmes disadvantaged the rural population. It also created conditions that were conducive to anarchy and intimidation.

The inter-party relations between the IFP and the Volkstaat movement which also claimed sovereignty over some parts of the province reinforced the state of uncertainty. There are a number key questions that are unanswered. They are central because they could enable us to capture the political feeling of the IFP members and supporters before the IFP decided to participate in the elections. Interesting were the reactions from the IFP strongholds after having heard of the decision to participate in the elections. Two important possibly questions loom here:

> (i) was it a reaction for victory as claimed by the IFP in their negotiations with the NP and the ANC?; or
>
> (ii) was it that they had been supporting participation from the beginning of the negotiation process or at a certain stage? How will it be if one argues that the people who met Buthelezi at Ulundi airport were his supporters of a certain fraction which was going to vote in the elections anyway?

This process itself was clearly earmarked by political strategies of the IFP which were contradictory. At one level was the one of not participating in the election. On the other hand this had rallied the supporters of the IFP for the elections[*]. The ANC also played a position of importance in the KwaZulu-Natal process.

African National Congress

It is also important to note that the ANC performed irregularities. The busing of thousands of voters from regions other than KwaZulu-Natal constituted what we would contend as an irregularity. This is always defended as an action that was taken because of the logistical problems experienced in areas bordering KwaZulu-Natal. It remains unconvincing though.

The failure of the ANC to win the elections could not be

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[*] This was evident in the election machinery of the IFP. It had been preparing for the elections long before the announcement for participation. And there were some IFP election posters that were already in place. The first posters that appeared read as follows: 'Vote IFP - When the Time Comes'. And on the very same night of the announcement of the IFP's participation the tone of the message and meaning drastically changed. It was: 'Vote IFP - The Time has Come'.

entirely blamed on irregularities by other political players. On the contrary, we argue that it was both inherent in its;

(i) intrinsic urban bias, manifested in its indifference in so far as the rural areas are concerned,

(ii) the ANC's own illusion that people in KwaZulu-Natal were to vote the ANC no matter how much intimidation is exerted on them.

Finally, neither of the political players discussed above could claim clean hands. And the political compromise reached could be partly attributed to the latter.
It will be churlish of us not to deal with the IEC. Hence it was a central institution in the running of the elections.

Role of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

There were difficulties that the IEC experienced in organising an effectively inclusive (elections) election. Some of which were controllable. The IEC operated within the bounds of a clearly prescribed mandate. Resources were accessible. It however failed to develop realistic contingency plans to deal with the unforeseen logistic operations. For instance; it could have reserved some resources to deal with the possible late joining of elections by parties outside the World Trade Centre negotiating process. What also undermined the IEC's position was its failure to ensure impartiality. In one district the chairperson of a political party contesting elections was also the IEC presiding officer. (e.g. Mr P.S. Dlamini of Wembezi in Escourt), [this is reported in the unpublished ANC KwaZulu-Natal Midlands Election Irregularities].

It did not reflect well on the IEC to have failed to deal with some incidents that took place in a number of areas mainly in the rural polling stations. At iNquthu members of the IFP who were hired by the IEC as monitors brought guns in the polling stations. In Dundee there were reports that IEC monitors from IFP were actively canvassing for the IFP inside the polling stations. Like wise in Pomeroy where it was reported that the presiding officer stood in front of the public and told electorate to vote the IFP. Accompanying this event was a local Induna inspecting the ballot papers and tearing up those supporting other parties especially those for the ANC.

The blanket hiring of KwaZulu civil servants for the running of elections in KwaZulu areas is itself not a desirable solution nor was it desirable that the IEC relied on KwaZulu Police for the protection of ballot papers. This is also cited by Mary de Haas in the letter dated 22 April 1994. Location of polling stations themselves was not dealt with accurately in some areas. In certain instance voting stations appeared to have shared the same station number e.g. Ekuzulekweni and Ekujabuleni. This we draw from the

documentation of the IEC[5].

The activities of the political parties and the IEC were decisive in the shaping of KwaZulu-Natal social and political arrangements. And they created a meaning for the future prospects of the province. And this is what we turn to discuss.

Future Prospects

In this part we turn to discuss the possibilities for the future. But in doing so we attempt to provide alternatives or rather institutions that could contribute to change in KwaZulu-Natal are briefly mentioned.

Political and Social Transformation: Questions on the Agency

Social and political transformation is here treated as meaning democratisation process which develops through a period of time. And the empowerment of the historically marginalised groups. We contest that there is a need for the entrenchment of a multi-party democracy culture in the KwaZulu-Natal province. And this always succeeds when the modern political institutions and social structures exists. In the case of KwaZulu-Natal it could be argued that the above has partly occurred. But also a disturbing aspects is the return of the feudal relations where one individual is trusted with all deals concerning land[6]. After all land is central in the development of people's lives - social, political and economic development - are all centred around the relationship that one has with land.

A question could be then posed as to who would bring about the social and political transformation? The notion of entrenchment the bill of rights in the constitution could be a better start. It may construct a significant practice of toleration which lacked in the elections (in cases where

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5. A number of pleas were made to the IEC. In one of the documents that is in our possession it is clear that there were substantial irregularities. For instance reports from one of districts (iNKANDLA DISTRICT) there were a number of informal and pirate voting stations. Because of the lack of the infrastructure in certain areas (rural) the IEC resorted to the usage of other means of transport to ferry voting material to the polling stations. From this document in our possession it appears as if taxis were made use of. And it is during this break between the IEC's offices and the polling stations that the rule were not adhered to. Some papers arriving at the polling stations already marked, checking of the ballot papers or who was qualified not taking place was never done. (not yet to be quoted)

6. Here we specifically refer to the 'Ingonyama Land Trust' deal that was made before the elections.

intimidation took place).

The above will provide foundations for democracy. And the agency for change is not the regional government. But its acceptance for free political activities will contribute. However the real contribution could be made by the civil society agencies. There exists a need for the creation of a strong civil society in KwaZulu-Natal, particular in the areas that were under the control and rule of the KwaZulu Government. A critical challenge though is the way the traditional institutions are structured. And the political history they harbour does not (did not?) provide enough or any ground for the civil society agencies.

The influential position of the traditional institutions challenges any attempt to the of civil society in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Chances for democratisation in Kwazulu-Natal region necessitate the existence of a fairly strong local government and functional civil society in the rural areas. Otherwise in the light of Ingonyama Trust it is difficult to think when will democratic control rather then traditional system of tribal authority control start to enjoy its rightful place in the province. We argue that there remain a need for the CBO, NGO movements to refocus their attention to the rural areas. To ensure that information is disseminated and divulged at different levels. This can limit the number of problems experienced during the elections. And it will, in one way or the other, empower the marginal.

Construction of New Histories in the Elections

This is a history workshop. And it suits us and the content of this paper to mention the new historical creations. As these would affect not the past but the present and the future. Hence there remains an overwhelming need to at least pinpoint the new discourses that were constructed through that historical event, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal. We do this with a great concern that the South African history has remained being the one of great men (and women?). It is conceived of as being constructed by individuals but not the ordinary peoples of KwaZulu-Natal who have been bearing the grunt of all political processes. Ours is indifferent. History is not from top to bottom nor a bottom to the top process. It is rather a paradoxical and dialectical process.

Having mentioned that we think it is vital that we share our conception of the result of the elections in KwaZulu-Natal - at a conceptual level. The new histories and discourses emerged. They could be summed up in the following way:

(a) re-entrenchment of political intolerance - political intolerance in the KwaZulu-Natal elections was a territorial event. This intolerance continues at the grassroots level. It is a culture that the political elite can still manipulate in future, hence the elite appear to have transcended it. Borders that have been

created by violence still remain'. And they may do so for a much more longer period than contemplated.

(b) the transcending of political intolerance by the political elite has occurred. This has taken place in the presence of undemocratic political events. It is a political event that dominated the election period. It could also be as a result of the historical significance of the event that led to this nature of political tolerance. The toleration of the undemocratic will possible extend to the entire life of our politics. And such cultures never ensure political stability. It is not a regional matter. But it extends its life into the national politics of South Africa.

(c) a failure to be as transparent as possible is entrenched in this period. The political arrangements that were arrived at concerning the Kwazulu-Natal elections are still puzzling.

As some academics put it:

> **"The published results were a product of a trade-off between the competing parties. Despite all attempts at creating transparency in the voting process, the trade-off that characterised the final moments of vote-counting in KwaZulu-Natal remains opaque". (Hamilton and Mare, 1994: 86)**

For the some people of this region it is an intriguing phenomenon that the election deals were never made public. We contend that this is an undemocratic process which puts questions hanging above the results of Kwazulu-Natal elections. On the other hand it could be argued that these reflect, at the elite level, a compromise between the competing interests. The accommodation of which could be seen as contributing to a point of nation building, hence developing the infrastructure which democracy requires to work effectively.

Hence perhaps the compromises are a requirement for building (i) the legitimacy of parliament and the culture of democracy (from the undemocratic), (ii) avoiding (violent) war, (iii) changing the domain of politics from territorial control and patronage to contesting elections and patronage.

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7. Johnston writes of the divisions between the two entities - "Kwazulu" and "Natal". He argues that these may remain divided for a longer period - as one of the possibilities -. We also conceive of divisions at a "micro-level" as stated in the paper. Divisions that we mention are based on and created by political violence. The election results, and the making of "Natal" and "KwaZulu" a single province have not shown any signs of a unified entity being created. (see Johnston, A. M. 1994 in Democracy in Action)

This resembles the contradictory nature of the modern world. The culture of modern democracy is never founded on free flowing articulations. It is rather the existence of many opposites that democracy is needed and functions. The new histories that are constructed are; as a result, and continuation of the above process.

Concluding Suggestions

Finally, we conclude that the elections in Kwazulu-Natal were substantially not 'free and fair'. And that the political institutions that were in place in Kwazulu did not provide [illegible] elections will not produce any change in lives of the people of KwaZulu-Natal, particularly those in the rural areas, if not reinforcements are not provided by other nongovernmental institutions. Central to this is a need for the population of this province to know what democracy means - this will enable them to make their own fair choice. The previous election, no matter how unfree and unfair it was, provided lesson for the local government elections. We also suggest that there remains a need for a;

(a) reliably census to ensure that the numbers of people does not exceed the number of people eligible to vote in the country.

(b) leading to a voters' roll, this will limit the type of election rigging that took place here in KwaZulu-Natal; and

(c) training of the election officers with case studies being available from other African countries.