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Ethnic Diversity and Democratic Stability in South Africa

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Arts in

Political Studies at the

University of the Witwatersrand,

Department of Political Studies

Academic Year: 2020

Supervisor: Prof. Lawrence Hamilton

DECLARATION

I **NM ZIKALALA** hereby declare that this thesis represents my own work which has been done after registration for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand and has not been previously included in a thesis or dissertation submitted to this or any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualifications. I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines and accept responsibility for the conduct of the research in accordingly.

Signature



Date: 13 April 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank God for the love, tolerance, wisdom and grace he has given to me throughout this research.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude and respect to my supervisor, Professor Lawrence Hamilton whose patience, tolerance, guidance, and support motivated me throughout the study period. More specifically, his excellent supervision and encouragement has been instrumental in the completion of this study. I feel fortunate to have collaborated with such a talented and fully composed scholar.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my wonderful and loving mother, Miss Nelisiwe Beauty Zikalala for her support and prayers, which enabled me to complete this thesis.

Last but not least I want to thank myself for not giving up, for working hard, for not complaining and for being humble throughout this research project.

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the extent to which South Africa can be regarded as a stable democracy, with reference to Eckstein's conception of the elements necessary for stability and an historical account of the role of the political mobilisation of ethnicity. According to Eckstein, democracies are stable if they demonstrate persistence in pattern, effective decision-making institutions and genuine democratic practices. In 2019 South Africans embarked on another successful electoral process, again selecting the ANC to govern for 5 more years. These were the sixth democratic elections since 1994, which satisfied the first condition of endurance. However, due to the legacies of apartheid, particularly the manipulation of ethnic divisions by the colonial state and the apartheid system of governance, South Africa remains a divided country with different systems of governance often at loggerheads in the rural areas in particular. Residents in rural areas are subject to the decisions of traditional leaders and democratically elected municipal councillors. The clash between these two forms of authority makes the conditions of effective decision-making institutions hard to come by and often malfunctional, in that traditional leaders continue to exercise various administrative capacities, especially with regard to land rights, thus making municipal decisions ineffective. Furthermore, the fact that South Africans tend to cast their votes based on ethnic preferences and allegiances instead of party policies makes the achievement of Eckstein's third element – genuine democracy – at least questionable. This research report thus brings out the partly hidden dynamics of the persistent role of ethnicity in South African politics and thus questions South Africa's democratic stability.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

In 1994, South Africa gravitated towards the path of being a fully-fledged democratic country. The country saw a successful transition from colonial-racial dictatorship to a state of inclusive democratic practice elaborated by one of the most lauded constitutions in the world. Over the course of twenty-six years since the dawn of democracy, it has become increasingly important to examine whether South Africans can triumphantly proclaim that their country enjoys a stable democratic system of governance. It is therefore the intended aim of this thesis to contribute to such an examination. It will be argued that the answer to whether South African democracy is stable lies in the fulfilment of all three conditions suggested by Eckstein; 'a country can be regarded as a stable democracy if it can demonstrate (1) a persistence of pattern (2) decisional effectiveness of democratic institutions and (3) it must be genuinely democratic' (Eckstein, 1961: 2).

Although South Africa has demonstrated an endurance of democratic practice without changing the rules of the game, there are two important factors that threaten democratic stability which are somewhat interrelated and are a product of ethnic divisions that took place during apartheid and colonialism. The first one is the role of former and current traditional leaders who were appointed in the form of Chiefs and Ndunas within the discourse of separate development and the creation of Bantustan policies during apartheid (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018).

Traditional leaders had to declare their ethnicity based on geopolitical allocations of land and they served as agents of the colonial state apartheid (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018). Their role in the new South Africa is not only controversial, but it has sparked ethnic tensions and undermined democratic institutions (Ngcobo, 2016). There are concerns around the decisional effectiveness of municipalities on developmental planning in former Bantustan reserves, particularly in rural areas where traditional leaders often clash with democratically elected Municipal Councillors. This has resulted in many rural municipalities being declared as dysfunctional, leading to protests and ethnic tensions in Vuwani and Malamulele villages of Limpopo between Vatsonga and Vavenda people (Baloyi, 2018).

The second factor deals more specifically with existing fears around the saliency of ethnicity as an important variable for analysing voter behaviour and political party strategies. This calls into question the assumption that South Africa is a genuine democratic country. The new democratic government under the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) has failed to address the ethnic question properly and in some quarters political leaders have often used ethnic divisions to advance their personal interests and political goals (Norbet, 2009). For example, Mangosuthu Gantsa Buthelezi, former Chief Executive Officer of the KwaZulu Territorial Authority founded the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), which is based on a certain

politicised form of Zulu ethno-nationalism. The IFP contributed to the violent conflicts that dominated electoral politics in the 1990s in KwaZulu-Natal between supporters of the Xhosa led African National Congress (ANC) and the Zulu led IFP (Szeftel, 1994). Another example is the establishment of the United Christian Democratic Party by former Chief Executive officer, Lucas Mangope of the Bophuthatswana Bantustan (currently North West Province). Towards the 1999 National Elections, Mangope played a Tswana ethnic card by consistently pointing out that conditions in the province will not improve under the Xhosa rule of the ANC (Hoeane, 2004). He was successful in creating the assumption that restoring power to a Tswana leader is essential for ensuring that conditions do not continue to deteriorate. Furthermore, although the ANC has attempted at various times to maintain a reputation of being a multi-cultural organisation, it was confronted by challenges in post 2009 elections as Jacob Zuma's ascent to power relied on the re-tribalisation of ethnic identity for political purposes (Nobert, 2009). This was an indication that South Africa bears the risk of ethnic politicisation, which poses a threat to democratic stability in the foreseeable future because the consequences of apartheid ethnic divisions remain prevalent in the new South Africa.

The apartheid government was successful in politicising ethnicity to advance the political and material interests of white people (Hoeane, 2004). In defining ethnicity, apartheid thinking, and colonialism more generally drew on primordial ideas. Primordialism as a philosophy holds that people are born into pre-existing ethnic group structures that define one's position in society and governs political behaviour. Furthermore, it was believed that 'being part of such a group is not a matter of choice or option' (Hoeane, 2004: 2). This served as a justification for the National Party to divide black South Africans into different Bantustans based on ethnicity and appoint traditional leaders who will be in charge of the day-to-day affairs thereof. Post-apartheid electoral studies began to explore the primordial myth and in doing so they rejected the notion that South African ethnicities are ancient and stagnant (Hoeane, 2004). It was found that South African ethnicities are open-ended with dynamic social and political processes. Mare (1993) defines ethnicity as nothing other than a sense of belonging. Notwithstanding the fact that it may involve serving or advancing non-ethnic interests, whether political or material, it is dependent on social identities that are often acknowledged (Mare, 1993).

It follows that ethnicity is a social construct that can be used in an instrumental manner to defend perceived ethnic interests or to advance an agenda that has no relevance to ethnicity. It is within this framework that this thesis will argue that post-independence or post-apartheid ethnic divisions should not be interpreted on the basis of primordial ideas; rather, they should be seen as political tools that were amplified and, to some extent, invented by colonialism. It is such divisions that made the democratisation process problematic in the early 1990s and in many respects continues to pose a threat to democratic stability in South Africa. It is also important to note that because of apartheid, race and ethnic categorisation in South Africa takes a particular form that is not necessarily found elsewhere. For example, in the United States of America (USA) race and ethnicity are sometimes used interchangeably, whereas they are understood in a very specific way in South Africa. Race in South Africa according to the 2020 census figures includes Black at 80,8 %, Whites at 7.9%, Coloureds at 8,7% and Indians or Asians at 2.6% (SA Stats, 2020). The Coloured people in the USA are classified in the same

category as black people. Ethnicity on the other hand normally refers to linguistic and cultural differences within the former groups, particularly White and Black people. Due to the history colonialism which was overtly a result of settlers from Netherlands and Britain, White ethnicities are made up of those who identify themselves as Afrikaners (descendants of the Dutch settlers from Netherlands) and English (descendants of British settlers). This distinction is not as rigid as that of Black ethnic categories because unlike White people, black people were structurally divided into different self-governing or independent states during apartheid. Ethnicity amongst Black people of South Africa, includes the following categories Zulu, Xhosa, Bapedi, Tswana, Ndebele, Basotho, vaVenda, Tsonga and Swati, all of which predominantly speak Southern Bantu languages.

Within this framework, this thesis will examine ethnicity and democratic stability in South Africa by focusing on two broad areas, which include ethnicity and apartheid governance as well as ethnicity and democratic practice in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study revolves around the notion that ethnic tensions are a serious threat to democratic stability, especially in post-apartheid South Africa where in many respects, ethnic groups are considered to give rise to fixed and homogeneous preferences that are motivated by a desire for self-esteem and having a sense of belonging. While the degree to which individuals aspire for these two forms of gratification may vary or change over time, ethnic groups are treated as monolithic groups with constant and common desires (Chandra, 2005). The threat to democratic stability results from the fact that ethnic based forms of politics are often a zero-sum game, in that the interests of one ethnic group contrast with (and can be made to triumph over) the interests of another ethnic group. This can be referred to as a politics of self-preservation which finds expression in slogans such as ‘it is either us or them’ (Yuval-Davis, 2010). This means that traditional and political leaders of ethnic groups often present their supporters with an either-or choice because the distribution of preferred outcome for ethnic groups lies at opposite ends. It is within this context that this thesis finds it important to discuss how South Africans ended up being tangled into this wide web of ethnic based forms of societies. This will enable a further discussion on the relationship between electoral outcomes and ethno-nationalism on the first hand and around the notion that traditional leaders clash with democratically elected municipal councillors in the new democratic South Africa, on the second hand.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis will endeavour to answer the primary question of whether South Africans can triumphantly proclaim that their country enjoys a stable democratic system of governance. In answering this question, the thesis will discuss the relationship between ethnicity and colonialism in South Africa and how this relationship impacted democratisation. Given that the primary focus is on South Africa, which experienced both colonialism from British rule

and colonialism of a special type under apartheid, the thesis will also discuss ethnicity and Apartheid governance as well as ethnicity and democratic practice in post-Apartheid South Africa. In doing so, the thesis will seek to answer the following secondary questions:

What is Democratic Stability?
What is ethnic diversity and how does it trigger democratic instability?
What was the role of Apartheid in inventing or reinventing ethnic divisions in South Africa?
In what ways do the legacies of Apartheid on ethnic divisions impact South Africa's democracy in the post-apartheid era?

1.4. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1. WHAT IS A STABLE DEMOCRACY?

In defining stable democracy, the proposed thesis shares in the political theory of stable democracy found in the writings of Harry Eckstein in his book titled a theory of stable democracy, published in 1961. Eckstein argues that unstable democracies are self-explanatory, while stable democracies require 'congruence of authority patterns between government and segments of social life which resist democratisation; it requires balances of contradictory behaviour patterns, in such a way that the balances do not lead to undue strain and intolerable anomie; it requires a certain similarity among authority patterns, but not to the extent that basic human needs are thwarted' (Eckstein, 1961: 46). For the purposes of this thesis, the answer to whether South African democracy is stable lies in the fulfilment of all three conditions he suggested, which are as follows (1) persistence of pattern (2) decisional effectiveness and (3) it must be genuinely democratic' (Eckstein, 1961: 2).

On the first condition, Eckstein writes that 'a stable democracy is one which has demonstrated considerable staying in power, a capacity to endure, without greater or frequent changes in pattern' (Eckstein, 1961: 1). This means that democracy can be regarded as being stable if it has enjoyed uninterrupted continuity without significant changes, at least on the fundamental rules of the game. Obviously, the emphasis on greater or frequent changes does not relate to democratically pursued changes such as the Nineteenth Amendment in the United States upon which women suffrage was recognised in 1920. Rather, reference to significant changes of the fundamental rules of the game relates to extreme changes that might be considered unjustifiable in an open democratic society. However, notwithstanding the importance of long endurance, Eckstein is aware of the fact that longevity on its own is not quite enough to be used as a rule of thumb in assessing democratic stability. He argues that while endurance or longevity remains an essential element, stability requires a more complicated analysis (Eckstein, 1961). Therefore, inasmuch as all South African citizens celebrated 26 years of freedom and democracy on 27 April 2020, this was a partial fulfilment towards a conclusion that the country enjoys a stable democracy.

The second requirement, namely decisional effectiveness, revolves around the argument that in a broader sense, democratic stability implies effective decision making towards shared political goals by members of a political community. Eckstein does not critically assess this

condition as he does others, in that he merely states that ‘the government must govern if anything else otherwise it is not a government’ and then ends with a statement that it is because of this reason that the Third Republic in France failed (Eckstein, 1961: 2).

Given what has been said, the thesis will interpret effective decision as follows: it does not simply mean members of a political community must have overtly similar political goals in all respects and that the government must bring all of them about if it is to be considered a stable democracy. Rather, the government must be able to determine the fundamental needs and interests of all its citizens and be able to deliver on them. In South Africa, the strained relationship between Traditional Leaders and Municipal Councillors is one of the most significant factors hampering development in rural communities (Ngcobo, 2016). This has resulted in many municipalities being regarded as dysfunctional and therefore unable to deliver services to local communities in rural areas. Municipalities are democratic institutions, and they must be effective in carrying forth their decisions and deliver services to those in need for there to be a stable democracy. Although the aim of this thesis is to focus on the relationship between Municipal Councillors and Traditional Leaders, it is important to note this is not a single factor hampering service delivery, in that nepotism, cadre deployment, corruption and embezzlement are amongst other factors to consider.

Service delivery includes the provision of a wide array of social services like health care, security, water and sanitation, infrastructure development and other developmental needs. According to Eckstein, the government must be able to implement policies that will enable citizens to secure employment. Rural areas remain impoverished areas as they were during apartheid and this has resulted in ethnic tensions in Limpopo between Vavenda and Vatsonga residents (Baloyi, 2018). The protests between these two ethnic groups demonstrate that if the government simply provides for the needs and interests of a few or a particular ethnic group in areas where ethnicity is politicised, this may lead to democratic instability because the relegated ethnic groups will constantly challenge the legitimacy of the government. This may result in civil unrests or even armed conflict, in worse-case scenarios. Within this framework, the importance of having a government that is accountable to all its citizens cannot be overemphasised.

On the third and final condition, Eckstein points out that a government does not qualify as a stable democracy unless it is genuinely democratic. Eckstein examines what 'genuinely democratic' means in relation.... to two conditions. The first is that democratic structures must play an active role in the day-to-day affairs of the country. Democratic structures must not appear as a façade, while the decisions that make the government effective come from non-democratic structures or non-democratic processes. Although Eckstein does not raise this point in relation to multi-cultural societies, it can be argued that in sharply divided societies, whether in terms of religion or ethnicity, there is a risk of having decisions that make the government effective being derived from the clergy or the royal family of a particular ethnic group. In South Africa, there are a significant number of royal families from almost all native ethnic groups and these royal families may have persuasive powers over elected representatives. It follows that elections should be the sole basis within which outcomes are derived. This includes

election outcomes in competition for power or enactment of policies. Therefore, the fact that traditional leaders in rural areas continue to reign supreme is a cause for concern because their authority is not an outcome of democratic practice.

Moreover, Eckstein's condition of a genuinely democratic government can be useful in examining ethnic politicisation and electoral outcomes. Thus, ethnic politicisation and mobilisation can produce bad leaders that thwart democratic principles such as the rule of law, accountability and transparency, notwithstanding the fact that elections were free and fair. Therefore, due to the fact that South Africans cast their votes based on ethnic preferences, instead of policy consideration, there has been a series of concerns around corruption and lack of accountability on par with Jacob Zuma's candidature and the assumed role of the ANC as a dominant political party.

1.4.2. Ethnicity as a driving force for democratic instability

Grofman & Stockwell (2001) acknowledge that accommodating diverse ethnic groups is a fundamental challenge faced by many countries. The scholars make an important distinction between plural and pluralistic societies. In the former, where there are deep divisions in the organisation of societies and politics are organised along acute ethnic lines, there is a greater potential for ethnic conflicts as seen with the genocide in Rwanda and civil wars in Burundi (Grofman& Stockwell, 2001). In the latter, the argument is that ethnic differences have been minimised, in that social systems are primarily based on mutual respect for all different cultures that make up a society. This means that no one ethnic group is forced to abandon its lifestyle and tradition irrespective of its subordinate position when compared to another ethnic group. Instead, everyone is free to express their culture and participate as equal members of a larger community without prejudice (Grofman& Stockwell, 2001). However, this does not mean that the potential for ethnic conflicts is completely neutralised as there are many domains that make ethnic conflict possible, 'even if it is confined to individual acts of intolerance or small-scale protests or the occasional so-called race riot' (Grofman& Stockwell, 2001: 2).

There is no general consensus in the literature on whether democratic practices exacerbate the potential for ethnic conflicts, or whether they provide mechanisms for long-term peaceful conflict management (Grofman& Stockwell, 2001; Sisk, 1996). It can be argued that there is no definitive answer in the later assessment as each point of enquiry will have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Using South Africa as a focal point of enquiry for this thesis requires that one begins by examining whether the country is a plural or pluralistic society. To this extent, one has to discuss two broad areas that are relevant to the study, which includes ethnicity and apartheid governance as well as ethnicity and democratic practice in post-apartheid South Africa. It is only after this, that one may begin to suggest or recommend the necessary institutional arrangements that might facilitate inter-ethnic accommodation and mitigate the potential for ethnic conflicts.

Grofman & Stockwell (2001) provide a wide array of institutional arrangements for accommodating diverse ethnic groups and for this reason some of their proposals lack detail and thorough analysis. On representation, which is of concern in this thesis, the two scholars merely highlighted that the ANC in 1994 chose proportional representation instead of first past the post in order to reassure inclusive representation. While this may be true, it can be argued that there is greater inclusivity in the first past the post electoral system because it creates a direct, accountable connection between elected representatives and the voters. Instead of relying on a party list that is primarily determined by individual political parties, voters can elect representatives from their constituency whom they have chosen based on whether and how they would represent their interests. This is of extreme importance, especially in a country where provinces are overtly clustered along ethnic lines.

1.4.3. Ethnicity and Apartheid Governance

Segregation was at the heart of apartheid laws and policies. The abhorrent apartheid system did not only divide people based on race but on ethnic grounds as well. Such an endeavour began in 1959 when the government passed the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018). The Act was designed to further the so-called Grand Apartheid policy which meant that South Africa would be permanently partitioned into national homelands. While white people would have greater control over the country, black people were unilaterally divided into separate nation states by the white regime. Each black nation, defined according to language groups, was provided a Commissioner General who was tasked with developing his assigned homeland into a fully-fledged self-governing state (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018). Black people were expected to exercise their political rights within their assigned homeland and to not interfere with external political affairs in the remainder of South Africa where white supremacy and Afrikaner nationalism would be articulated.

It is against this background that in his book *Citizens and Subjects*, Mamdani observes that the apartheid system involved various attempts to consolidate homelands into ‘national’ ethnic states in which chiefs were turned into politicians (Mamdani, 1997). He states that the establishment of ethnic homelands was the beginning of an invention or reinvention of ethnic divisions as they are understood in contemporary South Africa. The lives of black South Africans were structured at every level. In line with the divide and conquer principle, the National Party contrived and rewarded politicised ethnicity to maintain its own domination. Homelands reinforced the idea that a black person belongs to a primordial ethnic group (Hoeane, 2004).

The thesis supports Mamdani’s observation that South Africa continues to bear the legacies of what he referred to as decentralised despotism (Mamdani, 1997). It will add to the discussion that in contrast to the political intentions to overcome apartheid legacies in post-apartheid South Africa, the redrawing of internal boundaries contributed to the consolidation of areas of the former Bantustans and that this poses a threat to democratic stability for the foreseeable future. At the local government level, the Constitution created a framework for the establishment of municipalities throughout the country, including rural communities that were previously

governed by traditional leaders during apartheid. While the original impetus was to encourage participatory democracy at the local government level on matters relating to developmental policies, this later waned as government embarked on 'outsourcing its work to consultants who crowded out community structures'(Heller 2012:655). Chapter 7 of the Constitution provides that the role of local government through municipalities is to grow local economies and to provide infrastructure and services. The department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) is tasked with ensuring that municipalities perform their functions consistently by strengthening and building their capability and accountability. This has proven to be an uneasy task in former Bantustan areas where local municipal councillors often clash with traditional leaders.

In an article published by the South African Human Rights Commission, Wasani Baloyi writes about tribal wars in Limpopo and their negative impact on development. He refers to a story he was told by his grandmother where she mentioned that there was a time where Vendas and Tsongas used to live together as one people in Mashau's Bonchas Village (Baloyi, 2019). He writes that it was the creation of Bantustans by Malan and Verwoerd that planted seeds of hatred and difference between the two different ethnic groups which continue to haunt the village some decades later.

To support the argument that ethnic politicisation can result into ethnic tensions or conflict in a worst-case scenario, the thesis will also reflect on the violence in KwaZulu-Natal during the democratisation process. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of similar trends in other African countries that have experienced ethnic conflicts as a result of ethnic politicisation will be paramount. In some African countries, it is submitted that colonialism was the perpetrator of entrenched ethnic divisions and the continuities thereof are the source of ethnic conflicts. The argument here is that the way in which the African continent was divided in the Berlin conference did not consider native concerns. Furthermore, colonial masters deliberately reinforced and in some cases invented ethnic divisions in line with the divide and rule strategy. In the *Art of War*, Machiavelli advises that a Captain should endeavour in the art of dividing the forces of the enemy by making him suspicious of those he trusts or give him reason to divide his army, thus making him weaker (Case and Maner 2014). In both Rwanda and Burundi, Belgium ruled through the Tutsi ethnic group – defined as anyone with more than ten cows and a long nose (Uvin, 2001). On the other hand, the Hutu ethnic group was at the bottom of the ladder and it was made up of anyone with less than ten cows and a broad nose (Uvin, 2001). This was a complete colonial construct of ethnicity riven with class distinction. Such distinctions caused socioeconomic disparities between the two groups, which were a major factor for ethnic cleansing and the genocide that took place in the 1990s.

1.4.4. Ethnicity and democratic practice in post-apartheid South Africa

In his 1994 article titled *'Ethnicity and democratization in South Africa'*, Morris Szefted writes that the prevalence of ethnic divisions is the most constitutive element that informs or directs social and political systems, inflicting discrimination against minorities and threatening the survival of some states. In doing so, he quotes Pierre van den Berghe who observed that

South Africa remains a plural society with a population divided by deep rifts of class, race and ethnicity…it is highly likely that race and ethnicity will continue to play a salient role in South African politics for the foreseeable future, with probably a decreasing emphasis on race and in an increasing one on ethnicity (Szefted, 1994: 185).

This article is useful for outlining an argument that the decline of the ANC in the political scene will result in the relationship between ethnicity and politics being more pronounced and exploited. Furthermore, Szefted echoes the notion that Apartheid was a system that organised its institutions and interests along ethnic lines (Szefted, 1994). This segregation and oppression created a sense of solidarity amongst all black people, but its legacies are going to manifest themselves and cause tension post-independence as seen in other countries like Burundi and Rwanda. He is of the view that the democratisation process in the early 1990s responded to these interests with the IFP using ethnic identity to defend old privileges for the traditional political elite (Freund, 2000). Consequently, the demand for autonomy in Natal by IFP sparked a series of violent conflicts dubbed 'black on black violence' and this was exacerbated by acts of omission and commission by apartheid security forces. The violence was neutralised by the ANC when it assumed power and adopted an inclusive approach in terms of race and ethnicity.

At the empirical level, some observers are of the view that the primacy of ethnicity in explaining African political problems is a narrow ledged argument focused on the irrationality and essentially inexplicably primordial qualities of human nature. This includes scholars like Collier and Hoeffler (2000) who maintain that economic incentives are the main cause of the outbreak of violent rebellion. Within this framework, it is argued that violent conflicts in Africa are caused by greed and grievance motivations linked with material or class origins. However, Szefted (1994) remains relevant with his understanding that in Africa, concerns over the distribution of resources are often expressed in ethnic terms with one dominant ethnic group having a better share than others. He writes that once unleashed, ethnic conflicts develop autonomy far beyond class or material divisions from which they originated.

Tracing the voting behaviour of South African citizens from 1994 to 2004, Thabisi Hoeane acknowledges that race and ethnicity were instrumental elements used by political parties to generate votes and this contributed to election outcomes in 1994 and 1999 (Hoeane, 2004). However, she observed that 2004 marked a new beginning with many political parties developing inclusive policies and building coalitions with other political parties. While acknowledging that the 2004 elections may have marked a new beginning, this thesis will argue that elections from the 2009 onwards relapsed back into using race and ethnicity as a source of generating votes. For example, Jacob Zuma's ascent to power relied on the re-tribalisation of ethnic identity for political purposes. During a State Capture enquiry, Zuma expressed concerns over how his entire family have been victims of the anti-Zuma campaign by the media (February, 2019). He made reference to how his son, Duduzani Zuma, found it hard to do business in the country because people did not want to be associated with anything that has to do with the Zuma surname. According to the former president, he advised his son to go to Durban – meaning there would be better chances of doing business in KZN for his son than anywhere else in the country and it proved to be a sound advice (February, 2019). This

demonstrates that the Zulu dominated province remains passive towards serious allegations of corruption and mismanagement of state resources by the former president and his cronies for one of two main reasons. First, the commonly expressed idea that Zuma is a victim of ethnic persecution; and second, the fact that people in KZN seem unwilling to stand against their own, no matter what. Nevertheless, the issue always comes back to the ethnic question. It is therefore, reasonable to argue that identity politics continue to play a salient role in South African politics.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper makes use of a qualitative approach focused on desktop research. It engages with existing literature found in published journals, newspaper articles, books, academic thesis and online sources. The reason why a qualitative approach will be useful is because there has been thorough research conducted in the study of local governance and the institution of traditional leadership. Most of this research has focused on the conflict of power between the involved institutions with reasonable concern of communities who are directly affected by the manifestation of conflicting views and disagreements. This has generally narrowed the gap of further research but due to the uncommon research methods and approach complemented by distinct case studies, there is always room for further research.

Within this context, this thesis attempts to assess ideas and opinions of scholars and researchers regarding the tensions between Traditional Authorities and Municipal Councillors. One of the most prevailing issue about this institution of traditional leadership is the historical role it played during pre-colonial, colonial and apartheid epochs. Its historical stances are restlessly used by academics and civil society organization found in the post-apartheid democratic South Africa as reason why traditional leadership should be abandoned but the same history is employed to advocate its survival. A qualitative approach is also useful in this thesis given the availability of existing research that examines voting behaviour patterns in South Africa since 1994 General Elections. The thesis however does not seek to repeat what other scholars have already concluded, rather the attempt is to combine existing literature in an attempt to arrive at the conclusion that ethnicity remains salient in South Africa's young democracy and that this poses a threat for democratic stability.

It will make use of process tracing, which is used to trace the causal relationship between ethnic diversity and democratic instability and how this relationship has played out in South Africa. The reason for choosing process tracing is because it allows room for building and testing theories of processes that link causes and outcomes in a bounded population of causally similar cases. Combined with comparative methods and used in a more pragmatic fashion, process tracing will be useful for gaining a greater understanding of the causal dynamics of ethnic diversity and democratisation that have produced ethnic tensions and conflicts in cases such as Rwanda and Burundi as well as in many other parts of Africa.

The strength of process tracing in the thesis is that detailed knowledge will be gained through the experiences of similar cases across Africa which will serve as mechanistic evidence about how ethnic diversity and democratisation results in conflict, wherefrom an inference may be drawn in relation to the potential for ethnic tensions in South Africa. The thesis will share in the argument by Eckstein (1961) on the political theory of democratic stability and link it with plural and pluralistic theories of ethnicity and their relevance to democratic instability. Using South Africa as a selected case study, the thesis will discuss the history and nature of ethnic divisions, particularly in relation to the creation of Bantustans which influenced the way provinces are clustered today and how the continued uncertain role of traditional leaders has the potential to undermine democracy in the long run. Various examples across the country and from other African countries will be used to support specific arguments about inventions and reinventions of ethnic differences during colonialism and the continuities thereof in contemporary South Africa which contribute to democratisation challenges.

1.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Apart from the fact that the paper will ensure that every source used is acknowledged in a scholarly manner for conducting research, there are no ethical considerations in this kind of desktop study. As has been stated in the research methodology, there will be no interviews, meaning that the paper will be based on desktop research.

1.7. PROPOSED CHAPTER OUTLINE

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

The first Chapter is the introduction. This chapter introduces the thesis, outlines the significance of the study and the way research is conducted. It further provides a detailed account of existing research regarding the issue of ethnicity and democracy in South Africa.

CHAPTER TWO – THE FORMATION OF ETHNIC DIVISIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The second chapter provides a historical account of ethnic formation in South Africa and proceeds to discussing how colonialism and apartheid manipulated ethnic divisions to satisfy the interests of white settlers. It focuses on the reinvention and invention of ethnic differences in line with the divide and conquer strategy by the colonial and apartheid state. This includes taking into account the development of Bantustans during apartheid.

CHAPTER THREE – THE IMPACT OF BANTUSTAN POLICIES IN THE NEW DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

The third chapter begins by outlining the continuities of Bantustan policies, particularly the role of traditional leaders in the new democratic South Africa and how they have contributed to the reality of dysfunctional and ineffective municipalities in rural areas.

CHAPTER FOUR – ETHNICITY AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

This chapter makes a case for the saliency of ethnicity in analysing voter behaviour and political party strategies in national elections. It will examine general elections from 1994 to 2019 in an attempt to prove that ethnicity plays a role on vote outcomes, which indicates that South Africa is not a genuinely stable democratic country.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSION

Finally, the paper provides conclusions and recommendations regarding the discussed issues.

CHAPTER 2
ETHNICITY AND APARTHEID GOVERNANCE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the thesis seeks to explain how ethnic divisions in South Africa were instrumental in the colonial project which became a precursor for a more pronounced project of division called apartheid. Both the colonial state and apartheid managed to manipulate ethnic differences in South Africa and in the process inflicted hatred and distrust among black people (Baloyi, 2018). It will be argued that ethnic consciousness is a product of historical experience and it is a social construct. This argument is against a crude apartheid primordial view of ethnic differences in South Africa. Thus, apartheid thinking revolved around the idea that people are born into fixed ethnic groups and that being part of such a group is not a matter of choice or option (Hoeane, 2004). Furthermore, the abhorrent apartheid regime enforced the idea that these fixed ethnic identities are made up of structures that are external and coercive to an individual. It was believed that these structures determine an individual's place in society and influence his or her political behaviour (Hoeane, 2004). Such rudimentary thinking is what the apartheid government used to justify its segregation policies and laws that forcefully removed black people from their indigenous lands to Bantustan reserves. While black people were pushed into the outskirts of the country where famine and poverty were rife, whites were granted land designed to be for their exclusive use, often these lands being the most attractive and productive areas. But before one explores ethnic manipulation by colonialism and apartheid, it is important to first give a historical background on the formation of ethnic groups in South Africa.

2.2. THE FORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN ETHNICITIES

The history of South African native identities can be traced back from around the third century AD with the expansion of African Kingdoms (Herbert, 1990). These dynamic polities increased slowly with gradual expansion of territories and had reached the west coast of South Africa by the time Europeans arrived in 1652. Herbert (1990) points out that the economies of these African societies were primarily in the form of livestock (sheep, cattle and goats) as well as small scale farming of horticultural crops. Effective political units and social organisation was in the form of hereditary chiefdoms, which varied in size and were by no means closed entities. Chiefdoms were made up of individuals from different descent groups and migrants who had broken away from other chiefdoms as a result of wars and famine. This means that African chiefdoms were fluid and made up of people who interacted, cooperated and welcomed new ideas and practices as a means of survival. It follows that these chiefdoms were not tribes, and this point is further illustrated by Thompson (1990: 1) who contends that 'the Western concept of tribalism, which is usually taken to refer to closed populations reproducing fixed cultural characteristics, is not applicable to [these] African farmers'. African societies were so dynamic and fluid to the extent the settlement pattern was not constant – while others split and settled, others kept going and the dialect changed as a result of new arrivals and encounters.

Due to changes in language and dialect, South African societies before colonialism were classified as being made up of Khoi-San, Nguni and Basotho speaking people – all of whom are descendants of the Bantu-speaking people from Central and Western Africa (Herbert, 1990). The Khoi-San are considered to have been the first arrivals in South Africa and had settled in the West Coast by the third century, while the Nguni began migrating from the Great Lakes of Eastern Africa from 900 to 1290. Some of these groups moved southwards and during the fourteenth century they settled in the East (present day provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Gauteng). Their encounter with the Khoi-San accounts for the use of 'click' in their languages (Herbert, 1990). The Basotho speaking people are the Bantu-speaking group that inhabited the central part of South Africa. They are a product of interactions with different groups including the Khoi-San and the Fokeng people, originally with a Nguni culture, as well other invaders and local people. All these Southern African societies were dynamic, decentralised and dispersed groups, organised in the form of kraals with each kraal being ruled by a chief. Therefore, before colonialism these groups were far from representing what the colonial state referred to as fixed cultural tribes or ethnicities (Thompson, 1990).

It follows from this that the social creation of South African ethnicities is a matter of controversy and the argument advanced in this thesis is that ethnicity is a social construct. This argument is echoed by Ashley N. Mabasa who stresses that the creation of ethnicity is not natural. In doing so, she makes reference to the creation of a Zulu ethnic group and argues as follows:

> The creation of a Zulu ethnic group involved state building, military conquest, physical expansion and the absorption of refugees and defeated people and eventually colonisation by the British Empire. As a result, the meaning of being Zulu is not static, but has been shifting over time (Mabasa, 2019: 27).

The argument is based on the fact that before 1820, Zulu was no more than a clan name whose ruler, Shaka Zulu managed to defeat other clans such as Mthethwa and Zwide through strategic and military innovations and incorporated them under his kingdom. There was also a political element in this – associated with the importance of uniting natives against the threat of colonialism, thence other clans were not incorporated through force and conquest but became party to the Zulu kingdom through shared cultural attributes, including language (Mabasa, 2019). Furthermore, the Zulu expansion (called, Mfencane) under Shaka reached the Basotho people residing in the Highveld by the 1820s, which prompted a skilled diplomat and strategist, Moshoeshoe I to unite and gain control of the dispersed Basotho people. He established an easily defensible mountain range capital in Drakensburg for his people where they resisted Mfencane and Dutch encroachment during the Great Trek.

2.3. COLONISATION

Apart from Shaka's contribution in the creation of a Zulu ethnic group and the subsequent consolidation of Basotho people under Mosheshoe I to resist Mfecane, colonisation also played

its role in the creation of South African ethnicities as they are understood today. Bruce J Berman notes that the primary actor in the process of ethnic creation in Africa was the colonial state, which used instruments of modern state power, such as maps and censuses, to define and classify rather fluid African societies (Berman, 2010).

At the empirical level, there is general consensus that colonisation in South Africa began in 1652 when European traders from the Dutch East Indian Company landed in the Cape (Berman, 2010). The initial impulse was to establish a halfway station to Asia but a year later, Jan Van Riebeeck realised that the land had immense possibilities and the halfway station became the Cape colony. The Dutch came into contact with the Khoi-san people and expanded to the immediate north and especially the east side of the country where they clashed with black people called the Xhosa in 1770 (Oliver and Oliver, 2017). The Cape colony was conquered by the British in the battle of Muizenberg in September 1795 and again in 1806 during Napoleonic wars when the British Crown sought to use the Cape colony as a protection zone for sea routes to its Asian Empire. When Britain was experiencing a serious unemployment problem after the end of Napoleonic wars, the conservative government funded 4000 migrants to the Eastern Cape agricultural belt in 1820 which was a step closer to the creation of a colonial state. The colonial project was further intensified by discoveries of diamonds in the south bank of the Orange River and gold in the Witwatersrand (white waters reef). These discoveries created an immediate need for cheap domestic labour, regulatory capacity, infrastructure and political stability that only a modern state could provide, thence the need for a colonial state (Berman, 2010).

Furthermore, there was a need for skilled labour that only British migrants could provide to the satisfaction of the British Crown which resulted into an influx of British settlers. Herbert writes that ‘these British settlers brought with them the scientific theories of difference, which they adapted creatively to their new circumstances’ (Herbert, 1990: 11). Among these theories was social Darwinism which is based on the concepts of natural selection and survival of the fittest. The idea behind this theory is that those who are strong will be able to maximise their utility at the expense of those who are weak. African natives were considered to have been made up of primitive tribes with weak political and economic institutions and therefore could be dominated (Herbert, 1990).

It is within this context that native individuals and their communities were assigned to what the colonial government erroneously believed to be ancient primordial identities or tribes. European missionaries created a class of native collaborators and provided cultural resources and political contexts that were used to produce grammars and dictionaries which converted local dialects into standardised written languages (Berman, 2010). In South Africa, the categorisation and mapping of native societies was intensified by the Apartheid government and it provided the basis for the creation of administrative units to facilitate political control and subjugation. When the 1910 Act of the Union was adopted, it formalised segregation and entrenched privileges for whites that would become the foundation of apartheid. Chiefs as traditional authorities were manipulated in order to regulate the movement of African men who were the backbone of mining and agricultural farming (Herbert, 1990).

Mamdani explains how ethnicity is a colonial product which was aimed at advancing imperial interests and used to justify colonialism and apartheid in South Africa. He argues that ethnicity in South Africa during colonialism and apartheid was by no means just about identity (Mamdani, 1997). Its two controversial moments included both social control and social emancipation. Within this context, Mamdani points out that one should be careful not to either embrace ethnicity without being critical or simply reject it outright. This means that one should be somewhere between the two extremes and therefore avoid being dogmatic on either side. Perhaps the ANC illustrated this point with more tenacity during the inception of the Freedom Charter in 1955 by making the following remarks:

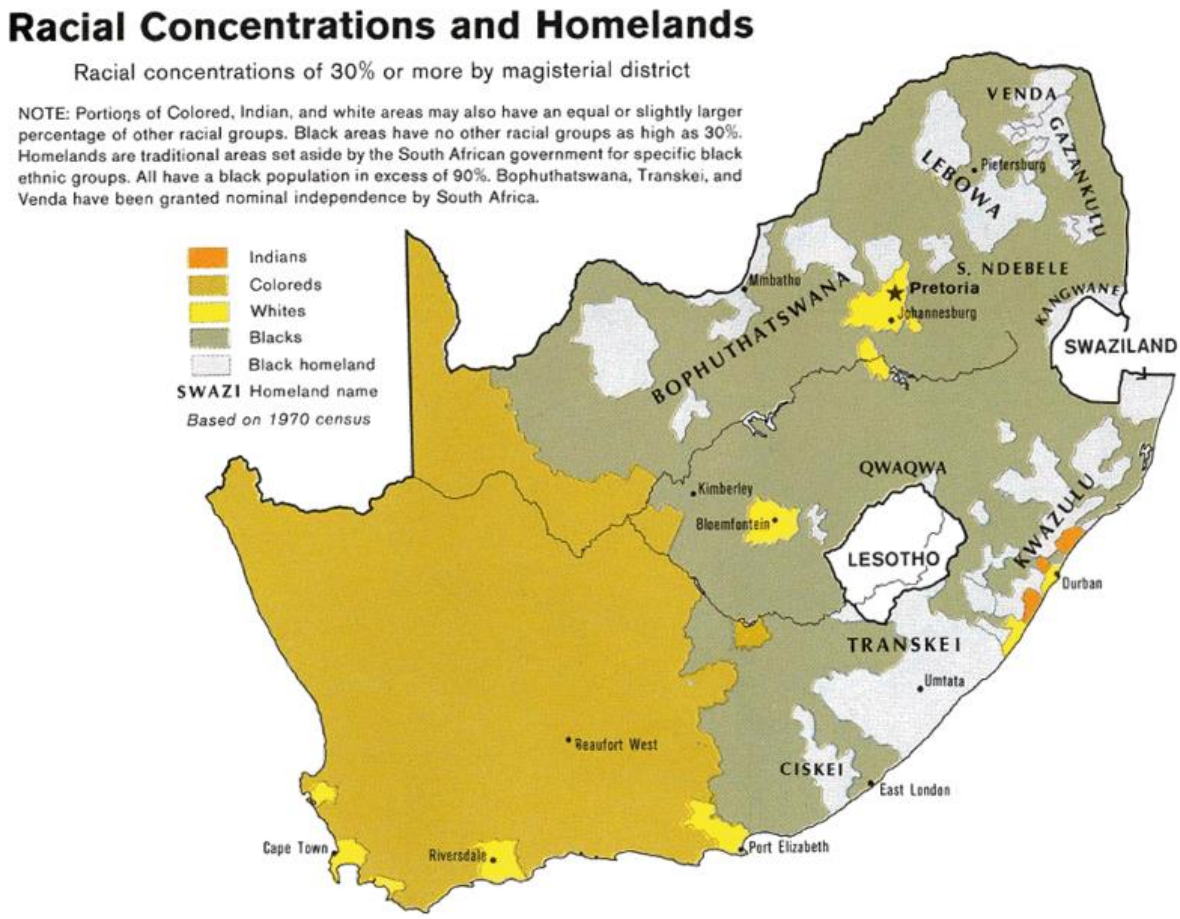
> While we do not encourage tribal pride - in fact we denounce it - we are far from being indifferent to traditions, languages, and culture of individual ethnic groups; we do not propagate ethnic nihilism. Our reality is a multi-ethnic society, we respect and strive to develop all local languages and cultures and this helps us to combat all forms of reactionary nationalism, chauvinism and ethno-centricity. It also helps us to improve inter-ethnic relations, thus facilitating the drive towards national and social emancipation (Baloyi, 2018: 3).

Years before the adoption of the Freedom Charter, the colonial state used ethnicity as a tool for controlling natives. It was reasoned that if natives were to unite as a single unit, there would be significant challenges in controlling them and securing a much-needed labour force. At the same time, ethnicity proved to be a source of emancipation for the natives, in that it is hard to think of a peasant colonial revolt that was not inspired by ethnic sentiments. For example, the Bhambatha Rebellion of 1906 led by Bhambatha Kamangcinza from the amaZondi clan of the Zulu people against the poll tax and British rule in Natal was inspired by a desire to emancipate Zulu people from foreign rule (Redding, 2000). Bhambatha is often cited as a central figure of resistance for native South Africans and is regarded to be a precursor of the anti-apartheid movement.

2.4. APARTHEID

The period between 1910 towards the end of the Second World War marked the beginning of Afrikaner nationalism and when the Afrikaner dominated National Party secured an electoral victory in 1948 under the catchy slogan ‘apartheid’, it began a wave of repugnant segregation policies (Butler, 2017). While many of these policies were aimed at separating people based on race, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act No. 46 of 1959 brought a change of direction. The Act was an important piece to South African legislation, in that it encouraged ‘forced removals of ‘incorrectly’ located Black people, the creation of Bantustans and deliberate programmes of re-tribalisation’ (Herbert, 1990: 17). The late apartheid president of the Union of South Africa, Hendrik Verwoerd was at the forefront in the furtherance of the Grand Apartheid policy which meant that parts of South Africa would be permanently partitioned into Bantu Homelands. The figure below demonstrates the segregation effect of Apartheid based on race between Whites, Indians, Coloureds and Blacks.

Map 1: South African in 1970



Source: Racial-demographic map of South Africa published by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1979 with data from the 1970 South African census.
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/south_africa_racial_1979.jpg,

The Bantustans project was contentious and it developed at a slow pace, firstly by consolidating native reserve areas with the aim of granting these Bantu lands increased power for self-governance overtime (Butler, 2017). There were ten Bantustans in total and four among them (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei or TBVC states) were granted independence by the 1980s. The other six (Lebowa, Gazankulu, KwaNdebele, Qwaqwa, KaNgwane, and KwaZulu) were assigned autonomy but never given independence. The Act over-emphasised the differences between South African ethnic groups, in that each administrative unit in the Bantustans was made up of a single culturally and linguistically homogeneous ethnic group. In these Homelands, crossing over from one ethnic group to another was strictly forbidden and this neutralised the fluidity of South African ethnicities (Legassick and Wolpe, 1976). Black people were forced to remain in their homelands except where exceptional circumstances exist, such as employment. The most dominant form of employment at the time was mining and so Transvaal given its gold deposits was a common destination where natives from different homelands or ethnicities would come to seek for better opportunities. In order to ensure that the project of creating sharp divisions among South African societies did not falter in the

Transvaal, the government created townships such as Soweto that would be divided into sections based on ethnic ties (Legassick and Wolpe, 1976).

Political leaders within Bantustans were appointed and recognised by the National Party in the form of Chiefs and Ndunas and they had to declare their ethnicity on the basis of geopolitical allocations of land. This had significant ramifications among natives during apartheid and afterwards. In her study titled *'The Discarded People'* Nadine Gordimer (1969) notes that there was a constant battle for control over state resources between Vatsonga and Vavenda ethnic groups at Sibasa. She goes on to say that there was a struggle in terms of access to state resources for the Vatsonga people living under Vavenda territories and in some instances Vatsonga people complained about being under the political leadership of Vavenda Chiefs in their own land (Gordimer, 1969). Once appointed, the political elite operated as an agent of the state and he was granted access to state institutions and resources, which reinforced ethnic patronage as a basis for politics, even in the post-apartheid South Africa (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018).

2.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to discuss the formation of ethnic groups in South Africa. It has found that before colonialism, ethnic groups in South Africa were open-ended with dynamic social and political processes. They were a product of interactions with different groups which included invaders and local people. The idea that South African ethnic groups are fixed cultural tribes was invented or constructed by the colonial state and further reinforced under apartheid. It is this kind of thinking that has caused significant problems in the new democratic South Africa with traditional leaders making it difficult for municipalities to make effective decisions in rural areas. Further, the manipulations of ethnic divisions by the colonial state and apartheid have had an impact in the saliency of ethnicity as an analytical variable in examining election outcomes.

CHAPTER 3
THE IMPACT OF BANTUSTANS IN THE NEW DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

3.1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant policies of apartheid was the creation of Bantustans and the assignment of traditional leaders to administer the affairs of native people. The policy remains active in post-apartheid South Africa, in that the country is divided into nine provinces with ethnicity being the primary determining factors and to some extent traditional leaders remain active agents of such divisions. Traditional leadership is overtly hereditary and its role and authority in a new democratic South Africa remains as controversial as it was during colonialism and apartheid, and traditional leaders have greater overarching authority within their areas of jurisdiction than do local municipalities. Municipalities are democratic institutions and they should be effective in their decision making process for there to be democratic stability. Chapter 7 of the Constitution provides that the role of local government through municipalities is to grow local economies and to provide infrastructure and services. The department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) is tasked with ensuring that municipalities perform their functions consistently by strengthening and building their capability and accountability. This has proven to be a difficult task in former Bantustan areas, particularly in rural communities where local municipalities often clash with traditional leaders over development planning. The primary reason for this is that traditional leaders continue to exercise administrative land rights in rural areas as if the land belongs to them. They have the power to allocate and distribute land in rural communities to their own benefit and not for the community at large. In the villages of Vhuwani and Malamulele in Limpopo, local residents have expressed concerns over the fact that traditional leaders often base their administrative decisions on ethnic preferences, which has led to inequalities between Vatsonga and Vavenda people. As a consequence, municipalities in rural areas have become dysfunctional and ineffective when it comes to delivering services.

3.2. BACKGROUND

A pre-colonial understanding of traditional leaders in South Africa is understood in the context of chiefs and headsman performing a wide range of functions vis-à-vis their societies (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018). These include guaranteeing safety and security, being a spiritual leader as well as allocating and distributing land to the benefit of their communities (Mashele, 2004). In the advent of colonialism, traditional leaders were incorporated into the architecture of a colonial state as subordinate rulers with exclusive administrative powers (Vail, 1991). This was a result of an engineered policy of indirect rule. While the British policy of indirect rule dates back from the mid nineteenth century, its more successful application came with the passing of the Bantu Administrative Act No. 38 of 1927. The Act granted the Governor-General,

Alexander Cambridge, a status of a supreme Chief of all African people, in that he could appoint and recall traditional leaders as he saw fit and he could banish or relocate any group of people (Mashele, 2004). Furthermore, the Act made provisions for what came to be known as the hostility law. The hostility law provision stated that.

> Any person who utters any words or does any other act or thing whatever with intent to promote any feeling of hostility between Natives and Europeans, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to imprisonment not exceeding one year or to a fine of one hundred pounds or both (Bantu Administrative Act No. 38 of 1927).

This means that the Act managed to distort African customs in relation to the appointment of traditional leaders and in doing so the Act ensured that African people remain silent about any injustice in the appointment of traditional leaders. The ramifications of this were that traditional leaders were at a crossroads, with the colonial state expecting them to act in the interests of white settlers on one hand, and on the other hand they had an obligation to serve native people (Vail, 1991). Chiefs and headsman that were appointed by the Governor General and those who were able to find his favour remained in power for a long time as nothing but puppets of the colonial state. The subornation of traditional leaders continued throughout colonialism and it was intensified during apartheid when the National Party passed the Black Authorities Act of 1951. The Act established Bantustans and classified black people according to ethnicity in line with the policy of separate development. Chiefs continued to act as subordinate rulers of the state within their areas of jurisdiction and those who dared to question apartheid policies were relieved of their duties. According to Mashele (2004), over 30 recalcitrant chiefs were sacked and declared hostile by the apartheid government in Transkei between 1955 and 1958. It follows that chieftaincy under colonialism and apartheid was no more than a tailored enterprise that suited only those who were willing to operate as policeman to guard against political instability, anti-government activities and to maintain influx control in the interest of the National Party.

3.3. THE INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN OF MUNICIPALITIES

The setting up of Local Government in South Africa was a product of tense negotiations. However, the institutionalisation thereof took longer to realise because of complex issues such as land demarcation and because they were the last item in the composition of government structures (the primary ones being national and provincial). Negotiations over whether local governments should be separate spheres of government or functions of provincial government posed a significant challenge. Nevertheless, it was reasoned that local governments should be a separate structure and they were afforded certain rights and responsibilities that the provincial government does not enjoy, including the right to tax, mainly through rates and a responsibility to be the sole service provider (Barichievy & others, 2005).

The democratisation of local government structures is different from the provincial and national system of representation. Instead of a straightforward proportional representation (PR) party list system used at provincial and national levels, the local government electoral system is complex. In metropolitan and local councils, half of the seats are allocated using the first

past the post electoral system and the other half is allocated using proportional representation party list system. In district councils, seats are allocated via proportional representation with some district councillors being appointed by local councils within the District Municipality. To complement this form of representative democracy, it was reasoned that local governments needed to be more democratic than provincial and national spheres and this was to be achieved through the introduction of participatory governance. Intended to shape decision making between elections, participatory governance warranted that there must be an active engagement of communities in the affairs of the municipality (Barichievy & others, 2005). It follows from this that participatory governance amounts to three things. The first being that residents and traditional institutions are defined as being one of the components that makes up a municipality. The Second enhancement relates to the idea that public consultancy in the making of key decisions like annual budgeting and development planning is important (Piper and Lieres, 2016).

It is within this context that the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998, provides for the participation of recognised Traditional Leaders in municipal councils. However, Traditional Leaders are bound by the Code of Conduct for Councillors, but do not have voting rights and do not become councillors. The involvement of Traditional Leaders is also justified in terms of section 152(e) which provides that the object of the local government is "to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government". The institutional design of local government was established under the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act of 2000. The act also recognises that municipal governance structures must develop a dual culture of a representative government and participatory governance (Piper and Lieres, 2016).

Section 81 of Structures Act 117 of 1998 provides for a maximum of 20 percent representation of traditional leaders in municipal council meetings, where there are traditional leaders in the municipality. Section 5 of the Traditional Leaders and Framework Act 41 of 2003 further provides for partnerships to be entered into between municipalities and traditional councils. Traditional leaders may participate in proceedings of the relevant Council (as gazetted by the MEC) and must have the opportunity to express a view on matters directly affecting the area of the traditional authority. Traditional leaders participate in their capacity as representatives of their traditional communities. Notwithstanding these provisions, Traditional Leaders do not have the power to make decisions and this disempowerment is provided for by section 16(2) of the Local Government: Municipal Act of 2010, which states that the mandate for participatory governance should not be interpreted as relinquishing municipal councillors of their prerogative powers to exercise authority in the municipality. Therefore, Traditional Leaders are but advisory structures to the municipal councillors, which has been a cause for controversy amongst the two structures.

3.4. Traditional Leaders and Democracy

The government of national unity upon democratic dispensation was torn between abolishing traditional leaders and incorporating them within modern institutions of governance (Baloyi,

2018). The latter found considerable support within the ANC over the former, but it was reasoned that traditional leadership should be aligned with democratic principles. It follows that section 211 of the constitution provides that '*the institution, status and role of traditional leadership, according to customary law are recognised, subject to the Constitution*'. This became a clear indication that traditional authorities were to acquire a status secondary to the constitution and institutions of modern democracy, particularly Parliament. Furthermore, section 212 (2) (a) makes provisions for the establishment of houses of traditional leaders at both national and provincial levels of government. However, unlike the role that traditional leaders enjoyed during apartheid which enabled Chiefs to exercise legislative powers as well as administrative authority within their jurisdiction, the constitution merely confers upon the house of traditional leaders an advisory role on matters relating to customary law.

Nevertheless, traditional leadership is overtly hereditary and its role and authority in a democratic South Africa remains controversial. Perhaps these controversies stem from the fact that traditional authorities occupy an uncertain role in the constitution. While Chapter 12 of the Constitution merely recognises the presence of traditional authorities, it does not articulate precisely their powers, function and scope, and how they are constituted. As a result, traditional leaders base their authority on a generalised understanding, often based on historicity and customary law (Bank and Southall, 1996). Goodenough and Hornby (2002: 5) define a traditional leader as 'a father figure of the clan whose administration carries out a range of responsibilities and these responsibilities entail disputes resolution in the community, administration of justice through customary courts and other traditionally related matters'. This means that a traditional leader operates as a judicial officer within his defined territory or jurisdiction. Nevertheless, his decisions cannot be understood as final and binding, in that an aggrieved individual may approach a modern court and have it set aside if it found to be unconstitutional. However, a decision by a traditional leader can be enforceable notwithstanding such a decision being set aside by a modern court. This is based on the fact that a traditional leader often finds favour within his constituency or community and therefore, it would be unsettling for an individual who has challenged his decision to continue residing within that community. Furthermore, traditional leaders deal with matters relating to land allocation, subdivision of boundaries and right holder disputes (Ngcobo, 2016). It follows that traditional leaders exercise their powers as dictators would, in that they carry out a judicial, executive and a legislative function which is against the doctrine of separation of powers envisaged by the constitution.

To illustrate this argument, one may refer to the Ingonyama Trust land agreement that was signed by His Majesty the King, Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu and the apartheid government three days before national elections in 1994 (HLPR, 2017). The agreement conferred upon the Ingonyama Trust 29 per cent of land in KZN in exchange for political stability towards the elections. This was done by passing The KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act No. 3KZ of 1994. The Act appointed the Ingonyama as a sole Trustee of the land that previously belonged to the KwaZulu government, and it made provisions for the establishment of the Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB). The ITB became responsible for the material wellbeing and welfare of community members living on the land. As a result, the land under the

Ingonyama Trust relinquished the powers of the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform to have an administrative capacity as he did in all other provinces in the new democratic country (Bank and Southall, 1996). This had far reaching consequences for the people living under the land. While the Act also applied in some townships in KZN, the Amendment Act of 1997 stated that the ITB has no rights over land in the townships and that all land rights in the townships are vested on municipalities. Notwithstanding this, there are certain parts of land within the townships that belong to the Ingonyama Trust and it exercises ownership rights (HLPR, 2017). But the impact on development thereof is not as far reaching as it is in rural areas where the ITB operates with impunity.

The Trust was slammed by former President Kgalema Motlanthe in the 2017 High Level Panel Report (HLPR, 2017). He stated that 'control of land by the King has produced mavericks, popcorn politicians, a comprador bourgeoisie, quasi-bantustan administrators who possess no responsibility to mobilise, and in fact benefit from the status quo' *(*Mabasa, 2019: 28). This was largely influenced by the fact that people in rural communities continue to occupy and use land on the basis of customary tenure rights without statutory rights and written documents (HLPR, 2017). The same issue was raised in the early 1990s where people requested the government to issue them with Permission to Occupy Certificates (PTO) and to upgrade existing ones to full ownership. The government responded to these concerns by passing the Upgrading of Land Tenure Rights Act 111 of 1991 (ULTRA). According to the Act, PTOs could be granted and upgraded to ownership upon surveying the land. However, the Act was never implemented effectively due to complexities and costs associated with surveying the land and transferring tittles. The HLPR (2017) points out that existing PTOs and customary rights in land have been converted into lease agreements for both business and residential purposes. The ITB is responsible for these lease agreements. A standard ITB lease agreement makes provisions for a 40 year term of user rights with an annual increase of 10 percent every year on rental. Other terms of the lease agreement include the following:

> The 'lessee' is compelled to fence the property within six months. The lessee must obtain written permission to build and record all improvements, and submit this to the ITB. The ITB is entitled to cancel the lease agreement for failure to pay rent. All buildings and structures that have been built on the land will belong to the Ingonyama Trust when the lessee vacates the premises (HLPR, 2017: 275).

It is submitted that the Ingonyama Trust generates a significant amount of income from ITB lease agreements with R96 130 563 being recorded on rental between 2015 and 2016. However, there is little evidence on the ground that the money is used to advance the wellbeing of communities residing on the land as envisaged by the Act (HLPR, 2017).

Furthermore, apart from the unique status of traditional leaders as a result of the Ingonyama Trust, traditional authorities across the country have over the years routinely assumed administrative power with regard to land allocation – notwithstanding the fact that there is no statutory basis for such powers *(*Mabasa, 2019. In some quarters, traditional leaders have entered into contracts with mining companies about communal land without consulting local residents (De Kadt and Larreguy, 2018). As a result, mining companies in rural areas of North

West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal have operated in ways that affect the health of rural residents through air and water pollution. These mining companies operate with impunity as the land allocated to them belongs to traditional authorities (HPLR, 2017). On 6 September 2016, the Department of Traditional Affairs made a presentation during a public hearing where residents of rural communities raised their concerns over the notion that 'post-apartheid legislation of traditional leaders resuscitates the apartheid geography of the former Bantustans in rural areas, resulting in divided citizenship and economic inequality between rural and urban areas' (HLPR, 2017: 492). This is largely influenced by the fact that apartheid distorted all forms of customary law land rights and created an incorrect assumption that authority over land administration is primarily vested on officially recognised traditional leaders who can exercise their powers without prior consultation with residents (Bank and Southall, 1996). During apartheid, residents in Bantustans were mere subjects of chiefs, in that traditional leaders approved and recognised by the National Party were granted exclusive administrative rights in exchange for their loyalty. This is in contrast to customary law traditions where local residents gathered as *Ibandla* or *legotla* under a tree to consult with the chief and members of his council, request reasons and voice out their opinions on matters that could affect their livelihoods (Bank and Southall, 1996). The main difference is that the voice of the people carried weight and it was taken into account in the decision-making process.

A submission made by a representative from Eastern Cape in the HLPR report also challenged traditional authorities, particularly the impact of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 (TLGFA) in the province and associated this with political leadership under Bantustans where rural areas were marginalized in terms of development initiatives. The submission reads as follows:

> We all know the homelands, and we are still squeezed in within them where whites forcibly moved us to and there is no noticeable change when it comes to land reform. [...] That Act [TLGFA] has caused the boundaries that we thought we erased in 1994 to resurface. [...] These boundaries are taking us back to the old maps of the homelands. We thought that we are free but now we have Acts that are bringing back the tribal authority as they were before. [...] Just remember, Mr President, that these places that are called homelands are the same areas that do not have a strong economic base. …We the people from Qoboqobo, Cofimvaba, Lusikisiki,; as black as we are, we are ruled under false pretences, saying that we are traditional people at the government's mercy. When you compare this ruling with the people in urban areas, like Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth, East London, be it black or white, they are ruled using democratic rules, development but we are ruled under false pretences... (HPLR, 2017: 427).

It is against this background that among other things, it is the lack of cooperation between traditional leaders and municipal councils that has prevented development and service delivery in rural traditional communities (Ngcobo, 2017). For instance, 2016 protests by Venda-speaking residents in the Vhuwani village of Limpopo refusing to be merged with the Tsonga-speaking residents of Malamulele to form one Municipality represent deep seated issues of ethnic tensions and distrust (Baloyi, 2018). The protests began after an assessment by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) had found that certain municipalities in the province were dysfunctional and therefore had failed to deliver services to all the residents of Limpopo. Furthermore, COGTA found that traditional leaders within these villages had used community resources and revenue through business deals to

enhance themselves and members of their ethnic groups. Upon these findings, the Minister of COGTA invoked section 22(2) of the Municipal Demarcation Act, which led to a decision to amalgamate Vuwani villages and Malamulele villages into one new local municipality. Protests broke out with Vatsonga people stressing that they do not want to be infused with Vavenda people and be under their authority. The protests had a huge impact in that over 20 schools in the Vhembe district were burnt down (Kgatle, 2018).

These protests affirm the idea that segregation policies during colonialism and apartheid continue to inspire hatred and distrust among members of different groups in the new democratic South Africa. In an article titled '*Tribal war halts development in Northern Limpopo'* published by the South African Human Rights Commission, Wasani Baloyi writes about tribal wars in Limpopo and their negative impact on development and political stability. He refers to a story he was told by his grandmother where she mentioned that there was a time where Vendas and Tsongas used to live together as one people in Mashau's Bonchas Village. He writes that it was the creation of Bantustans by Malan and Verwoerd that planted seeds of hatred and difference between the two different ethnic groups which contribute to haunt the village some decades later (Baloyi, 2019).

Such seeds of hatred among different ethnic groups are not peculiar to Limpopo. They manifested themselves during the democratisation process in the early 1990s in KwaZulu-Natal between supporters of the Zulu led IFP and the ANC (Piper, 1999). At the core of these seeds is the fact that during apartheid, Black South Africans were granted a status of citizenship within their designated homelands in an attempt to prevent them from laying a claim of political rights in 'white' South Africa. Black people were deprived of the right to travel freely across the country and be exposed to other cultures and this led to often unsettling and unfounded conspiracies about the 'other'. Instead of dismantling Bantustan borders after 1994, the ANC chose to cluster the country into 9 provinces, which are divided in accordance with ethnic divisions, thereby indicating a continuity of Bantustan policies (Yuval-Davis, 2010).

Perhaps one may argue that the divergent make up of Gauteng represents an ideal form of what social cohesion and nation building should be in the new South Africa. A vast majority of public schools in Gauteng make the effort to expose learners to all eleven official languages. However, in other provinces learners are only exposed to learning only their native language and English as a first additional language. The failure to introduce all eleven languages in public schools does not only perpetuate ignorance of other cultures but it also furthers ethnic based stereotypes which can only be addressed through communication. For example, Zulu people who come to Gauteng seeking for better opportunities are often stereotyped as narcissists who do not want to learn other native languages. While this stereotype has basis, it lacks appreciation of the fact that a Zulu man from KZN has no exposure of other languages and the fact that all black people in Gauteng address him in his own language, prevents him from obtaining access to other languages. For him to learn other languages, he will have to attend language classes provided that he has the time and money or he will have to ask everyone he interacts with to stop speaking Zulu and speak in their own language. What distinguishes him from a Tswana person from North-West who speaks both his native language and has been

able to learn Zulu in Gauteng is that the Tswana man has access to both languages since Zulu is a predominant language of communication amongst black people in Gauteng. Therefore, this is less of a stereotypical problem and more of a governmental problem, which has failed to build social cohesion by ensuring that all South Africans have equal access to all eleven official languages in public schools.

3.5. CONCLUSION

The failure to clarify the powers of traditional leaders in the new democratic South Africa resulted into the development of two forms of leadership in rural areas: traditional leaders and democratically elected Municipal Councillors. While the constitution recognises traditional leaders, it does not articulate their role in rural communities, especially on matters relating to land allocation and distribution. While the initial impulse was to create a situation where traditional leaders would work together with Municipal Councillors to enhance the lives of their constituencies, such an arrangement does not find favour among traditional leaders who continue to operate as dictators within their areas of jurisdiction. This has had a huge impact on the lives of local residents in rural areas with many municipalities being declared dysfunctional and ineffective. It follows from this that there has been little change in the new South Africa with regard to the level of development in rural areas when compared to the period of Bantustans. Traditional authorities continue to reproduce feudal patterns of capital accumulation for themselves and their families at the expense of their communities. Furthermore, there have been concerns over the fact that traditional leaders exercise their authority with bias and often exclude members of other ethnic groups. This is a result of policy failures to deal with segregation policies of the past that came with Bantustans which have inspired lasting seeds of hatred and distrust among different ethnic groups across the country.

CHAPTER 4
ETHNICITY AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In 2019, South Africa held its sixth General Elections where many South Africans from all walks of life participated in voting for a political party of their choice. Using ethnicity as an analytical variable, this chapter will attempt to advance the argument that ethnicity, in some respect, influences voting behaviour in South Africa. This is done without dismissing the relevance of other variables in understanding voting behaviour, such as race, age, gender, education, religion, party policies and class, but it will be argued that ethnic politicisation poses a threat to democratic stability. Within this framework, it is important to reiterate that ethnicity and political behaviour dominated post-apartheid electoral studies in the 1990s focusing more broadly on the violence in KwaZulu-Natal between supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The violence was characterised by four main dimensions: first, a struggle for territorial control; second, a struggle for the preservation of Zulu traditions that were presumptuously assumed to have been threatened by communists from the ANC; and third, constitutional disagreements (Szeftel, 1994). Fourth, the violence between ANC and IFP supporters was exacerbated and fuelled by acts of omission and commission by the apartheid government security forces (the 'third party'). Furthermore, the violence was intensified by the pathological social conditions of apartheid legacies, which in many respects continue to haunt South Africa (Szeftel, 1994).

The so-called 'black on black violence' was neutralised upon the promulgation of an inclusive Constitution in 1996, which operated as a framework for promoting and respecting South Africa's diverse cultural heritage. The preamble of the constitution provides that we, the people of South Africa believe that the republic belongs to everyone who lives in it, united in our diversity. This statement is repeated in section 9 (3) read with section 30 which states that no one may be discriminated against based on ethnicity and everyone has the right to participate in a culture and use a language of their own choosing. Since then, electoral studies began to neglect the relationship between ethnicity and voting behaviour in South Africa. In a paper titled *The Racial/Ethnic Interpretation of South Africa's 2004 Election*, Thabisi Hoeane went as far as arguing that the relationship between ethnicity and voting behaviour was misguided and flawed (Hoeane, 2004).

There is minimal contemporary literature on the relationship between ethnicity and voting behaviour in South Africa, and this puts the researcher somewhere between two extremes – is ethnicity playing a salient role in South African politics or not? This chapter will argue in the affirmative focusing on elections from 1994 to 2019. It will point out that many South Africans cast their votes based on identity politics instead of policy preferences and that this can cause serious and dangerous ramifications for democratic stability in the foreseeable future. For example, it is self-evident that the Democratic Alliance and Freedom Front Plus remain white

dominated political parties (Mottiar, 2015). The same argument can be said about the Zulu dominated Inkatha Freedom Party. Inasmuch as the Economic Freedom Fighters have often managed to get a good appeal from the marginalised group with their radical rhetoric against white capitalism, it is no coincidence that the organisation generates much of its support in Limpopo where Pedi people are one of the main ethnic groups – a group that makes up the majority of high-ranking officials of the EFF (Mbete, 2015). The 2019 elections were an exception in the province because President Ramaphosa from the ruling ANC emerged as a strong competitor since he is considered to be one of Limpopo's very own given his Venda identity.

Furthermore, it is often overlooked that General Election outcomes at a national level are decided by voters from three provinces that make up the vast majority of the South African population and voter turnout (Botha, 2004). As of 2020, Gauteng hosts over 15 million people, followed by KZN which hosts over 11 million people and then Eastern Cape which is home to 6.7 million people (Stats SA, 2020). Combined together, these provinces make up more than 50 percent of total registered voters in South Africa. Zulu people represent above 90 percent of the total Black population group in KZN and Xhosa people also represent 90 percent of the Black population group in the Eastern Cape. Both population groups are highly represented in Gauteng with Zulu being the most spoken language among the 77.4 percent of Black people in the province (Stats SA, 2020). This means that only political parties with a strong support base among Xhosa and Zulu people can win national elections. It can be argued that this is a reality that contributed to Zuma's presidency in 2009 and 2014 as he used ethno-nationalism as a campaigning strategy.

It is important to acknowledge that writing about ethnicity and democracy in South Africa might bring about controversial nuances informed by elements of presumptuousness and inferences from the past. Nevertheless, the potential dangers of ethno-nationalism, if left unattended will not only destroy the ruling party itself but the whole of South Africa and its hard-fought democracy. Since 1994, it has been a general rule that whoever is elected president of the ANC, during the party's national conference, becomes president of South Africa. As discussed in this chapter, these elections have always generated controversies around the issue of ethno-nationalism.

4.2. BACKGROUND

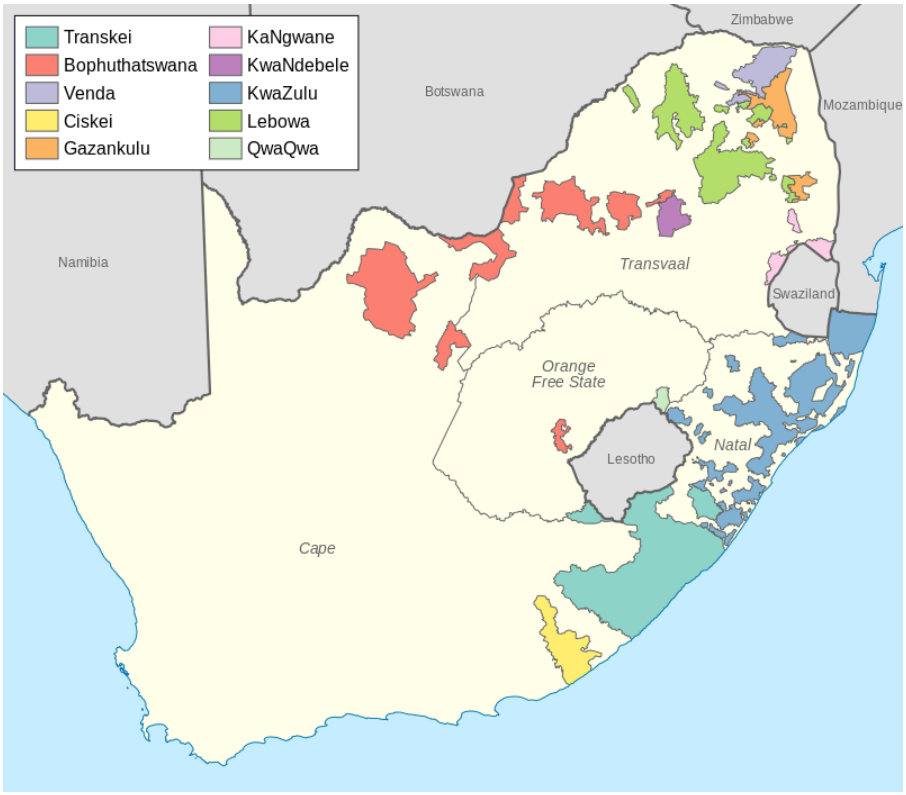
Before one unfolds the prevalence of ethnicity in South African General Elections, it is important to firstly lay a basis on why ethnic representation remains intact. The argument throughout this thesis has been that sharp ethnic divisions in South Africa are a result of segregation policies during colonialism and apartheid, particularly with the creation of Bantustans in the latter. This point can be illustrated using a Bantustans map. This will then enable a further discussion on some of the continuities in the post-apartheid South Africa, particularly the manner in which provinces are clustered. Although there are no strict measures at place as was the case during apartheid in terms of separating people based on ethnic

categories, the contemporary map of South Africa does to a certain extent reflect ethnic representation. This chapter will therefore examine how such divisions create a space for ethnic politicisation within different provinces in the country. Various examples will be used to support this argument. It will also be argued that the ANC initially struggled to maintain an all-ethnic inclusive status in the country. While this proved to be problematic in 1994, especially in KwaZulu-Natal amongst IFP supporters who may have been concerned with the fact that it was led by a Xhosa president and deputy president, the organisation has managed to secure a well organised routine in appointing presidents for the organisation who come from different ethnic group. At first it was Nelson Mandela from the Xhosa ethnic group who served one term. He was followed by Thabo Mbheki from the same ethnic group and then Jacob Zuma from the Zulu ethnic group and now it is Cyril Ramaphosa from the vaVenda ethnic group. This is in contrast to other dominant organisations such as the IFP, UDM and perhaps even the EFF, which from their inception have been led by presidents who come from one ethnic group. One may be attempted recuse the EFF from this argument given it strong policy position and appeal to different ethnicities but the fact that it has generated a vast majority of its votes from Limpopo, where its leader Julius Malema comes from, is enough to raise eyebrows.

It is important to reiterate that the argument in this thesis is not that ethnicity is an all determining variable for understanding voter participation. Rather the thesis argues that ethnicity does play a role but this is not a full-fledged role because the ANC remains a very strong and an all-ethnic inclusive competitor for South African political parties. Therefore, should the ANC lose at the polls, ethnic parties and voting would gain more prominence. Another strong competitor is the Democratic Alliance, which has tried to maintain an all-inclusive reputation but the resignation of prominent black leaders in the organisation has made many black South Africans to reconsider. This is a questionable generalisation, and one may argue that the veracity thereof can only be extracted from the next General Elections in 2024.

As mentioned in chapter 2 that there were ten Bantustans in total and four among them (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei or TBVC states) were granted independence by the 1980s. The other six (Lebowa, Gazankulu, KwaNdebele, Qwaqwa, KaNgwane, and KwaZulu) were assigned autonomy but never given independence. The Act over-emphasised the differences between South African ethnic groups, in that each administrative unit in the Bantustans was made up of a single culturally and linguistically homogeneous ethnic group. In these Homelands, crossing over from one ethnic group to another was strictly forbidden and this neutralised the fluidity of South African ethnicities (Legassick and Wolpe, 1976). See the Map below.

Map 2: South Africa in 1994 Before the End of Apartheid



Source: Africa Open Data
https://africaopendata.org/en/dataset/former-tbvc-states-shape-file

Table 1 Ethnic Demographic Composition of South Africa During the Bantustan System of Governance

Bantustan	Ethnic Group
Transkai	Xhosa
Ciskei	Xhosa
Gazankulu	Tsonga
Qwaqwa	Southern Basotho
Venda	vaVenda
Bophuthatswana	Tswana
KaNgwane	Swazi
KwaNdebele	Ndebele
KwaZulu	Zulu
Lebowa	Pedi

MAP 3: South Africa in the New Democratic System of Governance

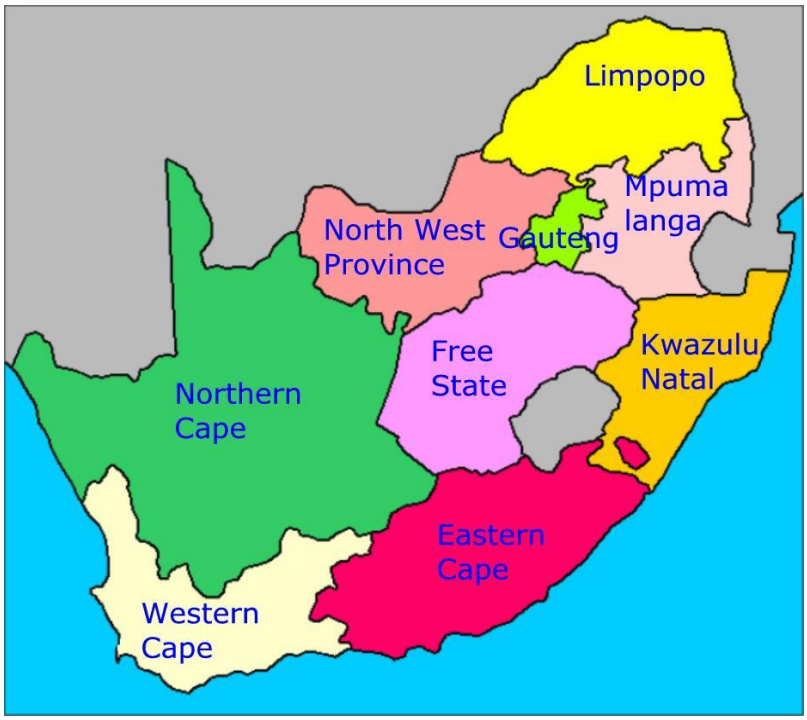


Table 2: Demographic Composition of South Africa by Ethnic Groups Across all Provinces Groups

Province	Ethnic Group
Free State	64,2 % Sesotho
Eastern Cape	78.8 % Xhosa
KwaZulu-Natal	77.8 % Zulu
Mpumalanga	Swazi 27%, Zulu 24%, 10% Tsonga
Northern Cape	Tswana 50,4%
Western Cape	Coloureds 50%, Xhosa, 24,7%
North-West	Tswana 70,4%
Gauteng	Mixed
Limpopo	52,9% Pedi, 17.0% Tsonga, 16.7% Venda

Source: 2020 South African Census.

It follows from these demographics that South Africa is a fertile ground for ethnic politicisation, especially when it comes to provincial elections and to some extent, national elections as well given that the two forms of elections are casted simultaneously. To understand this one has to examine general elections from 1994 to 2019. The ANC has remained in power

since the first election in most provinces except for KZN where it managed to defeat the IFP in 1994 as well as Cape Town where it lost the province to the Democratic Alliance. In all the provinces where the ANC has always received electoral support, the leading opposition party has in most cases constituted an element of ethnic saliency in voter behaviour. This will be explained further in the following discussion and in making this argument about the saliency of ethnicity, the thesis relies heavily on discourses around general elections. It also does take electoral data into account but focuses more on the former. The argument advanced in this chapter is echoed by McLaughlin (2007) who points out that 'ethnolinguistic identities are in fact broadly salient in South Africa. These subracial identities appear to influence aggregate political outcomes and individual vote choices.' This is despite the fact that McLughlin relies more heavily on electoral data in his approach.

4.3. THE 1994 GENERAL ELECTIONS

In the build-up to the 1994 General Election and shortly thereafter, electoral studies in South Africa focused on race and ethnicity – indicating that these were the primary analytical variables for understanding voting behaviour and political party strategies (Hoeane, 2004). Socio-economic policy preferences were considered to be secondary factors in terms of the dynamics that influence individual citizens when casting their votes. The seriousness and insolubility of racial and ethnic divisions were said to pose a threat to democratisation and democratic stability as seen elsewhere across the African continent. For example, civil wars in Somalia, Liberia, Angola, Burundi and the genocide in Rwanda were catastrophic conflicts induced by ethnic prevalence of communities in conflict and traditional hostilities reified and often even invented by colonial powers (Samatar, 1997).

The 1994 elections in South Africa were characterised by a sharp racial rift between white and black voters. Lawrence Schlemmer points out that 'the election, regrettably, was not quite the unfettered exercise in evaluation of competing policies which democracy is ideally supposed to be' (Schlemmer, 1994: 19). Outside of the racial divide, the four-year period from 1990 since the unbanning of political liberation movements and a commitment to a negotiated settlement that would determine the future of South African politics, there was political violence between the ANC and IFP supporters. The violence had manifested itself as an ethnic conflict that led to a renewal of interest in the study of ethnicity, specifically in problems relating to its definition and to its scenery in the South African context (Szeftel, 1994). As the events of gruesome political killings unfolded in KwaZulu-Natal between supporters of IFP and ANC, questions were raised about the role of ethnicity in contemporary politics and about its position in the democratisation process (Piper, 2009). Given the fact that South Africa was emerging from an abhorrent apartheid regime, the most predictable constitutive element of conflict was between black and white. However, ethnic conflicts surpassed such predictions with day to day reported cases of political killings among black people. It is within this framework that Szeftel began to suggest the following.

It is highly likely that race and ethnicity will continue to play a salient role in South African politics for the foreseeable future, with probably a decreasing emphasis on race and an increasing one on ethnicity (Szeftel, 1994: 185-186).

One must note that the divide between black and white voters did not result into an all-out conflict. Instead, the racial division predisposed voters to vote for political parties that match their racial profiles (Hoeane, 2004). There has been a continuation in such a voting pattern but the consequences of it do not extend beyond scholarly questions of democratic consolidation. This does not mean that race is a variable simply to ignore in South African politics as it carries with its legacies of prejudice, injustice and discrimination. There are serious policy issues that exist around issues of land ownership, economic transformation and the somewhat over-amplified statements of 'white genocide' in relation to what others may argue to be crime and not necessarily politically motivated killings of white farm owners.

The PAC seemed to be the main party that adopted a racial position, in that its central message was around land restoration for indigenous people which was stolen by whites (Hoeane, 2004). On the other extreme, Freedom Front (FF) under the leadership of Constand Viljoen, advocated for the security, freedom and peaceful co-existence for the Afrikaner volk (people). Both parties generated not more than 4 percent of the total vote tally combined and they would continue to witness a sharp political decline. However, and more importantly for the purposes of this thesis, the ANC projected itself as a non-racial and non-tribal political party, but it was interpreted as a black party with a strong appeal to the Xhosa ethnic group. What the Xhosas are to the ANC, the Zulus are said to be to the IFP (Hoeane, 2004).

Mbeki was elected deputy president of National Unity by Nelson Mandela in 1994. Although Nelson Mandela was elected President, he left the duties of the state to Mbeki as he presided over the reconciliation process and occupied himself with international affairs. As a 'de facto' prime minister, Mbeki sought to pour oil on troubled waters between former enemies, particularly with his reconciliatory attitude towards the IFP. In this endeavour he was assisted by Jacob Zuma who served as Chairperson of the ANC in KwaZulu-Natal. At the 50th National Conference of the ANC in 1997, President Nelson Mandela emphasised his intention to retire and rejected a nomination for a second term, which led to Thabo Mbeki being elected President of the ANC without a contest. He contested for the first time as leader of the ANC for the 1999 general election.

4.4. THE 1999 GENERAL ELECTIONS

The election was characterised by a resilience of race and ethnicity despite F.W. De Klerk's optimistic prediction in an interview that 'the next election will not be about liberation; it will be about fundamental principles, about values needed to build society' (Hoeane, 2004: 7). He was insinuating that the 1994 election was largely informed by a racial and ethnic consensus, while expressing hope that South Africans would move to a higher degree of political maturity. Nevertheless, history has proven otherwise, and, in actual fact, a significant number of white voters were displeased over De Klerk abandoning apartheid and directing the NP towards the

centre of the political stage as a party for all, including black voters. The DP capitalized on this and resorted to racist posturing to win votes. It did this by preying on minority fears, claiming that it would be the right thing to do – to vote for the DP if you were a member of a minority group. As a result, the NP which was renamed the New National Party (NNP) lost a significant number of white votes to the DP and the latter replaced the former as the main opposition party. For the first time, the sharp ethnic divisions between Afrikaner speakers and English speakers within the sphere of politics converged within the DP (Hoeane, 2004).

After the ANC had won the first democratic elections, its major tasks were to reverse all forms of discrimination and segregation, including ethnic divisions that were formed by the implementation of Bantustan policies (Baloyi, 2018). However, the 1999 elections demonstrated that the task was far from being realized. Voters were still steeped in an ethnic understanding of South African politics. For example, IFP generated 87 percent of its votes in KZN and secured third place nationally. Piper (2009) makes an interesting observation about IFP in the 1999 elections. He states the elections entrenched the idea that electoral support for the IFP is not only concentrated in KZN but it is deeply rooted among rural Zulu people. As noted above (chapter 3), given that rural communities in South Africa have a strong sense of the need to preserve traditional practices including being under the leadership of traditional leaders, the IFP finds favour in rural Zulu people by advocating for the autonomy of traditional African communities and their leaders. Outside of KZN, the establishment the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) resembled the rise of ethno-nationalism. The party was associated with the apartheid Bantustan system, in that its leader, Lucas Mangope of former Bophuthatswana (now distributed between the new provinces of North West, Gauteng and Free State), generated a vast majority of votes in the North West capital, Mafikeng where the bantu government seat was located. It is important to note that popular support in the province was instrumental to the ANC's successful ousting of Mangope in 1994. Forming the UCDP was a political comeback for Mangope and his strategy was to play a Tswana ethnic card by consistently pointing out that conditions in the province will not improve under the Xhosa rule of the ANC. He was successful in creating the assumption that restoring power to a Tswana leader is essential for ensuring that conditions do not deteriorate any further.

Furthermore, in the run up to the1999 elections, the newly established United Democratic Movement (UDM) from the former Transkei Bantustan, which is now part of Eastern Cape, was understood as an emergent Xhosa ethnic party notwithstanding the party portraying itself to be non-racial and non-tribal (Hoeane, 2004). The basis upon which this was founded is that UDM generated a vast majority of votes from Eastern Cape and over 60 percent of parliamentary nominees were from the same province. Similar to the UCDP, the UMD support base was concentrated at the capital of Transkei, Umtata. Although the ANC appeared to have a strong support base across the country, it continued to be viewed by many as a Xhosa led political party. This perception was slowly fading away, especially in KZN where it was more pronounced in the early 1990s. The election of Jacob Zuma as the Deputy President of the ANC aided the process of building bridges between the ANC and IFP within the province. Zuma was seen as a conservative Zulu man but yet occupied a high position within the ANC. He established a code of conduct with IFP Premier, Lionel Mtshali and it was signed during a

meeting in the Durban City Hall (Piper, 1999). The code revolved around four points which are as follows '(1) free political activity, (2) building a culture of peace and tolerance, (3) a call for impartial and effective policing, and (4) the restraint of party members and supporters from infringing the code' (Piper, 1999: 146). The code was more than a peace deal for the violence that had engulfed the province in the previous years; it was also a commitment by both parties that future governance would overtly be shared among them.

4.5. THE 2004 GENERAL ELECTIONS

The 2004 elections continued to reflect a resilience of ethnic driven politics instead of policy-motivated politics. The IFP support base was overwhelmingly from KZN with the party generating 93 per cent of its votes from the province. The UCDP also recorded 93 per cent of its votes from North West province and the UDM 53 percent of support from the Eastern Cape (elections.org.za). This pattern affirmed the continued saliency of ethnic voting patterns in South African politics. Nevertheless, Hoeane (2004) writes that the 2004 elections revealed a countervailing argument that the continued pattern of ethnic saliency in voting behavior does not mean South African democracy is at risk. She asserts that the acrimony between political parties in their campaigning strategies was less pronounced as far as ethnic and racial undertones are concerned. Political parties lodged campaigns outside their strong support bases in order to draw in new voters. Thus, political parties began to understand that inasmuch as attitudes, perceptions and interests collate with ethnic sentiments, such politics do not benefit political parties. This argument is supported by the emergence of political party alliances. The argument of racialised politics was challenged by the ANC/NNP alliance and the IFP/DP alliance. These coalitions represented a shift from a politics of identity towards a politics of material interests, in that political parties began to understand that they have more in common than what divides them.

As far as the ethnic argument is concerned, the Afrikaner vote seemed to have spread across different political parties in the 2004 elections, particularly around the centrist NNP, the right-wing FF and the centre-right DP, with the latter being renamed the Democratic Alliance (DA). Furthermore, the UCDP experienced a national and provincial political decline in North West, indicating that it failed to secure significant support from the Tswana ethnic group as it did in the previous elections. The UDM and the IFP also experienced a decline of voter support with a significant number of voters' crossing over to the ANC in their respective strongholds, which was also an indication that there was a growing space to be exploited in South Africa focused on issues such as service delivery, unemployment and other social and economic ills. Such issues are always at the forefront in politics in any given context, however, the question among voters is who they can entrust in delivering on them and this is where race and ethnicity becomes an important factor given the history of apartheid. Nobert (2009: 126) writes that "electoral analysis according to the "Michigan Model" puts party identification first and regards issue-based voting and personal factors as secondary factors". It follows that a significant number of South African voters believe that a person they can identify with in terms of race and ethnicity will be the most suitable candidate to advance their desired interests

(Nobert, 2009). For example, the DA generates a significant number of votes from white people because it is overtly made up of white leaders and the same argument goes for the ANC in that it is considered to be a black peoples' liberation party.

In 2004, the ANC seemed to have overcome the idea that it was a Xhosa political party as it had implemented important transformation policies such as affirmative action through the Employment Equity Act and many black people were provided with social basic needs (housing, electricity, water and grants) as safety nets. As a result, many black people had been lifted out of poverty, especially as compared to apartheid times. In essence, there was a rational element of gratitude from voters, which contributed to the ANC obtaining a two thirds majority in the National Assembly.

It is within this context that, after the 2004 elections, scholars began to abandon the saliency of ethnicity as an analytical variable for understanding the voting behaviour of South African citizens. Furthermore, the black-on-black violence in KZN was put into the dustbin of history and there was an element of maturity in South African democracy, particularly on voting behaviour and political party strategies. The ANC was successful in portraying an outlook that is focused on pro-poor policies. The IFP had shifted from ethno-nationalism politics towards a focus on institutional and economic reforms and the Democratic Alliance relied on negative campaigning against the ANC since it had gained the main opposition political party position (Norbert, 2009). However, perceptions about South Africa gravitating towards political maturity waned in the 2009 elections, thus leading to scholars arguing that policy related factors were always secondary in analysing South African voting behaviour. The primary factor has been party identification, which is linked with ethnic representation of party leaders.

4.6. THE 2009 GENERAL ELECTIONS

In the build-up to the 2009 General Elections, the idea that the ANC is a Xhosa lead organisation resurfaced. This time it was a deep-seated concern within the ANC itself. The idea was based on previous convictions that the organisation had been led by Xhosa presidents since 1967 upon the election of Oliver Thambo who was succeeded by Nelson Mandela and then Thabo Mbeki, all of whom are from the Xhosa ethnic group. This resurgence of such ethno-nationalism in South Africa's politics began with the decision taken by President Thabo Mbeki to sack Deputy President Jacob Zuma on 14 June 2005 following Judge Hilary Squires's ruling that Zuma and Schabir Shaik had 'a generally corrupt relationship'. However, these words were proven to be a mis-quote by the media, in that they did not appear in the court transcript thence media outlets later switched to the phrase 'mutually beneficial symbiosis. In the aftermath of the high-profile Shaik trial, Zuma was formally charged with various counts of corruption, fraud, racketeering and money laundering. In late 2005, Zuma faced further charges of rape which tarnished his political career. At this point there was a visible faction within the ANC between Zuma supporters and Mbeki's allies.

Despite the fact that the South African Constitution does not allow any individual to run for a third term in office as president of the republic, Mbeki entered a third race to be president of the ANC in 2007 against Jacob Zuma and lost on 18 December 2007 at the ANC conference in Polokwane. On 12 September 2008, Judge Chris Nicholson ruled that charges of corruption against Zuma were unlawful on procedural grounds and that they were politically motivated. The honourable judge held that Mbeki or members of his cabinet had unlawfully interfered with the decision of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) to charge Zuma of corruption. This resulted into the decision by ANC national executive committee (NEC) to sack President Thabo Mbeki on 21 September 2008, which led to cabinet members resigning in solidarity and as a form of protest against the decision taken by the NEC. Among the resignations were Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel and Minister of Defence, Mosiuoa Lekota. Following his resignation, Lekota announced his intention to form a new political party that would challenge the ANC in the upcoming General Elections. The party was named Congress of the People (COPE) and upon its inception, it was clearly visible that the party was made up of former high-ranking members of the ANC. COPE seemed poised by its association with former President Mbeki and it sought to draw in ANC voters who were displeased by Zuma's candidature (Ndletyana 2010). COPE finished third in the national elections after the ANC and Democratic Alliance.

The split between Mbeki and Zuma proved to have certain benefits as well as serious ramifications for the ANC going forward. In KZN, the ANC was locked in a titanic political squabble, in that the IFP was facing a significant challenge, particularly among voters who had been attracted to the IFP because of its conservative Zulu appeal. For the first time, IFP leaders could no longer play the Xhosa Nostra card against the ANC to woo conservative Zulus because the new ANC president was a non-threatening face of the ANC (Ndletyana, 2010). Xhosa nostra is an idea that Xhosa speaking people within the ANC are invested in maintaining political power, and through it, dominate state institutions. In making this point, Ndletyana reveals that despite being in exile for many years during apartheid, Zuma remained eloquent in the Zulu vernacular and is fond of singing Zulu folksongs. He made regular appearances beside the Zulu King, Zwelithini Goodwill kaBhekuzulu during traditional ceremonies. He is also a polygamist that kept his birthplace in Nkandla and visited regularly. He presents an outlook that he is as conservative as any conservative Zulu man can be and this led to the ANC generating more votes in KZN (Ndletyana and Maaba, 2010).

However, in the Western Cape, the split between Mbeki and Zuma supporters created ructions within the provincial government and this seemed to have benefited the DA to gain an upper hand. The DA was in control of the Cape Town Metro Municipality and it was one step closer to becoming a leading party in the provincial government. The race between the ANC and the DA in the run-up to the 2009 elections was so close that any minor incident from either party was enough to tilt the scale in favour of the other side within the province. Therefore, when the ANC Premier, Ebrahim Rasool was axed for allegedly supporting Mbeki's bid for a third term against Zuma, the populous Muslim community in the province, where Rasool was deeply rooted, did not receive the news in favour of the ANC (Ndletyana 2010). As a result, the ANC lost Western Cape to the DA and shed an overall support of 6 percent in all provinces, except

in KZN where it gained an additional 17 per cent – from 47 per cent in 2004 to 66 per cent in 2009 (elections.org.za). The surge demonstrated the saliency of ethnic based voting behaviour in KZN, in that Zulu people were keen to see Zuma as the next president of the republic.

The Xhosa Nostra card has been exploited by the IFP since the early 1990s and Zuma got the most out of it by transforming himself from being labelled as a rape suspect to a cultural figure (Ndletyana and Mabaa, 2010). This does not however insinuate the notion that the entire situation was of his own making because Zulu ethno-nationalism had been a strong feature of political life in KZN. The saliency of ethnicity in voting behaviour in KZN predates his legal debacles. His candidature as a Zulu cultural figure earned him favour within the ANC leadership which saw him as an important asset in neutralising the stereotype that the ANC is a Xhosa dominated party in the early 1990s. He simply toed the line and ascribed to the conspiracy in order to escape conviction and to advance his political gains. Being cast as a victim of an ethnic purge had its perks, in that Zuma gained sympathy and secured a significant number of cross-over votes from the IFP electorate in KZN. Thence IFP support in the provincial legislature waned from 37 per cent in 2004 to 22 per cent in 2009 (elections.org.za). It is therefore safe to say that KZN provides a fertile grown for ethno-nationalism and if this goes unchecked, it will have serious consequences for South Africa's young democracy.

4.7. 2014 GENERAL ELECTIONS

The 2014 elections represented an entrenched saliency of ethnicity as a campaigning strategy within the ANC. For the first time in the history of the organisation, delegates attending the 2012 ANC national conference in Mangaung were wearing ANC t-shirts bearing a 100% Zulu slogan (Baloyi, 2018). This constituted and outright mobilisation of Zulu ethno-nationalism for the purposes of campaigning and it proved to be a successful strategy in favour of Jacob Zuma as he defeated an opposing group that had coalesced around contender Kgalema Motlanthe with a popular vote of 75 per cent (Baloyi, 2018). With the 100% Zulu slogan as a campaigning strategy, it would have been difficult for Montlanthe to win against Zuma since he is from a Sotho ethnic group. KwaZulu-Natal is the most populated province after Gauteng, yet it is less diverse in terms of ethnic grouping, which makes it easy for Zulu ethno-nationalism to thrive as a political strategy. On the other hand, Motlanthe is from a less populated Sotho ethnic group. Furthermore, many people from other ethnic groups across the country did not take offense to the slogan because they believed that Zuma was a victim of ethnic persecution.

Following the literal and intentional propagation of ethnic politicisation by Jacob Zuma, President Thabo Mbeki addressed the College of Human Sciences in the University of South Africa (Unisa) and he was quoted saying that:

> When a minister comes from a certain region, so will the officials in that department. They conspire in one language, and this is one of the challenges we need to address. When the ANC was formed 102 years ago part of its mandate was to bury the demon of tribalism. But 102 years later tribalism is showing its ugly head (Baloyi, 2018: 4).

Mbeki was expressing his concerns around the fact that the saliency of ethnicity in South African politics operates as a stumbling block for ethnic reconciliation and a hindrance for the democratic agenda of transformation. Towards election time, Jacob Zuma was again a subject of considerable controversy across various media outlets. He was facing investigations by the Public Protector regarding allegations of undue security benefits in his Nkandla Homestead. Nevertheless, his organisation managed to a victory of 62.15 percent of the total vote tally in the 2014 General Elections (elections.org.za). He continued to generate considerable support in KZN where the IFP was facing a steady decline as a result of strong competition from Jacob Zuma and from the split of former IFP members who went on to form the New Freedom Party. The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), founded by former ANC Youth League President Julius Malema from Limpopo participated in the National Elections for the first time and it was able to secure third place. Malema is from a Pedi ethnic group which has a stronger presence in Limpopo where the EFF obtained a significant proportion of electoral support. The EFF took a position that was occupied by COPE in the previous elections and the latter waned all the way down to eighth position.

4.8. THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTIONS

In the 2019 elections, the ANC was led by President Cyril Ramaphosa who was painted as a new dawn of South African politics. He is a multi-billionaire, and he adopted a strong conviction towards liberal policies (Nyenhuis, 2020). However, prior to the 2019 elections, he had to compete with Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma for the ANC presidential seat in 2017 at Nasrec. The Zuma camp attempted to woo supporters for Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma using ethno-nationalism in KZN but this was unsuccessful due to a court ruling that prevented ANC delegates from the Provincial Executive Committees (PECs) of KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and North West from voting (Tawengwa, 2017). As result, Nkosazana lost over Ramaphosa by just under 200 votes on 18 December 2017. In the subsequent months that followed, there was growing pressure on Zuma to resign as President of South Africa. Zuma had survived numerous attempts to remove him from office before but under the face of a new ANC president and mounting pressure within the ANC, it became clear that he would not survive another motion of no confidence. This new reality compelled Jacob Zuma to hand in his resignation on 14 February 2018. Ramaphosa immediately stepped in as President of South Africa and his first task in office was to build bridges with the pro-Zuma faction of members in the ANC NEC, particularly those from KZN (Nyenhuis, 2020). He was aware of the risk associated with him winning the ANC presidency over NDZ and him replacing Zuma before he could finish his term. The risk revolved around the notion that there would be a resurgence of Zulu ethno-nationalism in favour of the IFP in KZN towards 2019 elections.

In the build-up to the 2019 elections Ramaphosa visited KZN frequently and he was seen posing with high profile individuals from the province, including Premier Sihle Zikalala, King Goodwill of the Zulu people and religious leaders of the KZN based Nazareth Baptist Church. Ramaphosa wanted to make an appeal that he was a non-threatening face of the ANC among Zulu people. Although he managed to secure a decent vote, the ANC witnessed a 4.65 percent

decline of votes at the national level thus loosing 19 seats in the National Assembly. The IFP recorded an increase of 0.98 percent and gained 4 extra seats in the National Assembly (Nyenhuis, 2020). Furthermore, at the provincial level, ANC votes plummeted in all provinces due to the fact people were losing hope in the ANC as a result of corruption, however the highest decline on votes was recorded in KZN. The organisation lost 8 seats in the provincial legislature thus witnessing a decline of 10.8 percent. On the other hand, the IFP recorded an increase of 5.48 percent in the province and gained an extra 4 seats in the provincial legislature of KZN (elections.org.za). The re-emergence of the IFP in KZN accompanied by a decline of the ANC can be interpreted as an indication that ethnicity continues to influence voting behaviour in the province. The EFF maintained its position as an official opposition party in Limpopo and gained 1 extra seat in the provincial legislature. At the national level, the EFF recorded an increase of 4.44 percent and gained 19 extra seats in the National Assembly (elections.org.za). The organisation generated a vast majority of its votes in Basotho speaking ethnic groups which include North West, Limpopo, Free State and Gauteng.

4.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the saliency of ethnicity as a major influence of voter behaviour and political party strategies in South Africa since the democratisation process in the 1990s. While ethnic divisions might not be a single source of democratic instability in South Africa, there is no doubt that the use of ethnicity as a political tool to fulfil political and personal agendas is a stumbling block to democracy. The practice of electing political leaders based on identity preferences instead of policy inclinations promotes bad governance and lack of accountability. This was evident where people remained passive towards corruption simply because the perpetrator is one of their own kinsman. The Jacob Zuma presidency is considered to have been one of the most corrupt administrations since the dawn of democracy in the country, but the former president continued to gain support, particularly in KZN. He used Zulu ethno-nationalism as a campaigning strategy to secure electoral support. His wife had similar hopes at the ANC National Conference in Nasrec but this was prevented through a court ruling. Furthermore, history demonstrates that ethnic divisions and the politicisation thereof have the potential to stir up civil unrest or wars and genocide. This was evident from the black-on-black violence in the early 1990s in South Africa, the inception of Rwandan genocide in 1994 and civil conflicts in Sudan and elsewhere across the continent post-independence. Although South Africa seems far from generating a menacing threat of ethnic confrontation and democratic instability, the thesis argues that the ground is fertile to stir up confrontation and there is a considerable number of testimonies to the fact that the country is beginning to reap the negative fruits of ethnic tensions.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to discuss ethnic divisions and democratic stability in South Africa. It has found that the conditions that make up a stable democracy are often encapsulated in the form of ideas, rather than specific measures of economic, social and political variables. As a consequence, one may point out that there is no linear path or threshold to satisfy democratic stability. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that writing about democratic stability is to emphasise the importance of stable democratic institutions. The word stability refers to "the state of being firmly fixed or not likely to move or change" (Ginsburg & Hug, 2018: 20). Herein there are elements of tranquillity and perpetuity in the state of affairs, in that citizens are able to plan their lives ahead. Democracy on the other hand refers to a set of determined rules, systems and institutions of governance. The degree to which democratic practice is fully satisfied varies from country to country and it is always subject to certain imperfections. It is the degree of such imperfections that allows an observer or commentator to draw an inference on whether a country enjoys democratic stability. Eckestein offers a path towards examining the factors that make democracies survive and what dooms them to collapse. Using his approach, the thesis concludes that what makes democracies unstable is the failure for political leaders to solve political and economic problems, especially where inequalities are high. In some instances, democracies become unstable where political leaders have lost legitimacy and where there have been erosions in checks and balances.

To grasp a full understanding of the factors that pose a threat to democratic stability in South Africa, one must leap back in time, to the creation and manipulation of ethnic divisions by the colonial and apartheid regimes. Using ethnicity as a laboratory for the foundations of democratic stability, Carugati (2009) points out it was the gap between collective norms and existing institutions that caused democratic instability in Athens. It was only after institutions were created to reflect social norms that democracy was revived. This argument echoes the notion that democracy is not a one size fit all. Liberal peace building scholars have also attested to this view by stating that incorporating Western democratic institutions in Africa in an attempt to maintain peace does not always bring about the desired outcome, and in some cases democratisation has exacerbated ethnic tensions (Newman, 2009).

Carugati (2009) argues that for democracy to survive there needs to be a societal consensus on legality and on institutions that enshrine the consensus. While South Africa successfully promulgated a well-drafted and very much lauded Constitution in 1996, the failure to adequately articulate and set forth the powers of Traditional leaders in rural communities is a cause for concern. Traditional leaders continue to wield power over land allocation and distribution and their decisions clash with those of municipal councillors.

It is important to understand that rural communities in South Africa are overtly made up of conservative members of society. They are conservative in a sense that they have a strong belief in heritage and traditions, which includes being under the leadership of a traditional leader. It follows from this that traditional leaders continue to occupy a respected position 27 years after the new democracy and 25 years after the constitution was passed. While municipal councillors may have certain powers within their areas of jurisdiction, such powers cannot be fully exercised in a hostile environment, especially if such hostility comes from a traditional leader whose decisions are supported and respected by community members. It is therefore important that shared normative commitment towards preserving heritage in rural areas be aligned with democratic institutions in order to ensure democratic stability.

The constant vying for power between democratically elected municipal councillors and traditional leaders is a threat on the survival of democracy in rural areas. To solve this problem, there needs to be appropriate legislation that regulates the powers of municipal councillors and traditional leaders. What the government has done thus far is to try and reduce traditional leaders authority into an advisory role and give municipal councillors the power to make decisions. This has produced more problems than solutions, in that the tension between traditional leaders and municipal councillors has grown over the years to the detriment of ordinary community members who are caught in the dust of the fray. The ramifications have been felt severely by the residents of the Malamulele village in Limpopo and their frustrations have been expressed in the form of protests and riots.

Therefore, the thesis is of the view that ethnic divisions in the new democratic system of government remain a barrier towards South Africa being regarded as a genuinely democratic country. Part of the reason for this problem is the manner in which the democratic government reintegrated the ten former (independent and self-governing) Bantustans. Instead of defusing the entire structure of Bantustans which were based on ethnic divisions, the democratic government partitioned the country into nine provinces with ethnicity being the primary determining factor. Consequently, there has been minimal progress in overcoming stereotypes that emanate from ethnic divisions within the country and in many respects there has been a rise of ethno-nationalism within the provinces. This has enabled political parties to use ethno-nationalism as a campaigning strategy. It follows that the prevalence of ethnicity in the political arena and more broadly is one of the few continuities of apartheid since independence (Karodia, 2014). Scholars such as Karodia have suggested that ethnic fissures are essentially powerful enough to temper with shared views of belonging within a geographic polity, especially in times of economic crisis when resources are scarce, and unemployment is at its all-time low. Therefore, before dismissing the idea that there has been a saliency of ethnic elements that influence South Africa’s young democracy, it is important to think about the rise of ethno-nationalistic political party among all nine provinces. One may argue that it is these political parties that will grow in leaps and bounds upon the demise of the ANC. Their growth might upscale the saliency of ethnicity in South African politics, which will have far reaching consequences towards democratic stability as seen in the early 1990s and elsewhere across the African continent.

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