

NUMBER 46



# UMRABULO



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LET'S TALK POLITICS



## THE NATIONAL QUESTION

# UMRABULO

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**UMRABULO** was a word used to inspire political discussion and debate on Robben Island. This concept was revived in 1996 when the ANC published the first edition of *Umrabulo*. The journal's mission is to encourage debate and rigorous discussions at all levels of the movement.

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Editor-In-Chief: Nathi Mthethwa

Deputy Editor-in-Chief: David Masondo

Editor: JP Louw

## Editorial Collective

Lindiwe Sisulu, Naledi Pandor, Obed Bapela, Joel Netshitenzhe, Tito Mboweni, Barbara Creecy and Nkhensani Kubayi.

**Peer-review team:** Tebogo Phadu, Febe Potgieter, Msingathi Sipuka, Tsioane Matlan-yane, Mandla Nkomfe, Dipuo Mvelase, Phindile Kunene, Ashley Mabasa and Andries Nel. The team supports the work of the Editorial Collective through critically proof-reading and sub-editing submitted articles.

**Production and Publishing:** Donovan Cloete  
ANC DIP Media Production Unit.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Umrabulo  
PO Box 61884  
Marshalltown, 2107  
South Africa  
Tel: 011 376 1000  
Fax: 086 633 1437  
E-mail: [umrabulo@gmail.com](mailto:umrabulo@gmail.com)

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Twitter: @jaypeelouw



**I**N THE African National Congress' Strategy and Tactics document, the National Democratic Revolution is saddled with the responsibility of unravelling three basic and inter-related contradictions. These are:-

- The reality of South Africa being a nation where the colonised and coloniser shares in the spoils of the country – what is commonly referred to as Colonialism of a Special Type;
- Racial oppression and super class super exploitation; and
- Patriarchal relations of power.

The 46th edition of Umrabulo Journal, themed “**The National Question**”, applies itself on what the answers to these contradictions might be considering that South Africa is in the midst of its 25th year of democratic governance. Issues explored includes explanation of the historical context of the concept of The National Question, how it must be understood in terms of present day South Africa and whether the ANC, as leader of society, is well-suited to enable South Africa on this course of self-discovery and repositioning.

In **ABCs On What The National Question Entails**, struggle and ANC veteran, **Pallo Jordan** provides an insightful description on how the concept of The National Question arose and came to gain prominence from the 19th century to date. Within this context he draws thread to the South African context and meaning. **Seitebaleng Dikole's The National Question As An Issue Of Workers' and Class Struggle** makes the argument that “*Marxism remains the best and important doctrine to define society, its institutions and people's relations within a context of classes, class antagonism as well as class struggle.*”

**Thobani Mzabalazo Matheza's** article titled **Issues of Non-Racialism In South African Nationhood** dwells into South Africa's troublesome race issue whilst

**Sarah Mokwebo** poses thought provoking questions about the inevitable, but yet ignored dynamics associated with gender relation in ***Gender Bias In The Construction Of Nationalism.***

Still on the theme of those who tends to be forgotten in dogma around The National Question, in ***The National Question For The Coloured Community*** Dr **Oscar Van Heerden** points at realities for Western Cape's historical working

class communities who are primarily Coloured. Drawing attention to the ethnic conflicts in the Malumela area as a cautionary measure on how best to define The National Question, **Ashley Nyiko** writes about his impressions in ***Ethnic Consciousness In The Unresolved National Question.***

In ***Languages As A Driving Force Behind The National Question*** **Siphokazi Mbolo** deals with language policies in higher education institutions and the education sector. The essence of her argument is premised on the belief that “*the education sector has been influential instruments since colonization. This is because it is one of the primary agents of socialization which influence people's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours.*”

In ***Afrikaner Capitalism and its Nationalism*** **Pule Thulo** puts a spotlight on how capitalism, underpinned by an anti-African racially skewed and exploitative regime, brewed Afrikaner Nationalism. .

With the advancement of a post-Apartheid South Africa came the need to re-examine tenets which drove discourse, strategy and programmatic interventions. What is South Africa's National Question twenty five years later into a democratic dispensation is one such critical subject needed to be unravelled. You stand invited to engage this 46th edition of Umrabulo as a tool that inspires some thoughts in this regard.



# ABC'S ON WHAT THE NATIONAL QUESTION ENTAILS

- *European discourse on the nation...oscillated between... two conceptions: The first, derived from the experience of the French Revolution that placed emphasis on a set of democratic values and equality before the law constituting the basis for a community of free citizens. The second placed emphasis on the distinctions of geography, language, culture and ethnos that differentiated the oppressed from the oppressive empire or imperial power.*

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By **Z. PALLO JORDAN**

**T**HE National Question conception arose in the multi-national states of 19th century Europe.

The kingdoms of Austro-Hungary, Britain, Russia, Sweden and others expanded during previous centuries taking in and subjugating bordering lands and their peoples. Within all these empires there were smaller national and religious minorities, like the Jews and the Romanies. Since the 15th century, Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands and Britain had also conquered territories in the Americas, Caribbean, in Asia and Africa. Foreign domination was widely practiced and affected Europe, Asia, Africa and the countries of the new world by the end of the 19th century.

The subject peoples in these imperial arrangements were held down by armed force and administrative fiat. Their languages and culture suppressed and attempts at self-assertion met with repression.



After the revolution of 1789, France was the first European state in which religious minorities attained full civil rights. From 1792 Jews and Muslims living in France and its territories enjoyed the same citizenship rights as Christians. The abolition of slavery in 1793 extended these rights to all Africans living in France and its territories as well. France thus became a secular state, in which no religion or belief system was privileged; all religions were regarded as equal. When Na-

poleon re-imposed slavery in France's colonies in 1802, that was the signal for the former enslaved of Haiti to break their ties with France. After a bitterly fought liberation war, Haiti became the first African republic of modern times as an independent state in 1803.

Historically, "the nation" is a relatively new concept and is associated with the modern world. It is directly linked to the emergence of industrial capitalism in Europe as well as to the struggles of the peoples subjected

to colonialism by the European powers after the 17th century. Arising in the context of the French Revolution, the concept of “*nation*” is intertwined with that of “*citizen*”.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, adopted by revolutionary France in October 1789, pronounced the right of the governed to participate fully in government. It abolished institutions that vested such powers in the hands of an aristocracy or monarch and established the principle of equality in the eyes of the law. In revolutionary France itself it soon became evident that, in practice, not all could participate in governing the country and various measures were adopted to facilitate popular participation.

The suffrage – the right to elect or be elected to a governing body – became the emblem of citizenship, symbolizing the equality of all citizens and ending the regime of privilege.

In revolutionary France all adult males were regarded as citizens. The original French conception of citizenship was that it was a birthright that applied to all adult males as individuals. Equality before the law indicated that the individual’s parentage, region of origin, city or town of domicile, religious preference or race were irrelevant. Citizens had certain rights, the most important of which was the vote. Thus the community of citizens, created by the revolution, defined itself as “*the French nation*”, and no longer as the subjects of the Bourbon kings. The Bourbon monarchs too became the kings of the French nation before they were deposed and executed.

In reality individuals are associated with and affiliated to a number of groups and bodies that also claim their participation – the church, a professional body, a lodge, a guild. In revolutionary France, it was argued that these identities, are or should be subordinate to the more significant affiliation to the community of citizens, the nation. The French Revolutionary concept of the nation consequently upheld the idea of a multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-faith community, a nation, bound together by a body of shared political values and equal suffrage rights.

The second conception of “the nation”, derived from the experience of the subject peoples of Europe, as they sought to create such a community by the gathering in of the dispersed members of a language community, cultural or ethnic group in order to assert their collective rights against an oppressive empire. Issues such as language, geographical region, ethnos, culture and race would become emblems of inclusion or exclusion for such movements.

European discourse on the nation consequently oscillated between these two conceptions: The first, derived from the experience of the French Revolution that placed emphasis on a set of democratic values and equality before the law constituting the basis for a community of free citizens. The second placed emphasis on the distinctions of geography, language, culture and ethnos that differentiated the oppressed from the oppressive empire or imperial power.

## THE DEBATE AMONG EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS

After 1848 it was the socialists of Europe who consistently pursued the cause of national independence and debated the issue most avidly. Two principal streams of thought emerged in the debates on the national question among the 19th century revolutionary movements in Europe.

The Austrian Social-Democrats, led by Carl Renner, Otto Bauer and Victor Adler, sometimes called the “*Austro-Marxists*”, espoused the concept of “*cultural autonomy*”.

Renner and the Austro-Marxists argued that the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its wealth were the shared inheritance of all the working people of that empire and that it would be historically retrogressive to dismember it into a number of smaller national units. What socialist policy had to address, they argued, were the injustices in the existent state which could however be abolished by a regime of legal equality – like that of France – amongst all citizens. It was the task of socialists to strive for the unity of this nationally and culturally diverse working class.

Instead of separate national states, socialists should struggle for the equality for all national groups before the law and in all institutions of state, with the aim of creating a single national state in which Germans, Magyars, Slavs, Jews, Romanians, Czechs, Slovaks and Italians all enjoyed equal rights within a single state. To ensure actual equality, each of these groups would have equal representation in the central administration and each national language would have equal status in the schools and all state institutions. The “*Austro-Marxists*” envisaged each national group being permitted to manage its own “*cultural affairs*”.

The Austro-Marxists argued that their concept accommodated two modern realities – by bringing all these nations and nationalities together in a single state it would reduce sectional and ethnic tensions; and it addressed the need to abolish national oppression by basing the unity of the state on the equality of all citizens. In addition to these merits, they argued, the principle

of cultural autonomy retained the large state with its developed national economy, which was the collective legacy of all the national constituents, and not the Germans alone, while creating an environment in which all national cultures could flourish.

Though their viewpoint won a measure of support in many other parties, the perspective that emerged dominant was that of “*national self-determination*”, which even earned the support of US President, Woodrow Wilson, when the US was drawn into World War I in 1917.

Tsarist Russia was known as the “*Prison House of Nations*” because of the many nationalities under the Tsarist yoke. Russian revolutionaries necessarily had to address the relationship between national emancipation and their own struggle for democracy and socialism. The debate among the Russians ebbed and flowed before one trend became dominant. The advocates of national self-determination accepted the viewpoint of the “cultural autonomists” in principle, but took it one step further by arguing that subject nations should have the right to secede from an empire and establish their own state as an independent nation.

The Polish struggle for independence enjoyed the support of liberal nationalists, democrats and became one of the cornerstones of the political tradition associated with Marx and Engels after 1848. Greece’s struggle against the Ottomans had also attracted widespread support amongst the intellectual circles of Europe and one of Britain’s great Romantic poets, Lord Byron, died fighting in the Greek War of Independence.

But the reactionary compact, sealed among the European Empires at Vienna after the Battle of Waterloo (1815), conspired to consolidate the regimes of national oppression. Tsarist Russian troops helped suppress national uprisings in Poland, Hungary and Roumania. While Britain retained its hold over Ireland and expanded its trans-Oceanic empire, it helped the Ottoman Turks suppress the Slavic nations in the Balkans.

The national movements of Europe were led by radical democrats from the middle classes seeking to bring their own nations abreast of the most powerful states on that continent. After 1848 the drive for nationhood in some instances was taken up by the forward-looking elements of the incumbent ruling class. This was the case in Piedmont and Prussia, where Count Cavour and Otto von Bismarck drove national unification as stated projects that resulted in the creation of the Italian state in 1866 and that of Germany in 1870.

Having attained his objective Count Cavour reportedly declared: “*Now that we have created Italy, we have to create Italians*”.

Count Cavour’s remark captured the significant distinction between what the Piedmontese had achieved in Italy and what the revolution in France entailed. The French Revolution gave birth to a nation through a movement and struggle of the common people; Cavour and Otto von Bismarck executed that transformation from above, employing the state. Consequently a “*national consciousness*” had to be taught and nurtured through state policy. In France it was the revolution and wars to defend its achievements that stimulated and sustained a “*national consciousness*”.

In most of Europe the thrust of national movements was homogenizing the elements of a potentially unified political entity by drawing into a single state culturally and linguistically related communities, thus setting up psychic and emotional borders that incorporated some to the exclusion of others. Language, geography, folklore and traditions acquired a new importance as signifiers of acceptance or exclusion.

Most of the terms employed in discussions of the national question derive from these two European experiences. The definition of nation or nationality usually makes reference to specific characteristics such as a common language, territory, economy, traditions and customs all of which relate to one aspect of the 19th century European experience.

## THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

During the 20th century the experience of the movements for colonial freedom has enriched this discourse in a number of ways because there are noteworthy differences between the European experience and what has unfolded in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America.

The most important factor shaping the movements for nationhood in the world outside Europe was that the imperial power and its colonies are situated in different continents, and with the exception of a few, conquest and control of the colony was vested in a relatively small number of administrators, traders, missionaries and of course the military, who came to constitute the dominant class in the colony.

Consequently, the colonized people usually differed from the imperial power in physical appearance – usually referred to as race – in culture, language, traditions and, often, religion. Most of the countries colonized by the Europeans were pre-industrial societies that were then subjected to the demands of the imperial power and its industrial economy requiring the indigenous economy of the colony to be reshaped and consequently undermining local traditions and changing the culture.

One of the mechanisms of control imposed by the imperial power was the institutionalization of social distance between the colonizers and the colonized. Physical difference, race, was the most effective instrument for this purpose because its markers are so readily evident. As a result contact between the imperial power and the subject peoples was formal and never allowed to go beyond certain well defined points. In every part of the world they conquered after the 1500s, the European powers employed race as a signifier of power and powerlessness. White racism, institutionalized in virtually all European colonies, dates from this age.

*The inauguration of the ANC in January 1912 marks the end of the second phase of the anti-colonial national struggle, when the colonized, having experienced colonialism attempted to restore the pre-colonial society.*

Apart from the early birds, like Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands, the colonial empires built by the Europeans date from the 19th century and entailed the export of capital either to extract resources and to exploit labour from the colonies or to explore new fields of profitable investment. Colonization and imperial expansion respected neither territorial nor cultural boundaries in the colonies so that the borders of colonies were designed by colonial powers acting individually or collectively, as happened in 1884-5 with respect to Africa at the Congress of Berlin. No colonized people were consulted in the drawing of such frontiers.

## THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

We are all conversant with the Morogoro Conference, the consultative conference that the ANC held in Morogoro in 1969. We referred to the system of national oppression as a “colonialism of a special type”, different from the conventional systems, because the colonized people and colonial state occupied the same territory. In other words, black South Africa was the colony of White South Africa.

At that conference, the ANC adopted a **Strategy & Tactics** document, which identified the principal source of the conflict in SA at that time as that between the colonized black majority (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) and the white colonial/racist state, which expressed itself in racial terms. The Strategy and Tactics document went on to say that contradiction could not be resolved by the colonial/racist state reforming itself out of existence. Consequently, it was only through struggle that we would be able to resolve the central

contradiction in our society. But, because the colonized people and the colonial state occupied the same territory, the system of colonialism in SA would not be overthrown by the colonial state packing up and leaving the territory of the colonized country. To resolve the colonial contradiction in SA required the attainment of democracy, the dismantling of the colonial state and the creation of a democratic state. In other words, abolishing the colonial status of the black majority by making them citizens on whose authority a government could then legitimately claim the right to govern.

In the past the authors of apartheid used to proclaim its essence in plain language, unadorned by the deceitful rhetoric they learnt after 1957. J.G. Strijdom, Malan's successor as National Party Prime Minister, unabashedly told the Whites-only Parliament of his day:

*“Call it paramountcy, baaskap or what you will. It is still domination. I am being as blunt as I can. I am making no excuses. Either the white man dominates or the black man takes over... The only way the European can maintain supremacy is by domination... And the only way they can maintain domination is by withholding the vote from the non-European.”*

The national question in South Africa addressed precisely this system of white domination as spelled out by Strijdom. It had evolved from the 1909 Act of Union, with its racist provisions to deny blacks (or “non-Europeans” as Strijdom expressed it) the franchise.

The initial response of the oppressed was the founding of the ANC in January 1912. The clarion call for that inaugural meeting came from the pen Pixley ka-I-saka Seme in tones resonant with national sentiment. His appeal to bury the inter-tribal animosities of the past and to take united action as an oppressed people was repeated in one form or another at the subsequent founding of every national movement on the African continent.

The inauguration of the ANC in January 1912 marks the end of the second phase of the anti-colonial national struggle, when the colonized, having experienced colonialism attempted to restore the pre-colonial society. But it also marked the beginning of a modern political practice amongst the Black elite.



During the late 19th century Black politics had been concerned with fighting an unsuccessful rearguard action in defence of the few rights the Black petty bourgeoisie had enjoyed under colonial rule. After January 1912, Black politics would increasingly challenge the institutions and the notion of White overlordship and in the process learn to pose alternatives for the country as a whole. As the 'parliament of the African people', the ANC assumed unto itself the role of custodian of the political values, ideals, and aspirations that had found no place in the 'official' White parliament, implicitly seizing the initiative from the white minority and recasting the question facing the country as the pursuance of common citizenship in a unified state.

The European liberal-democratic tradition, which the leadership had leant from their predecessors, provided the core political ideas of the national movement during its early years. The Black leadership shared an idealised image of the British Empire and its institutions, which they assumed was built on that political tradition. Like their White counterparts, they turned to Britain, as the final arbiter in South African affairs and tried to legitimate their claims by an appeal to that political tradition, demanding their rights as "*subjects of the British crown*".

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The racism of the Union constitution however also had the unintended effect of reinforcing group cohesion and solidarity among the oppressed, both of which became factors in political action. Because racism circumscribed the activities of the elite to dealing mainly with their own people, both became factors in political action. Confined to the ghettos of their skin colour, the elite became susceptible to aspirations and objectives that were not necessarily its own. Those circumstances forced it to recognise that the fulfilment, of its own limited objectives and ambitions, was contingent upon the status of the Black community as a whole.

The "*African Bill of Rights*", which the movement adopted in 1923, was essentially a liberal-reformist document setting out the aims of the ANC. They were:

1. The restoration of the Cape African Franchise and its extension to the other provinces (i.e. a property-owner's franchise applicable to all races).
2. The abolition of the statutory colour bar.
3. Restoration of African rights to buy and sell land anywhere in the country.

The ANC then conceived of the struggle as essentially for civil rights: an extension of the framework of the 1910 Union constitution to include Blacks. The notion of overthrowing white minority domination and replacing it with a government representative of the majority was not part of their political vocabulary.



*During the 1950's, basing itself on the Programme of Action, the ANC was transformed into mass political movement, leading and initiating popular campaigns, strikes, civil disobedience campaigns and smaller local struggles.*

The liberation movement executed a radical break with that tradition during the 1940s. Inspired by the adoption of the Atlantic Charter in 1941, then ANC President, Dr. A.B. Xuma, convened a Blue Ribbon committee of African political thinkers and leaders to apply the principles of the Atlantic Charter to the African continent. The product of their labours was "*The Africans' Claims*", a programmatic document that the ANC adopted at its annual conference in 1943. The following year a group of younger members of the ANC established the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL).

At its founding conference the ANCYL announced that it adhered to the ideology of African Nationalism, and regarded itself as the 'brains trust and power station' of that ideology within the ANC, whose objective was to transform the movement into a broadly based movement fighting for national freedom and the unity of the African people. As understood by the ANCYL, the principles of their nationalism were set out in the Youth League Manifesto.

We can underscore the following themes implicit in both *The Africans' Claims* and the ANCYL Manifesto:-

- i) White supremacy in South Africa, no matter in what guise, is essentially illegitimate.



- ii) The Oppressed people claim the right to national self-determination – i.e. racist South Africa cannot be considered a sovereign state.
- iii) The oppressed people must be/will be their own liberators.
- iv) Since power will not be willingly conceded, the movement required a strategy that employed whatever means necessary to wrest power from the White minority regime.

It was on the initiative of the ANCYL that the ANC adopted the famous Programme of Action of 1949 whose preamble states:

*“The fundamental principles of the Programme of Action ... are inspired by the desire to achieve National Freedom. By National Freedom we mean freedom from White domination and the attainment of political independence. This implies the rejection of the conception of segregation, apartheid, trusteeship, or White leadership which are all motivated by the idea of White domination...”*

During the 1950's, basing itself on the Programme of Action, the ANC was transformed into mass political movement, leading and initiating popular campaigns, strikes, civil disobedience campaigns and smaller local struggles.

The ANCYL's perspective was of the African people realizing their unity in the course of the struggle for liberation that would draw in all Africans, irrespective of tribe, language or class. Unity of the oppressed too was conceived as the outcome of common struggle, in which African, Coloured and Indian would earn each other's confidence through the shared trials of the struggle for liberation.

From the platform of that unity, they argued, the oppressed majority would overthrow white domination and create a non-racial state in which all citizens enjoyed equal rights. Our conception of the nation as composed of the peoples indigenous to Africa, those who came from Europe and those who came from Asia who all met on South African soil and all of whom have an equal claim on SA, which they could all collectively call their home, evolved from that. Hence, as proclaimed in the Freedom Charter: *“South Africa belongs to all who live in it...”*

The liberation movement never argued for separate nations; or about distinct nationalities competing with each other; or, worse yet, for a policy to manage the inevitable competition amongst these separate national

entities. For a long time, the people who call themselves “liberals” in this country subscribed to such views and consequently advocated various versions of federalism to accommodate the claims of the “competing units”. In our view that was merely a variant of the apartheid regime's notion of a multiplicity of nations and pursued the same objective: neutralizing the numerical weight of the African majority in the governing of the country. A number of societies that emerged during the latter part of the 19th century and the early 20th century evolved along lines similar to South Africa. The late African-American revolutionary political activist, Paul Robeson once sang in *“A Ballad for Americans”* of the US as a nation consisting of Christians, Jews, Muslims, Catholics, and Protestants; that is: “English, Irish, Italian, African, German, Jewish, and Czech, double-Czech, American!” reflecting what emerged as a result of the coming together on the shores of the USA of peoples from all parts of the world.

In Africa, colonialist policies had no regard for historic pre-colonial communities and their boundaries. The borders of colonies reflected the balance of power in Europe and the negotiating skills of imperialist statesmen. National movements on our continent necessarily had to emphasise political equality, equal opportunity, the franchise and a shared democratic political order to the exclusion of factors such as language, ethnic group, cultural or religious community.

The liberation movement had to address all the colonized, transcending ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural affiliations. Rather than bringing together the disparate elements of a potential nation into a homogenous entity, our movement's approach is to embrace heterogeneity as a strength rather than as a source of tension. Thus South Africa's national motto proclaims: **Unity in Diversity**.

The ANC's response is to build a nation made up of diverse ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural groups who share a common home and whose nationhood is determined territorially – the country they call home. In his address during the last sitting of our Constituent Assembly in 1995, Comrade Thabo Mbeki laid that conception out in a brilliant speech which he titled, **“I am an African”!** He drew the threads of that together pronouncing:

*“It is a firm assertion made by ourselves that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white. It gives concrete expression to the sentiment we share as Africans and will defend to the death, that the people shall govern”.*

# *The* **NATIONAL QUESTION** *as an* **ISSUE OF WORKERS'** *and* **CLASS STRUGGLE**

- *Theory of the national question is more about national oppression within a given society with intention to emerge with a programme that will facilitate both national and class struggles to build a nation with specific material conditions...The National Democratic Revolution remains the best scientific project to address the legacy of the national question in South Africa. The past 25 years has laid a foundation and framework that serve as a pillar to create a non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous, united and democratic country.*

By **SEITEBALENG DIKOLE**

**M**arxism remains the best and important doctrine to define society, its institutions and people's relations within a context of classes, class antagonism as well as class struggle. This was not done through metaphysical framework but through body of knowledge obtained and critically tested in practicality.

Theory of the national question is more about national oppression within a given society with intention to emerge with a programme that will facilitate both national and class struggles to build a nation with specific material conditions. The liberation movement characterized our oppression within the framework of what is known as Colonialism of a Special Type (CST). Success has been made to dismantle key features of CST, since the ascendance of the ANC into power.

The capitalist conceptualisation of class, nation and state has been reckless and escapes realities. This is be-



cause the system is more interested in profit maximisation and exploitation, instead of highest form of human civilisation. The 21st century ushered clear responsibilities of the state as champion of the interests and antagonism of different large social groups within a class existing society. The bourgeoisie in our country are tirelessly fighting to roll back the gains made by our people in achieving a better life.

State became central in solidifying relations of classes within a nation. This is done because it becomes a powerful tool that champions interests of various large social groups that seek to determine a nation. A nation will fulfil its historical mission and dreams by relying on the state; by total takeover of state power from the oppressive class. Equally relations of classes with the state always reveal the level of unfairness and imbalances of ownership of means of production. Therefore the states become a court of battles by classes to manifest their interests across society.

One of the achievements made by ascendancy of ANC into power was attainment of constitutional democracy in general and the establishment of a democratic state that seeks to champion development of a South African nation.

Concepts such as “developmental state” developed with the intention to say that the state will exist above class rule. The concept of developmental state carries neo-liberal principles which serve as a redeemer of the capitalist crisis.

In a letter Frederick Engel wrote to Augustus Bebel he indicates that there was no state previously and that it emerged at a particular point in time when society was entangled into insoluble contradictions of class, hitherto it became an instrument of class rule.

This enabled the World Socialist System during the days of Soviet Union to establish the state on behalf of the working masses. The state also serves as a bastion for nation building and building of an egalitarian society. It is only under socialism (as it has appended in history) wherein a nation can be build, promoted and defended solely within the interests of humanity. The bourgeoisie are always quick to demobilize people by characterising the state as an instrument that is superfluous. This they do whilst at the same time exerting hegemony for dominance in the state to purport class relations towards their egotistic and selfish interests.

The capitalists regard the state as an instrument that is superfluous. This they do whilst at the same time exerting hegemony for dominance in the state to purport class relations towards their egotistic and selfish interests. This is very rife in our country and they continue to belittle policies that seek to uplift living standards of our people in championship of super exploitation.

Post-Soviet Union and the end of Cold War has put the capitalist system into a continuous trajectory of failures with regard to defending humanity as well as building nations as well as their relations to human civilisation.

We advance the argument that the interaction between classes, state and nation is not class neutral as the capitalist will want to mislead us. Hitherto class antagonism

becomes a yardstick to determine class rule. Arguably if a class is been organised skilfully and consciously through a revolutionary theory, it can become a catalyst for progressive development for attainment of an egalitarian society.

## CLASS EXISTENCE

It was Lenin (the indomitable fighter for purity of Marxism) who made a profound and scientific definition of classes. This is what he had to say in relation to class: “classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated by law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and their mode of acquiring it”.

The bourgeoisie always want to escape this formula by giving the liberal conceptualisation which does not rise above class influence and class struggle. The state is open to interests of various classes that seek to use the state for their own different class interest. That is precisely the reason why the state becomes active role player in class struggle. Determined leadership should fight for the developmental state to be more biased towards working class as the NDR suggests. Any minimisation to this particular tasks will make regression in ad-

ressing the national question, and the resolutions on unity and renewal of the ANC give an impetus for that to happen.

## NATION STATES

The nation states claim to be a genuine representative of a given nation within a given period. It claims to be a champion of modern civilisation with interests of developing human beings and making history. In real terms this is contrary. Different countries (even under developed) have been used as pliable instruments by imperialist forces to launch their aggression to other state within the context of what Marx called a cosmopolitan character of capitalism that seeks to settle and nestle everywhere. Institutions such as parliament and cabinets in various respective countries always succumb to the pressure of market aggression and they repress the interests of people.

*Post-Soviet Union and the end of Cold War has put the capitalist system into a continuous trajectory of failures with regard to defending humanity as well as building nations as well as their relations to human civilisation.*

South African democracy has ushered a new model of the democratic states that seeks to facilitate interaction between a new nation and class. The democratic state becomes central in building a non-racial, on-sexist, democratic and prosperous society. Clearly the conceptualisation is the historical mission of the liberation movement in purport to build a nation within the context of the National Democratic Revolution.

For the past twenty five (25) years the model couldn't pass without facing challenges from two contending classes i.e. capitalists and working class. The democratic breakthrough in the revolution always creates favourable conditions for classes to fight for erection of new superstructure in their own ways for the sake of trajectory of their own needs. Reality of the matter is that like in any part of the globe, capitalism reproduces itself within a capitalist society and the state is inherently a bourgeois state.

### **CLASS SUICIDE BY THE WORKING PEOPLE**

History has taught us that ascendancy of many revolutionary movements into power managed (regrettably) to turn most advanced revolutionaries into political accumulators in government. This happens through co-option by capital in purport to sustain their selfish interests of class accumulation, and its dominance in the developing world.

Working class leaders from revolutionary formations ended up being in echelons of power and become shop stewards of super exploitation in different forms. It always becomes difficult for organisations to take firm and resolute actions against state officials and capital because leaders who are in contact with capital always polarised discussions and develop high level of arrogance. The process of renewal in this regard becomes necessary with a clear framework of systematic political education of all members.

This must go hand in hand with establishment of tough criteria for one to assume position of responsibilities. Marxist axiom that says emancipation of the working class should be the work of the working class remains relevant as ever in order to avoid working class demobilisation. Therefore it will be the work of the working people themselves to work out a plan (within the context of legality) of organizing and mobilising against capitalist system.

### **ATTITUDE OF PARTIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS TOWARDS NATION BUILDING**

Many political parties do exist without a tangible programme of addressing imbalances of the past or com-

mitting themselves to the programme of nation building. The parliamentary systems give them impetus of material benefits and to speak from uniformed position that seeks to authorise their existence. Since the dawn of democracy the political parties are there to see the death and the burial of the ANC.

Nothing or next to nothing has emerged in their mission to fight national oppression and pursue nation building. It is going to be difficult for political parties to understand their rightful position in fighting for emancipation of our people. Parliament can be utilised correctly by the ANC on its processes of renewal, unity, as well as the social compact. The ANC has made meaningful impact in parliament as an institution to take control and promulgate laws that are intended to remove the legacy of the past.

Therefore there should be accountability that is much improved in the level of legislature, executive and the judiciary. Reality of the matter is that institutions of power must be recognised and be fully utilised for nation building.

### **CAPITALISM AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION**

According to Karl Marx the historical role that was played by capitalism was when it overthrew the feudal system, transforming peasants into a proletariat as well as development of productive forces. The systemic methods of oppression developed by capitalism have made consciousness of men and women to rise in conflict with material conditions and wage a struggle against the system.

The capitalist system is arrogantly promoting environmental degradations, human rights violation, women oppression as well as various forms of racism. Instead of accounting to this heinous crime, it resorted to violence and intimidation of nations and movements at the global platforms. This could not succeed without powerful resistance by popular movements, CBOs and NGOs globally.

It is quite important to strengthen the role of NGOs and CBOs solely to deepen mutual relations with the state in order to address national question in the country. This can't happen without a clear political framework and monitoring on mass works by these formations, because counterrevolution is also using them to oust government in different parts of the world. Mobilisation of classes, social strata should always be a principle that guides leadership that is entrusted with responsibility to champion the National Democratic Revolution. . We are raising this because the current epoch doesn't require intervention of capitalism in addressing national oppression from the past.



## GAINS MADE BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

Reality of the matter is that radical and profound changes were made in the last years of assuming political power by the ANC. These were made under difficult material conditions that were determined by both internal and external factors. The entire movement continuously believed that the gains must be deepened, advanced, as well as defended.

State Capture emerged as a counter revolutionary weapon that has worked tirelessly to roll back the gains made through replacement of capitalist profit maximisation. What is emerging out of commissions of enquiries within the state must be used as precedence in determining radical shift within the ANC and to reinforce participation of society in bringing changes. The work of the integrity commission needs to be defended at all times precisely because reinforce ANC values within democratic society.

## URGENT TASKS

The current state of affairs gives ANC more power to renew its commitment to address grievances of the past. Central to that is mobilisation of all social forces behind the sole mission of addressing the national question.

The mandate that ANC got from the national election must be utilised in a way that seeks to speed up service delivery, uniting people, land expropriation, as well as fighting greed and corruption. Twin tasks for the entire movement is to roll back state capture, promote values and principles of democracy (without necessarily becoming a pliable instrument of the market) and lead society within the context of people becoming their

own liberators.

The success of the South African model of development will become realisable only if we have a strong ANC, through iron hand discipline on its cadres, modernised communication with the South African nation and capability to discipline capital as well as treat sovereign states on an equal basis.

All comrades in the movement are expected to keep in mind their historic mission, remain modest and prudent, guard against arrogance and rashness, and maintain a style of plain living and hard struggle. Cadres are expected to be eager to make changes and innovations and guard against rigid thinking and stagnation. The movement should unswervingly forge ahead along the path of the National Democratic Revolution and work very hard to unite people of all ethnic groups.

## CONCLUSION

The National Democratic Revolution remains the best scientific project to address the legacy of the national question in South Africa. The past 25 years has laid a foundation and framework that serve as a pillar to create a non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous, united and democratic country.

Capitalist class will continuously fail to demystify the role of the state. What is vital is for the masses to be central in promotion of accountable and transparent governance. Leaders must be held accountable and be exposed for corrupt activities. Social movements must continue to intensify their fight against oppression and violation of human rights. In this regard people must become their own liberators by making sure that they determine their own destiny.

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# *Issues of* **NON-RACIALISM** *in* **SOUTH AFRICAN** **NATIONHOOD**

- *South Africa, as diverse as it is, is not combined to form a nation based on shared values, heritage and history. It remains polarized, both racially and ethnically. This does not mean South Africa's democracy is dysfunctional. It merely states that South Africa still faces challenges of a united society, manifested in issues such as identity, race, ethnicity and class.*

14

By **THOBANI MZABALAZO MATHEZA**

Scholars, researchers and academics examined non-racialism in relation to the concepts of race, generic humanism and universalism. This was done in order to establish conditions under which non-racialism can be implemented as an emancipatory concept.

After centuries of racial discrimination, oppression and class divisions, South Africans welcomed the political transition from apartheid with joyous enthusiasm. Twenty-five years after the political transition, general public opinion reflects a downturn, as people have grown increasingly discontented with continuing, deep socioeconomic inequality. Race does exist historically and socially. To ignore its existence in addressing the question of non-racialism would be to deny the validity of the experience of racial inequality.

Despite a Constitution that is welcomed as one of the most progressive globally and despite the implementation of numerous policy programmes and initiatives,



many feel that not enough has been achieved to realize the promise of fundamental human rights and to reduce income inequality, poverty, human underdevelopment and uneven access to basic services<sup>1</sup>. The issue of underdevelopment, poverty, inequality and uneven access to basic services emanates from historical and socioeconomic racialism.

This is coercing one to strongly argue that the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is neither a myth nor reality. The provision of services and levelling of the economic playing fields that were so drastically skewed by the apartheid system must be absolutely central to any concept of transformative constitutionalism<sup>2</sup>.

Historical perspectives, socioeconomic differences and racial disposessions forces one to argue using racial spectacles, precisely because since 1910 the state has been utilized at all times to secure and develop the capitalist mode of production, whilst corporations have endorsed a racial form of political domination<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore, grounded on evidence based results, the main analysis of this paper is stating categorically that the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is neither a myth nor reality.

For instance, the South African Constitution as the key guide of the country, advocates for a non-racial South Africa, at the same vein the Constitution and policies of the African National Congress (ANC) as a governing political party is also proclaiming a South Africa that is advancing nation building and social cohesion, stepping up the fight against racism, sexism, homophobia and other intolerances. Therefore one cannot say the notion of non-racialism in the country's politics is a myth, precisely because there are serious efforts and successes that have been made by ANC and its Alliance prior and post 1994 to fight the scourge of racism. Even though the demon of racism is far from defeated, South Africa is having a society that refuses to accept racism as the norm.

South Africa has been notorious for racial segregation and apartheid that dominated the country's twentieth-century history. The country was so much a special focus of international contempt that it is sometimes hard to recall how commonplace racial oppression has been in other societies. It has also proved very difficult for even the wealthiest societies to dismantle the mechanisms that perpetuate institutionalized racism<sup>4</sup>.

The degree to which apartheid deformed both its victims and its beneficiaries has become ever clearer. This historical legacy also influences citizens' varied prognoses for the country's future. Pessimists view the 'new' South Africa's political destiny through the lance of African decline. Seeing South Africa's transition to democracy as just one more step along the road to civil war, ethnic division and one-party rule that has characterized much of post-colonial Africa<sup>5</sup>.

In analyzing whether the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is a myth or reality, one could further project it by stating clearly that skeptical Whites often liken the country to post-independence Zimbabwe. A society that proved unable to overcome its historical divisions and that fell victim to predatory political elites. Optimists, in contrast, have seen the new South Africa as a rainbow nation, unshackled by the miracle of transition from economic and social chains of apartheid<sup>6</sup>.

For the first two post-apartheid decades, many of the supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) understood the liberation movement as a glorious locomotive of African renaissance that would pull the continent into a brighter twenty-first century. While Blacks in general and Africans in particular have been more

positive about the future than White South Africans. No doubt because the burden of racial oppression has been lifted from blacks in general – though black South Africans still feel the legacy of the past regime.

There has been growing public discontent in recent years. White hopes that the scars of centuries of oppression might somehow fall away overnight have been dashed. Blacks' aspirations to lead dignified lives, free of poverty, have not been sufficiently widely realized. Therefore one cannot say the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is a myth or reality. For all South Africans, the alleged miracle of transition to non-racial democracy has begun to turn sour, when incidents such as the Marikana Massacre took place.

Institutionalized policies of dispossession and the destruction of black people in general and Africans in particular laid the historical foundations for poverty, which cannot be separated from the influence and power of the business sector<sup>7</sup>. The notion of non-racialism in the country's politics is neither a myth nor a reality, while continued state of dispossession amounts to a system of neo-apartheid, which affects the largely poor black population, poverty, unemployment and inequality has persisted after 1994 in spite of a growing black capitalist class.

South African Constitution recognized about eleven South African languages. Language is not an instrument of exclusion in principle as anyone can learn it. Therefore looking at South African racial groups one notes that the majority of white South Africans are unable to speak other South African languages except English and Afrikaans. While South Africa is having eleven official languages, what impression is the high level of language illiteracy on white South Africans is saying about the notion of non-racialism?

No one lives long enough to learn all languages. Print-language is what invents nationalism, not a particular language *per se*<sup>8</sup>. To greater extent in South Africa many ethnic groups and racial groups seek to be recognized through their languages – Afrikaners advocate for the use of Afrikaans in schools, while Khoi-Sans feel excluded in their country of origin. The Khoisan for a very long time feel that they were not recognized until recently, when the ANC Government came up with the Leadership and Khoi-San Bill.

Apartheid capitalized on differences in race, culture and gender<sup>9</sup>. Though South Africa is a democratic country since 1994, the country still faces major challenges of nation-building and the establishment of the common identity based on South African nationalism and a shared patriotism<sup>10</sup>. These challenges have proved to be difficult to overcome, precisely because they are rooted

in South Africa's society. South Africa is a diverse country in terms of ideology, class, linguistic, cultural, racial and ethnical nature<sup>11</sup>.

South Africa, as diverse as it is but it is not combined to form a nation based on shared values, heritage and history, it remains polarized, both racially and ethnically. This does not mean South Africa's democracy is dysfunctional, it merely states that South Africa still faces challenges of a united society, manifested in issues such as identity, race, ethnicity and class<sup>12</sup>.

One can argue that South Africa remains separated, citing a number of case studies. Looking at the case of Orania, an Afrikaner only town, where only Afrikaans is being used as a language, because on fears about diluting culture. Boshoff is one of the leaders of this town founded by his father Carel Boshoff Senior, an Afrikaner intellectual and son-in-law of apartheid architect, Hendrik Verwoerd. This part of South Africa in the Northern Cape Province shows that the spirit of racially, ethnically and linguistic division is live.

However, there have been unifying events, such as the successful hosting of the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Nevertheless, a relentless sequence of tragedies and scandals has buffeted popular sentiment and led even congenial optimists to fear for the future of their country.

Looking at case study such as the Orania, one may argue that the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is a myth. Orania has also proved to be the answer for those Afrikaners who felt displaced in the land their people had ruled for many decades.

Black people in general and Africans in particular cannot live in Orania because residents are screened by the town council using a strict criterion, which includes first and foremost being an ethnic Afrikaner. Therefore the notion on non-racialism in South African politics becomes a myth in this instance. This can also force one to look at the issues of socioeconomic aspects in racial terms.

Poverty is still racial in South Africa, therefore this coerced one to use racial lances to look at the issue of poverty or even inequality as well as unemployment. Due to the fact that these three challenges are still alive and very stubborn, this shows clearly that the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is a myth. According to South African Statistics, the official criteria in 2011, 40% of black South Africans were poor, as were 22% of coloured, 3% of Indian and 0.4% of white South Africans<sup>13</sup>.

The democratic government led by the African National Congress (ANC) is acknowledging how deep rooted

is the notion of racism, ethnic division etc. When it came to power in 1994, the African National Congress envisaged to unite all the people of South Africa, for the complete liberation of the country from all forms of discrimination and national oppression. To end apartheid in all its forms and transform South Africa as rapidly as possible into a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic country based on the principles of the Freedom Charter and in pursuit of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), to promote economic development for the benefit of all<sup>14</sup>.

This is what the governing political party ANC envisage for South Africa. As a governing party, the ANC is striving for a non-racial society, which means in its policies the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is a reality that it is working towards its full results based evidence.

Looking at the South African Constitution, which is a guiding document for a democratic South Africa, one may argue that in South African politics the notion of non-racialism is a reality, while theory and practice when it comes to South African politics is a totally different issue. The preamble of South African Constitution stated that *we, the people of South Africa, recognize the injustices of our past; honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land; respect those who have worked to build and develop our country and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.*

*We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law; improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations<sup>15</sup>.*

Noting the South African Constitution preamble and the chapters of the country's Constitution, together with the Constitution of the political party in Government, one may conclude that the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is a reality. The Country's Constitution as well as the ANC Constitution is aspiring of a non-racial South Africa.

Therefore one may reject the notion of non-racialism in South African politics, arguing that a major reason for the rejection is the snail pace in pursuing the economic transformation promised in the Freedom Charter and the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), though a large proportion of the ANC still aspires to the kind of sharing of the economy envisaged during the struggle against apartheid<sup>16</sup>.



On 9 June 2008 when the former President Thabo Mbeki addressed the Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics in Cape Town, he stated that the immediate reality is that all of us know that the poor are knocking at the gate. If this gate does not open, because we who have the key are otherwise involved, the masses will break down the gate<sup>17</sup>.

One may argue that let alone the fact that the issue of non-racialism is not yet fully accomplished in South Africa, in our politics the notion of non-racialism is neither a myth nor a reality but an aspiration that the Tripartite Alliance (ANC, SACP & COSATU) and ANC Government is striving to achieve. The majority of South African political parties are in favour of the South African Constitution, therefore this gives an impression that the issue of non-racialism is favored by the majority, though it is not a myth neither a reality yet. The ruling party and its Alliance South African Communist Party (SACP) and Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) are stuck to non-racialism as the ultimate policy. Non-racialist democracy as a policy, however did not eliminate African identity<sup>18</sup>.

The notion of non-racialism in South African politics is neither a myth nor reality; non-racialism is the policy that the ANC as a political party with its Alliance

Partners as well as the government of the ANC wish to achieve, non-racialism in South African politics is a work in progress.

South African politics explicitly shows that every revolutionary is having a primary duty to understand classes, which were responsible for oppression and those which might form an alliance against that oppression. Evidence suggests that stabilization achieved its principle objective of bringing some control over the major financial variables such as domestic debt, inflation and interest rates, but a heavy price was paid in the persistence of inequality, unemployment, poverty and the huge cost of consequent social problems such as crime, Aids and disease and all the aforesaid social ills forces. Non-racialism as a concept has a rich and contentious history in South African politics. For many it was a core feature of the struggle against apartheid, uniting a range of forces fighting for a society free from racial discrimination. Indeed, it is a central tenet in South Africa's Constitution, forming a core part of the founding provisions of the country. However, there is widespread contestation over what the concept entails, both theoretically and in practical terms. Yet the notion of non-racialism in South African politics is neither a myth nor reality.

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The ANC government has made only modest gains in elaborating a common citizenship, institutionally. It is sufficient to say that many of the changes made since 1994 were introduced with the intention of extending services to areas that the apartheid state had deliberately neglected, expanding access to services and equalizing the quality of services between blacks and whites and between provinces. It is also true that the success of these various measures is extremely uneven, and in key sectors, especially health and education, the results are poor, therefore it is inevitable not to use racial spectacles when analyzing socioeconomic issues in South Africa and looking at social ills. The notion of non-racialism in South African politics is neither a myth nor reality.

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# GENDER BIAS *in the* CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONALISM

- *...why is nationalist ideology depicted as though men and women have different goals and agendas for the nation? Why is nationalism portrayed as patriotic manhood and exalted and romanticized motherhood? Why should the liberation of these two genders be unequal and different?...*

*Post-independence, nationalists use the state to facilitate further divides. For example, refusing to treat citizenship as a gendered relationship between the state and its citizens overlooks the manner in which both (men and women) participate in state institutions and also how they are affected by state policies and laws differently.*

19

By **SARAH MOKWEBE**

## DEFINING NATIONALISM ...

Nationalism is generally used to describe the phenomena of anti-colonial domination/ subjugation and the actions taken towards achieving and maintaining self-determination, as well as national identity. To sum the two descriptions given, nationalism is both a goal and a state of being.

As a tool against colonial rule, nationalism has been a dominant force towards the re-imagination and re-configuration of human agency. However, this re-imagination and re-configuration doesn't occur in vacuum, it takes place in a society already socialised in a certain way and in favour of a certain gender (not necessarily sex). In itself, the human



agency that is in quest of is that of a certain gender.

Nationalism, as a form of identification and system of representation, is constituted as a gendered discourse right from its beginning; its construction occurs in an already gendered society. As such, these already socially constructed ideas of femininity and masculinity shape the participation of females and males (or women and men) in the building of nations and states. This extends also to how the roles of these two mentioned genders

are epitomized. The focus of nationalism on primarily men and women genders also disregards the existence of other genders and sexualities who partake in the struggle for freedom.

## WHO REPRESENTS NATIONHOOD?

Theorists and proponents of nationalism – Fanon, Cabral and Machel being the exception to the rule – have seldom felt the need and importance to explore how nationalisms are implicated in gender dynamics. This is to say nationalism the world over never afforded women and men the same privileged access to political power and resources of the nation-state. Although some nations have progressed to advocate for the equality of (binary) genders; it has seldom manifested into an actual practice of gender equality. In instances where women are afforded equality, there's a certain typology that these women need to adhere to.

There exists an interchangeable relationship between theorists of nationalism and nationalists themselves; in how the reduction of women manifests. This is two-fold: firstly, in theorising about the making of nations and states, women are depicted as auxiliary participants in the quest for political freedom and are also relegated to minor and symbolic roles in nationalist movements, in relation to men. Both these manifestations are mechanisms of excluding and erasing work of women in political organisations, movements and decision-making. Due to this, the account/ narration of the construction of nations and states placed women as supplementary participants in the struggle for freedom. There often is an omission or exclusion of women and their work in the making of states/ nations and a downplay of their roles as members of the nation. The scripts in which these roles are embedded are written primarily by men, for men and about men. Women are, by design, supporting actors whose roles reflect masculinist notions of femininity and of women's proper "place".

As a result, the needs of the nation are synonymous with those of men and their frustrations and aspirations. Women on the other hand are construed as the "*bearers of the nation*" as inferred by Fanon in his essay *Algeria Unveiled* [translated]. The national state, as an institution, has a hierarchal authority structure which places males at the top and females in subordinate positions often characterized by unrecognized and uncompensated labour. The forced identity of motherhood onto women, and its exaltation has made it difficult for women to choose to stay single/unmarried, to choose to not have children or to identify as homosexual/queer. This reverberates the notion that women should always be at the service of men and this is their destiny, and not as independent members of the national community.

There also is the propensity to liken the nation to a family by nationalists which is symbolized as male-headed household where there exist 'natural' roles for both the man and the woman to play. This gives rise to the obsession about the purity of women as 'mothers', and prompts interest in the sexuality and sexual behaviour of women. These women have to be 'well-behaved'

because their actions have potential to shame the family – and the family's shame becomes the nation's (the man) shame.

Nationalisms represent political power and are closely tied to the state as well as its institutions. These institutions include media, schools, churches, the military and political organizations. Nationalism uses these institutions to (re)invent and perform social difference through elaborate social practices which continue to perpetuate gender stereotypes.

This then begs the question: why is nationalist ideology depicted as though men and women have different goals and agendas for the nation? Why is nationalism portrayed as patriotic manhood and exalted and romanticized motherhood? Why should the liberation of these two genders be unequal and different?

## FEMINISM AND NATIONALISM: UNEASY BEDFELLOWS?

The analysis or examination of the manner in which nationalism is gendered shouldn't be done in a manner that conflates the terms 'gender' and 'women'. Nor should focus be placed on women only as this overlooks how gender in its entirety shapes politics and the nation-state. This overlooks what is systematically designed as masculine and how it reveals itself in structural, cultural and social contexts as well as the accompanying activities.

The symbolism that women have to perform is a prescribed one, and as a result, there exists repercussions for (political and personal) actions of women who do not conform to predefined typologies and roles awarded to women in nation states. If women choose or decide to stand up for their rights as women, they are often described as disloyal to the cause/ revolution.

Faced with these constraints, women sometimes attempt to decree nationalism through embodying the traditional roles allotted to them which entail supporting their husbands, raising the (nation's) children as well as serving as symbols of national honour under the title "*mother of the nation*". In other instances, the women are compelled to demonstrate strength outside the 'confines' of their own gender by performing masculinity and (masculine) militancy. They repeat and perpetuate the authoritarian attitudes of nationalism and react with severe intolerance to any form of non-conformity, especially from fellow women. Nonetheless, whatever role women play in nationalist struggles, they still find themselves harshly under the thumb of institutionalized patriarchy in the end.

Subsequently, because of the lens within which women are viewed in nationalist struggles, women can too exploit their patriarchy-informed positionality to advance



nationalists struggles. It is for this reason that women in the African National Congress at the height of apartheid would be able to recruit with ease for underground operations.

The involvement and integration of women, especially formally, into the African nationalist and liberation struggles wasn't due to explicit and intentional invitation. It stemmed from their own agency and was in response to repression and violence from non-democratic regimes and apartheid authorities. For example, the first ever notable action repelling subjugation of women by the apartheid state dates back to 1913 where women had restricted access to cities and urban areas. In response, hundreds of women marched to Bloemfontein to discard of their passes. It was under this clout and climate of militancy that the then Bantu Women's League (now ANCWL) came to formation in 1918. It however took the ANC 31 years after its formation, and 25 years after the formation of the Women's League, to grant women full membership and voting rights.

The rise of the feminist struggle in the midst of the liberation and nationalist struggle has always been met with resistance, regardless of the fact that feminist movements are in response to imperialism which marginalizes women in social and economic spheres. In most cases, which is still prevalent, feminism has been perceived as a western concept and sometimes equated to imperialism. This, in part, could be attributed to its misinterpretation as sold by those opposed to it.

Historically, the relationship between feminism and nationalism has been that of double repression; theories of nationalism would ignore gender as a category integral of nationalism. Feminism would too be ignorant of race and class as essential categories of gender. This in turn would place women in a position of difficulty as it would present contradictions in their circumstances. The result would be to treat or view nationalism as the panacea of their oppression. Sequentially, women are then told to remain silent until after the revolution.

Women have continued to organize and mobilize against their repression, within and outside of nationalist spaces as a way of engaging "new" struggles since political independence. But still they encounter back-

lash and sometimes reversal of whatever gains they would have achieved. This often manifests as cultural and sexist backlash. In dire counterattacks, women are driven back into their traditional roles through sexual and physical assault as a way of 'putting them in their place' or 'teaching them how to be decent and respectable women. Feminism or the championing of women's rights is a political refusal of gender conflict, and not its cause.

Post-independence, nationalists use the state to facilitate further divides. For example, refusing to treat citizenship as a gendered relationship between the state and its citizens overlooks the manner in which both (men and women) participate in state institutions and also how they are affected by state policies and laws differently. In as much as in independent (and democratic) states women and men vote, gender dynamics still play out in the building of new institutions. Subsequently, women tend to be treated as recipients of state policies instead of agents in the formation of new social and political orders.

It is also about time that nationalists and society as a whole move away from the rhetoric that colonialism and/or capitalism have been women's ruin, and patriarchy only being a secondary and indirect oppressor destined to wither away when capitalism has been conquered.

### ... TOWARDS A COMMON END?

If nationalism is not acutely informed and transformed by a thorough analysis of gender power, the nation-state will continue to only champion male hopes, aspirations as well as privilege.

Nationalism in itself poses the risk of heightening the denial of difference onto the conveniently ambiguous "collective will" whereas there exist contradictions within the deliberate collectivist character of nationalism; conflicts such as class, gender, ethnicity, regional and generational difference. The insistence on a single politics of identity (nationalism, socialism, feminism etc) cannot ultimately guarantee political correctness as there is no one identity that encompasses the complexity of humans.

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# THE NATIONAL QUESTION FOR THE COLOURED COMMUNITY

■ *This province which post 94 has seen sharpened racial conflict, is populated by a majority of coloureds with Africans and Whites as minorities. In light of the nation building project, how should these tensions be understood? Does the manifestation demonstrate an unresolved national question? Are we failing the national building project? What are the political and economic factors which shape the contours of the national question within the province?*

By **DR OSCAR VAN HEERDEN**

Twitter: @OHeerden

THERE is a commonly held perception that the ANC said that we should try and ignore the coloured voters in and around Cape Town and rather rely on the influx of Africans from the Eastern Cape. This is uppermost in the minds of a lot of coloured people when you interact with them. They have this view that they can see this, meaning, the influx of particularly Xhosa's.

Also, the fact that there is no coloured role models - when you sit with people and you ask them they will tell you that you know clearly the economic scale is against us because you look at the Patrice, the Tokyo's, the Cyril's, etcetera - where are the coloured role models with wealth?

Even Indians have role models in terms of the new, the nouveau riche post 1994. Where are our coloured role models?

Then of course there's the syndrome of feeling special. This notion that during apartheid, Africans being



at the very bottom, you knew there were some privileges and accommodation made for coloured people in education, health and in a number of other social services. So this notion that suddenly they are not special anymore, goes hand in hand with we are also not black enough in terms of affirmative action, BEE and all these other policy choices made post '94.

Racism of course is still very pervasive in the Western Cape and it is systemic and structural because it is informed by history. This province which post 94 has seen sharpened racial conflict, is populated by a majority of coloureds with Africans and Whites as minorities. In light of the nation building project, how should these tensions be understood?

Does the manifestation demonstrate an unresolved national question? Are we failing the national building project? What are the political and economic factors which shape the contours of the national question within the province?

In the 60s Colonialism of a Special Type (CST) was the pre-eminent theoretical framework used in the analysis of the South African National Question.

During this period, the understanding was that “black” meant the inclusion of Coloureds and Indians. The majority (Coloureds) of whom reside in the Western Cape. Indian South Africans who, and I quote, “*despite deceptive and often meaningless concessions, share a common fate with their African brothers and own their liberation bound up with the liberation of the African people.*” This was in the policy document of the ANC in 1969.

In other words the strategy aimed at liberating the black majority, of which Coloured people were considered a part, from national oppression and exploitation. It challenged and largely undermined a negative minority approach, i.e. thinking of one group as a separate entity. So it was very clear that we are one black majority and there are not these negative minority issues. In addition, the thesis committed a strategic mistake by imposing the concept of African leadership on the Western Cape in the 1980s.

The central aspect of the national question in South Africa was about defeating CST which would then lead to the emergence of a new sovereign and non-racial South Africa in which race, ethnicity and nationality are no longer indices of difference. According to the thesis this concept of nation was not defined by skin colour or racial designation. It involved sovereignty that will come from a people as a whole and not from a collection of Bantus and racial and tribal groupings organised to perpetuate minority rule.

Now, the thesis has not really grappled with the theoretical and programmatic aspects of the national question post 1994. There is still no rigorous theoretical conceptualisation of the dynamics of race and class in the post-apartheid era. For a long time we were governed by the thesis of CST. Perhaps it’s now time for a new framework and doctrine to deal with class and race as we move in this current political conjuncture.

The second approach, to understand dynamics of the national question in the Western Cape, one must look at post-apartheid capitalism. The structural constraints as well as the obvious fundamental basic principle of capitalism which is to ensure profitability and weakening of the working class within the country, but in this case in the province of the Western Cape.

South Africa is essentially a capitalist state which is presiding over three fundamental processes. One - the restoration of capitalist profitability to a capitalist trajectory built on the back of cheap black labour. Two - the reinsertion of white owned capital into the global economy at the expense of the national objectives, and thirdly the emergence of a black stratum of this capitalist class.

Such a state is complicating and delaying the resolution of the national question.

Firstly, Webster and Van Holdt demonstrated that capitalist globalisation has given birth to a new despotism at work, leading to a reorganisation of labour and the weakening of black workers in general. Secondly, the entire labour force is under attack in terms of wage disputes, low wages, etc. And then Du Toit says as a third argument, one must go beyond the simplistic reductionist and linear deterministic accounts of capital globalisation.

What happens to black workers under this new despotism is not simply the direct result of capitalist globalisation, but also locally mediated. In the case of rural Western Cape, these contexts include a social and cultural legacy of slave society, colonial settlements, segregation, white domination and apartheid which produce racialize identities.

These were later challenged by our political dynamic of democratisation, political transition, human rights and the transformation and restructuring of a democratic local government. However, these democratic impulses did not fully defeat the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, particularly in the Western Cape as shown by the dire conditions of farm workers in the province, despite the introduction of favourable laws. It’s a continuous struggle within the rural area.

The new labour laws protecting farm workers did not structurally change and reverse the long history of disposition. This long history helped create a white rural land-owning class which has assumed that ownership of land also means the right to govern the lives of those who work it (i.e. the land). Before the new labour laws, social relations of paternalism permeated Western Cape farms in the form of the “dop system” (a system where part of the workers payment was a certain quantity of alcohol). This would not only create dependency but also severe alcoholism. In addition workers were dependent on housing from farm owners as well as get threatened with evictions and vulnerability of racial and physical abuse.

Clearly the new labour laws fall far short of effectively addressing the structural foundations of these social relations. There is evidence of a shift away from the use of permanent workers towards the use of temporary seasonal and subcontracted labour that is largely women and an increase in the numbers of outsiders (migrant labour).

According to research done by Du Toit and Ali in 2004, African workers from the Eastern Cape brought in on contract are forced into constant friction with the Coloured insiders.

In other words, White controlled Western Cape Agriculture is passing rifts and costs onto black workers while at the same time exploiting cheap labour and dividing workers on a racial basis. Another critical factor was the entrenchment of existing property rights in terms of the political settlement post 1993-1994.

These property rights were obtained and secured through disposition, destruction of social economic systems, national oppression, gender oppression and economic exploitation. And as Joe Slovo once remarked, the basic objectives of liberation cannot be achieved without undermining the accumulated political, social, cultural and economic White privileges.

The moulding of our nation will be advanced in direct proportion to the elimination of these accumulative privileges. When Coloured people look at how redress on the economic front is taking place, they feel excluded. They feel that there is a disjuncture between what's happening and where they are situated within the Western Cape in particular.

This is worse in the Western Cape where there remains significant presence of white parties in the provincial and local governments as well as intense fractures of state institutions and resources that are used to protect white privileges such as the many anecdotal stories and reports about rural police stations refusing to act against abusive and racist farmers in the Western Cape. Objectively, the post-apartheid working classes had its traditional power base weakened and its social and political weight reduced to the combined impact of the restoration of capitalist profitability.

On the issue of class and race, Volpe's view was that the basis of the national question lay in the economic structure. Informed by this view which raised the question, what are the contours of the new post-apartheid racial order and how does it reflect the changing labour supplies, the informalisation of work and the emergence of an African bourgeoisie? In what ways does liberal democracy conserve or restore or challenge the racial division of labour and racialised property relations?

Further work is required to analyse the socio economic profile of White workers in order to identify similarities and differences between them and black workers. Through that kind of an investigation, one would come to appreciate the underlying factors, not the objective realities, because one always finds it very interesting that there's this argument that there's a difference between what poor people in Mannenberg and those in Guguletu wants.

They want the same thing. The DA has managed to convince, particularly Coloureds, that they want a different set of stuff, when if you are poor - you are poor and you want the same basic stuff.

Similarly, if you are an exploited worker, you have the same to argue for.

In all of these, the ruling class has sought to shape the substance of the new South African Nation and its state given that Coloured and African workers largely depend on the White capitalist class for employment. And they have certainly made full use of exploiting the two groupings by pitting them against each other.

So when we asked the question if Afro-Neo Liberalism can resolve the national question, it correctly emphasises the urgency of tackling racial inequalities and racism within society but conveniently forgets that it is the very black working class that is at the receiving end of undefeated white racism and capitalist exploitation.

The real aristocrats, i.e. white monopoly capital, are left unchallenged by Afro-Neo Liberalism except insofar as to how they should be encouraged and given incentives to support the creation of a black capitalist class. This emerging class fraction has typically not accumulated its own capital through unleashing of productive processes, but relies on special share deals, affirmative action, BEE quotas, fronting, privatisation and trading on one real piece of capital.

The concept of African leadership or hegemony has been described by the ANC as hegemony of indigenous Africans over national life and character of the new nation. There are three problems with this formulation.

Firstly, African is implied so as not to consciously and deliberately include the Khoi-San people which includes the history of an ignored but heroic anti-colonial resistance. This is to miss an important opportunity to embrace and reaffirm the African origins of large sections of Coloured people in the Western Cape.

Secondly, African is also used loosely to paper over class differentiation amongst the diverse African communities in South Africa. African leadership can end up as a narrow nationalistic concept if it is not related to its class content. To be controversial, there's no doubt that Whites like the communist Joe Slovo was a far better representative of black working-class interests than the black, but capitalist Patrice Motsepe.

The third problem has to do with the imagery of a timeless pre-colonial African society which can be transmitted as a whole to a 21st century capitalist South Africa. This has opened the doors for moribund feudal forces and practices to rear their ugly heads.

Under these conditions, black working-class unity as the bedrock of nation building, is far from a reality. Instead the entrenchment of racial identities, mutual fears and mistrust are the order of the day.



In the 1980s, the anti-apartheid struggle was characterised by intensive and grounded political education of activists and a mass base of non-racialism and nation building. In contrast the post 94 period has been marked by a virtual absence of such political education. This rise of narrow Africanism within the ANC in the Western Cape, on the back of the concept of African leadership can be seen as the beginnings of a tendency towards national exclusiveness which must be understood as a drive by the bourgeois elite among the oppressed to take over the role of the new exploiter.

Such Africanism is strategically incapable of structurally rolling back apartheid geography, socially immobilise the non-racial homeless people's movement and de-commodify basic services as basis for building integrated communities. The emergence of this kind of Africanism is found in how the ANC's Strategy and Tactics is defined in class terms.

For example, Joel Netshitenzhe narrowed the scope for national liberation to the removal of barriers that have been set by Apartheid in terms of black people and Africans in particular, access to the economy and services, leaving intact the economic structure of society. In the same piece he also sought to equate the role of the working class in national liberation together with that of the middle strata.

There was something quite deterministic about the CST thesis about how nation building would take place post-apartheid. It had this assumption that we would automatically just gel and start building a nation, which as we know is not happening and these include criticisms in the manner in which – these include the racialisation of transformation, inequality, capitalism, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and criticism in the manner which shows degeneration of the national debate to the level of race populism. A far cry from the rainbowism and even further from the national, radical national project.

One additional challenge that played itself out in the Western Cape is also the issue of provincialism – with the formation of the nine provinces the basic argument is that it has reinforced ethnic positions which we thought the ANC had long dealt with in its almost 100 year history.

In KwaZulu Natal, the Zulu ethnic phenomenon, in the Eastern Cape the Xhosa, and of course in the Western Cape Coloureds as the majority reinforces because we're now in a geographically defined space which governs ourselves and so provincialism has contributed to murky the water on the national question.

On the rethink of the racial basis of affirmative action, anti-discrimination, equity and affirmative action policies are legitimate policies to change the demographic

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*During this period, the understanding was that "black" meant the inclusion of Coloureds and Indians.*

content of public and private institutions as a start but these policies seem to have had racialised side-effects.

Those who benefited the most from these measures are middleclass blacks whilst the racialised structural inequalities facing the black majority remain entrenched. Despite their broad-based and legitimate nature, affirmative action and equity policies have also not been able to build bridges between Africans and other racial groups around the country.

Racialised divisions and antagonisms have been swept by the implementation of these policies. A range of commentators across the political spectrum forcefully argue that these policies perpetuate race category identities and race thinking. The DA plays on this whole "swart gevaar," telling coloureds they are not black enough and are not getting positions on the basis of due merit. And of course, this plays out, if we look at the voting patterns.

In conclusion, if we look at deepening social theory and the practice on the national question, the nation-building project requires a class approach to understand coloured and Indian identities and consciousness, the object conditions and positions of these communities as well as their class structure. For example, Coloureds come up with extremely negative human developed indices in national statistics. This is at variance with the notion that Coloureds benefited more than Africans from apartheid.

It is not possible to achieve any of the above tasks when you look at the ANC who has a membership of more than 90% which is African in the Western Cape. The challenge is to open working-class politics and organisations to the coloured working class. If we want to get to grips with understanding the impact of the national question in the Western Cape, the route is to definitely go through the Coloured working class.

# ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

## *in the*

# UNRESOLVED NATIONAL QUESTION

- *The manifestation of ethnic conflict in Malamulele signifies that the ANC has not addressed or dismantled the colonial and apartheid social relations. In 2015, David Masondo's seminal paper 'Tribalism, language and the national question in post-apartheid SA' pointed out that the resurgence of tribal consciousness in Malamulele was because of the ANC's post-apartheid failure to resolve economic problems.*

By **ASHLEY NYIKO MABASA**

Twitter: @ashley\_nyiko

**T**HE resurgence of ethnic consciousness in South Africa does not receive much attention since the democratic transition of 1994. The issue of ethnic consciousness is theoretical, unlike race relation – in which it is recognized that there are 'whites' and 'blacks.'

Ethnicity is the share of culture, religion, identity, history, etc. The question of ethnicity in post-colonial and apartheid politics has been at the centre of debates in different fields of social science. This discourse is not solely confined to academia; it has also shaped theory on revolutionary political practice and activism in many African states. Ethnicity refers to the different indigenous black African populations who were administered under customary law.

In 2013 the people of Malamulele, who are predominantly Tsonga-speaking, protested against the Thulamela



municipality, which was dominated by Venda speaking persons.

Mamndani draws our attention by contending that ethnicity is a colonial product that aimed to advance imperial interest and was developed and used as justification for colonialism and apartheid – the idea of ethnicity in South Africa was also used to divide and rule black people through Bantustans and separation development.

### COLONIAL STATE AND ETHNIC FORMATION

The Webster dictionary defines ethnicity as social engineered and interest based to achieve a political outcome. Hrabá provided the best definition of ethnic groups: "Self-conscious collectivities of people, who on the basis of a common origin or a separate culture, maintain a distinction between themselves and outsiders." It is not natural or a primordial feature of society.

To understand the formation of ethnicity, it is important to understand the history of the Indian revolt against the British colony in 1857 to 1858, known as the Sepoy Mutiny.

The anecdote goes that the Indian revolt occurred due to alienation of Indian nationalists from their religious and cultural experiences. In this case, the British government used Indian nationalists as police to maintain colonisation. The British forced the Hindu nationalists to clean bullets with the oil of pigs, which was against the Indian religion. And this led to the revolt.

The aftermath of the revolt resulted in Britain rethinking their colonial strategy due to the Sepoy mutiny and its expense.

In addition, the British devised a new method of colonisation, which was divide and rule – the bifurcated states were imposed on South Africans by the colonial apartheid government in the form of the 1970 Bantu Homelands Act. The Bantu Homelands Act concretised tribal authorities as the fundamental rule of the rural people in the countryside. Ethnicity was used as a divide-and-rule mechanism by the apartheid government by concentrating power to chiefs and ndunas who were custodians of ethnicity.

During the apartheid era, political leaders had to declare their ethnicity on the basis of geopolitical allocations of land based on one's ethnic background. The ethnic conflict between Tsonga and Venda people is not new in this discourse; the ethnic division between Vatsonga and Vavenda people became central as the battle to control local administrative resources during the apartheid era. It became a significant problem in the 1960s because people had to declare themselves as members of an ethnic group to access state-controlled resources, jobs, school and houses.

Nadine Gordimer (1969) in her study *'The Discarded People'* localised the 1960s ethnic battle for the control of state resources between Vatsonga and Vavenda ethnic groups at Sibasa. She further noted that under the apartheid government, Vatsonga complained about Venda chiefs being appointed in predominantly Tsonga areas. This further extends to the Tsonga ethnic group, who were living in Venda territory, getting marginalised as the colonial state always gave Vavenda principalship of schools and labour contracts.

The manifestation of ethnic conflict in Malamulele signifies that the ANC has not addressed or dismantled the colonial and apartheid social relations. In 2015, David Masondo's seminal paper *'Tribalism, language and the national question in post-apartheid SA'* pointed out that the resurgence of tribal consciousness in Malamulele was

because of the ANC's post-apartheid failure to resolve economic problems.

According to Bruce J Berman, colonisation is responsible for accentuating ethnicity in Africa. He argues that: *"Social construction of ethnic difference was also spurred by European missionaries who produced the grammars and dictionaries that turned local dialects into the standardised written language of a whole ethnic group, who promptly began to produce texts of their own, articulating their history and culture; and by professional anthropologists, mostly European, who conveyed the concept of culture as a distinct, systematic expression of the social practices and identity."*

It is important to note that ethnicity is not natural, it was created. In case of Zulu ethnicity, its creation involved state buildings, 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.

Before 1820, the term Zulu meant a clan name, which referred to the rulers of a small kingdom dominated by the larger and authoritative Mthetwa kingdom. Strategy and military innovation of the Zulu ruler, Shaka, ultimately allowed the Zulu small kingdom to defeat their Mthetwa overlords. After the defeat, a large number of other kingdoms in the region started to regard themselves as Zulu. The Zulu ethnicity was more political, as other ethnicities and kingdoms in the region were not incorporated but shared many cultural attributes, including language, with the Zulu.

Another interesting case of the formation of ethnic groups by Western Christians was the Yoruba ethnicity of south-western Nigeria and the neighbouring Republic of Benin. Like the Zulu ethnic group, in the 20th century, Yoruba meant something different.

Yoruba was a word used by Hausa people from the savanna to the north to describe inhabitants of Oyo. In the early 20th century, the most powerful Oyo went into decline because of the attacks from Hausa and Fulani Muslim battalions. The region of Oyo inclined into decades of internal warfare. As a result, a large number of Oyo people were on the move. New towns were formed and some people were kidnapped and enslaved in Brazil and Cuba. Others were in Sierra Leone and it was here that the idea of being Yoruba started to be reformulated.

The Zulu and Yoruba are amongst African people who undertook the scheme of *"ethnogenesis"* in the evolution of last few centuries.

## IN CASE OF MALAMULELE AND ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS AND UNRESOLVED NATIONAL QUESTION

At its founding conference in 1912, the ANC issued a vivid call for African unity under the slogan, *"We Are One People."* The ANC and alliance partners have been committed to unity and a democratic South Africa.

Marxist-Leninist theoretical framework approach to the national question for many years has been guided by Stalin's definition. Stalin defined the nation as a *"community of language, culture, territory and economy."* Post-Leninist tendencies have seen surfacing of ethnic emphasis or what Joe Slovo called *"cultural-linguistic or ethnic"* dynamics at the expense of class approach. Slovo attributes ethnic emphasis over class approach to earlier debates on the national question where unconsciously, comrades in exile and inside the country provided the rationale for ethnic separatism<sup>2</sup>. For instance, the 1932 Comintern, mandated Communist Party of South Africa to push the slogans:

*"Complete and immediate national independence for the people of South Africa. For the right of the Zulu, Basuto, etc., nations to form their own independent republics, For the voluntary uniting of the African nations in a Federation of Independent Native Republics. The establishment of a workers' and peasants' government. Full guarantee of the rights of all national minorities, for the coloured, Indian and white toiling masses".*

The quote from 1932 Comintern, justifies the argument which was forwarded by Archie Mafeje in *The dynamics of the Beleaguered State* that, SACP uses universal experiences and language to understand and analyse South Africa's national question and social formation. Today the resurgence of ethnic consciousness and the unresolved national question, are because the ANC government have not paid attention to nation building. Furthermore, the struggle of national building in multi-ethnic communities must not necessitate an obligation of cultural uniformity.

The vantage point of cultural diversity does not stand in opposite direction with national unity. This was affirmed by Slovo<sup>3</sup> in an interview with Lucio Lara that national unity can be made of total different cultures (ethnic groups). The manifestation of the protest by Malamulele people (Vatsonga) for their autonomous municipality shows that the ANC and its alliance, post 1994 have not resolve ethnic challenge as an aspect of the national question.

## ETHNIC RESURGENCE AS A TOOL TO MOBILISE ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Berman noted that the politics of ethnicity in the post-colonial society cannot be diametrically opposed to politics of resource accumulation in the colonial state. Berman further contended that:

*"Ethnicity thus became linked to the ability of big men holding positions in the state to obtain for their communities a significant share of the large-scale collective benefit 'development', as well as the more individual rewards apportioned to their person client."*<sup>4</sup>

South Africa's states have been incorporating and rewarding ethnic elites by providing access to state instructions and resources and therefore institutionalising ethnic patronage as a basis for politics in the post-colonial and apartheid politics. For example, the South African government, prior to the democratic breakthrough, gave the Zulu king 29% of the KwaZulu-Natal land under the Ingonyama Trust in exchange of ethnic stability within the Zulu nation. The Ingonyama Trust is a land deal that King Goodwill Zwelithini signed with the apartheid government three days before the national democratic elections. It was established through the KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act of 1994, on 24 April 1994.

The Ingonyama Trust Act has been used as a form of capital accumulation by tribal authorities in KZN. Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci problematised the opportunistic collaboration of the fascist regime with traditional leaders and religious social groups under semi-feudal circumstances. Gramsci argues that traditional authorities used hegemony and land as a form of accumulation to sustain the fascist regime. This is not dissimilar to South Africa's social formation in which the Ingonyama Trust reproduces feudal patterns of accumulating capital by King Zwelithini.

In addition, in this instance, The High-Level Panel Report by former president of South Africa, Kgalema Motlanthe, stated that control of land by the Zulu king has reproduced a comprador bourgeoisie:

*"The political system 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."*

The High-Level Panel Report shows how ethnic consciousness is used as way of mobilising resources. This cannot be completely treated as a different case of the Vatsonga in Malamulele protesting to have their autonomous municipality. The Vatsonga, through the protest, raised the issue that the reason they want an autonomous municipality is because they are underdeveloped, and have been since the post-democratic state. In 2015, Malamulele community leader Dr Isaiah Ndhambi articulated that the Malamulele community want an autonomous municipality because the Thulamela municipality does not provide service delivery and economic activity for Malamulele.

This is affirming the fact that the Malamulele protest by predominately Vatsonga speakers was about the failures of the ANC to address social relations, which are largely economic challenges.



But the question remains, how does unequal distribution of economic resources reinstate ethnic mobilisation?

In pluralist theory, the answer would be simple: The state's basic institutional structure and its action is fundamentally neutral because it passes laws and maintains social order – laws passed reflect the battle between different actors (ethnic groups, racial groups and classes) of the society, which is conceived as a constellation of organised interest groups. Therefore, society is composed of a plurality of interest groups: Labour and bourgeoisies, ethnicities, students, etc. The group (ethnic group) with the most influence wins out over the policy of the state.

In this case, the state distribution of resources reflects two things: The preference of the policy makers and top bureaucrats (premier, mayor and council) and the battle which continues within different interests groups to influence the state.

In another words, the pluralist approach refutes the idea that one group will have a systematic advantage over other groups because they are all organised around their interests and all have an advantage over the state. Pluralist theorists are wrong and ahistorical. In case of South Africa, the colonial and apartheid system engineered ethnic divisions and dictated which ethnic group access state resources or do not – and this was done through appointing chiefs and ndunas.

In addition, ethnic division in labour reserves also served as a tool for cheap dispensable labour. The apartheid productive economies such as mines and agriculture were dependent on extracting cheap labour of different ethnic groups in the countryside.

Wolpe (1972) presented a '*cheap labour thesis*' which states that urban migrants' reproduction was subsidised by non-wage economic activity in the rural areas, allowing capitalist enterprises to pay wages below the cost of reproduction. The different ethnic homeland economies performed the functions of social security by providing welfare for "*the very young and very old, the sick, the migrant labourer*" in periods of rest, providing the capitalist sector and its state the need to expend resources on these necessary functions.<sup>5</sup>

However, there are other social relations which can be attributed to the resurgence of ethnic consciousness. In Ghana and the Democratic Republic of Congo, bordering Rwanda and Burundi, the outbreak of ethnic conflict in 1997 to 1998 can also be attributed to the role of the state in defining both a region of complexity in ethnic identities.

In this case, in South Africa, in the days leading up to

the 1994 elections and their aftermath, ethnic divisions were used to stir up tension between the Xhosas and Zulus. Instead of having the democracy of the country work in favour of all black Africans, ethnic divisions led to continual violence between the two groups. Zulus were commonly identified as aligned with Inkatha Freedom Party in KZN and Xhosas were known to be aligned with the African National Congress. This derailed the idea of total democracy and freedom. In some circles, they have contended that the IFP was clandestinely funded by the apartheid state to invoke ethnic violence to derail the establishment of a democratic state.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE? IDEAL OF UNITY AND DIVERSITY

The Malamulele protest by Vatsonga people signified that ANC has not adequately addressed the colonial and apartheid legacy. South Africa is still confronted with contradictions which manifested recently in Malamulele.

The ANC was formed with the purpose of transcending tribalism. The ANC, under the colonial and apartheid system, recognised tribalism and ethnic division as amongst the reasons the apartheid state was strong and they failed to end this apartheid system, insofar as colonial and apartheid strategy is concerned with divide and rule. Therefore, the ANC was formed as a way to counter that counter-tribalism. Hence, the ANC conference amended the ANC's new constitution under President Dr AB Xuma by contending that the tribal leaders or traditional authorities cease to represent rural areas' people in the ANC, that every person will join the ANC instead of being represented by traditional leader, including allowing women to join the ANC.

In 1956, the ANC in Bloemfontein adopted the Freedom Charter as its political programme. This Freedom Charter alluded to the importance of a national identity through the recognition of the rights of each group to pursue its own language and culture. The Freedom Charter attempted to build national unity by putting all South Africa's indigenous languages in the same barometer. The colonial and apartheid social engineers which attempted to invoke ethnic division through the Bantustan policy partially succeeded. Classifying native people on the basis of linguistic categories in South Africa has been more fluid than boundaries between racial groups, which was enforced by law.<sup>6</sup>

The attempt to segregate people according to their ethnic group might have partially succeed in the rural areas, but in the urban areas, it has failed blatantly, as was shown by the rise of integrated popular movements during the 1970s and 1980s. This includes the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the 1976 student uprising.

In addition, the ethnic division by design of the Bantustan policy might have achieved the apartheid goal of separating people from one another, the manifestation of organisations such as the IFP. Nonetheless, some ethnic groups used ethnic division as a form of resistance against the apartheid system, for instance, the formation of the 'Venture' language, which was a combination of the Venda and the Vatsonga language.<sup>7</sup>

The Bantustan policy failed to overcome the issue of language confluence within different ethnic groups in their geographical allocated spaces. This was not only limited to Vavenda and Vatsonga. It extended to the people of the Transkei and the Ciskei who speak the same language, Xhosa, as well as English. The Bantustans had in common Northern Sotho, English and Afrikaans. Basotho at Qwa Qwa had in common Southern Sotho with Lesotho and bordering part of the Transkei. Furthermore, it shared Xhosa with the Transkei.

The ANC has been an adoptive and dynamic organisation. In August 1985, the post-ANC national congress known as the Kabwe Consultative Conference, called upon South Africans to fight against Bantustans as well as the apartheid tricamera parliament in order to establish the alternative of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.<sup>8</sup>

Further pledges with Bantustan leaders to fight against apartheid to earn a place in free, democratic South Africa that was envisaged. This is contradictory – the ANC pledged support of the leaders of the Bantustans in exchange for a guarantee that, under the democratic breakthrough, they will continue to exist.

However, the manifestation of an ethnic conflict at Malamulele between the Vatsonga and Vavenda people for control of the municipality signifies the ANC's failure to discard colonial and apartheid legacy. In dealing with the resurgence of ethnic conflict, the ANC government needs to do the following:

1. Draft policies that counter neo-liberal hegemony. The intensification of the neo-liberal dominants' capitalist nation-state in 1980s and 1990s reserved the African conception of development with rejection of the state owning the strategic centre of economic development, including nation building. Neo-liberalism prohibited state intervention in market relation.

African countries started to face economic challenges, which led them to adopting structural adjustment policies (SAPs). Subsequently, SAPs resulted into currency devaluation, fees for basic services, removal for food subsidies, privatisation of public corporations and state-owned enterprises. The African agenda of state-led industrialisation and economic modification had to be discarded. Politics were only a corrupt invasion in which leaders looted state resources at a grand scale. Neo-liberalism policies contributed to most of the decay of the state in Africa's escalating struggle for control of resources and the accumulation of wealth in an environment of growing poverty and growing of vertical inequalities between ethnic communities and the conflicts of moral ethnicity and political tribalism. Neo-liberalism imprisons a state to be incapable of creating a new agenda of development.

2. The ANC government must dismantle provinces. South Africa has nine provinces which were intentionally designed to contain no majority ethno-racial community and the system is officially described as 'devolved union' rather than federation, with strong central government powers. The existence of provinces perpetuates the idea of ethnic division engineered by colonial and apartheid government in South Africa.
3. Finally, dismantle the semi-autonomous traditional authorities which continue to reproduce ethnic divisions. The traditional leaders do not only reproduce ethnic violence, but also reproduce xenophobia.

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# LANGUAGES *as a* DRIVING FORCE *behind the* NATIONAL QUESTION

■ *The education sector has been an influential instrument since colonization. This is because it is one of the primary agents of socialization which influence people's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours. It is a fundamental component which moulds and reproduces members of society. Its influence cuts through the civil, public, and public sector.*

By **SIPHOKAZI MBOLO**

Twitter: @siphokazimbolo

*The objective of this paper is to analyse the national question in South Africa from the lenses of language policies in higher education institutions and the education sector at large.*

## INTRODUCTION

The national question in South Africa is embedded in the oppression of the black majority by the white minority. It is a question about who belongs, who is a citizen. In this telling, belonging to a nation is connected to one's geographic origin, race, ethnicity, and language. Language has been a fundamental component in the oppression of black people as language was politicized and used as an oppressive tool by the colonial and apartheid governments to control and limit black development.

In trying to resolve the language question through higher education institutions, the government has developed language policies such as the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002), and the Language Policy of the Department of Higher Education and Training



(2017) to recognize the legacies of language inequalities in South Africa. This is pivotal for the democratic government and the Department of Higher Education and Training as history has taught us that language patterns – language policies and language practices – have either reinforced or refuted societal tendencies towards the disproportionate distribution of opportunities and

resources.

The Constitution recognizes the role of language and linguistic diversity as a crucial component to nation building and as a contributor to a unified common South African identity. The declaration of eleven official languages signifies positive measure to establish social cohesion and inclusion while upholding the ideals of democracy.

In this light, the Department of Higher Education and Training has put a call for all South African higher education institutions to develop their own language policies which favour the development of indigenous language-

es. The significance of linguistic diversity and language diversity policies has been appreciated by some higher education institutions. For example the University of the Witwatersrand which stated in its 2003 Language Policy that *"Currently millions of South Africans do not complete their schooling, partly because they are taught and assessed through the medium of English or Afrikaans and have no access to concepts in a language that they fully understand. To overcome this legacy, it is essential to develop the African languages of South Africa to provide equal access to education"*.

### **Why the Education Sector and Higher Education Institutions?**

The education sector has been an influential instrument since colonization. This is because it is one of the primary agents of socialization which influence people's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours. It is a fundamental component which moulds and reproduces members of society. Its influence cuts through the civil, public, and public sector.

The apartheid government saw education as an area of interest as it would be an effective avenue to control people's attitudes to mould them into agents to sustain the unjust regime. It could also limit the development and skills of black communities which would ultimately impact their access to job opportunities and economic participation, thus favouring and creating more opportunities for English and Afrikaner people.

Edition, Edition, Briefs, & Hub, (2008)<sup>1</sup> assert that education was sought after by the apartheid government because it, *"not only reproduced and promoted the values, cultural norms, and beliefs of apartheid society but also as an instrument to maintain and legitimize unequal social, economic, and political power relations"*. Therefore, stifling the development of black people through education and language solidified the apartheid's objectives of separate development and the marginalization of the black communities. It was part of the regimes broader plan to ensure that white systems and privileges were promoted.

### **The challenge with Higher Education Institution Language Policies**

Despite the attainment of democracy, South Africa is still defined by continuous colonial social relations – legacies of inequality, racial and class divisions. The post-1994 nation-building project has failed to address the oppressive structural socio-economic base which continues to reproduce itself in the democratic dispensation. It has failed to cultivate a common identity while preserving people's diverse ethnic, racial, linguistic and other concerns. This is the same as the language question. The government has continuously reproduced language policies for higher education institutions

which maintain white hegemony and perpetuate divisions along racial, ethnic, and tribal lines.

In the Department of Higher Education and Training's recommendations for higher education language policies, dominant regional languages are the basis for language selection where for instance the University of Cape Town would choose English and IsiXhosa to be mediums of instruction. The University of Limpopo to choose English and Xitsonga or Tshivenda and the University of Johannesburg to choose English and IsiZulu or Sepedi.

The recommended criterion of dominant regional languages adopted by institutions such as the University of KwaZulu-Natal (English and IsiZulu) and the University of the Witwatersrand (English, Sesotho, and IsiZulu) are problematic in that they do not consider the rapid constant internal migration in the country. More importantly, such recommendations rekindle the spectre of apartheid language tensions by excluding speakers of other languages.

Under the apartheid governments Extension of University Education Act of 1959, different higher education institutions were built to cater for different racial and ethnic groups. The apartheid government sought to organize higher education like broader society, along racial, ethnic and linguistic lines. The ideological aspiration was to indoctrinate black people into internalizing that, *"... their otherness (inferiority) was natural. It aimed to imbue the subaltern child with an ethnic (tribal), cultural identity, with the hope that it would identify with its own people and ethnically defined Bantustan. It aimed to constitute thoroughly docile subjects whose will to resist would be crushed and policed by themselves"* (Reddy, 2004, 9)<sup>2</sup>.

There was geographical conception of African languages where the University of Zululand catered for Zulu speakers, the University of Fort Hare catered for Xhosa, the University of the North catered for Sotho, Tsonga, Tswana, and Venda groups. This means that by encouraging contemporary higher education institutions to adopt dominant regional languages, we are encouraging the democratic state to replicate apartheid divisive and exclusionary language models.

### **Therefore is a monolingual English education the solution? Absolutely not.**

According to Smith (2013)<sup>3</sup>, only one in twenty black students succeed in their academics due to language barriers. This means that almost half of black learners drop-out before finishing their education. Smith contends that the continued dropout-rate of black students compromises the realization of full transformation in our education institutions and South Africa at large.



This dropout-rate raises concerns about biased access to knowledge as several black students in higher education institutions lack proficiency in English. Thus, Smith demonstrates that poverty in black communities is maintained in a monolingual English education system and this contradicts the government's aspirations to create an equal and equitable society.



*Resolving the national question means creating one united nation.*

*We should strive to develop policies that embrace our unique differences and combine them into a single nation with provisions to protect people's distinct languages, cultures, etc*

Similar to Afrikaans, English was politized and used to oppress black people. However, unlike Afrikaans, white people successfully created an illusion around the English language and associated it with intelligence, prestige, and social elevation. Therefore, when the missionaries banned black people from learning in their indigenous languages and attached them with narratives of backwardness and inferiority, black people grew accustomed to English as a development instrument and started to detach from their indigenous languages to escape inferiority.

Thus, when the Afrikaners came into power in 1948, the dominance and narratives of superiority, progress, and development attached to English persisted. Afrikaans was rejected and resented by black people with some labelling it the language of oppression. English became the language of liberation for black people. It became particularly popular during resistance campaigns and protests against the apartheid regime. English was an instrument to communicate with members of different ethnic groups and the international community, thus becoming a significant feature in the liberation process.

We cannot escape that English is a universal language. English is the language used for social, economic, and political interactions, not only in South Africa but across the globe. English is thus a tool South Africans can use internally and externally. Nevertheless, English should never be the sole medium of instruction in a linguistically diverse democratic country.

The sole dominance of English is a disadvantage to students who are supposed to be empowered by our

democratic system but are not proficient in the language. It excludes black people from a system which is supposed to prioritize them as a group previously disadvantaged. Yet, I'm not entirely convinced that English should be a medium of instruction instead of being a compulsory subject from the foundation phase to high school. I'm of the view that is enough time for one to obtain competencies in English to compete in the market, locally and internationally.

### **Resolving the Language Question in Higher Education Institutions**

Resolving the national question means creating one united nation. We should strive to develop policies that embrace our unique differences and combine them into a single

nation with provisions to protect people's distinct languages, cultures, etc. One way to overcome the legacies of inequality and resolve the language question is to move towards meeting the aspiration of the Constitution where language is no longer an instrument of division and deprivation to access.

However, the reality is that despite attempts to elevate indigenous languages to the status of Afrikaans and English and incorporate them in the education system, many black parents and students prefer to be taught in English rather than indigenous languages. The rationale behind this is entrenched in legacies of Bantu Education where education in English was superior and education in indigenous languages was inferior.

Bantu Education managed to create an education system that marginalized much of the population by coupling indigenous language education with underfunding and an impoverished curriculum. Therefore, most black parents and student's post-apartheid do not want an education taught in indigenous languages. This creates a growing rejection of indigenous languages in education as they are associated with failure, while Afrikaans, but especially English, is associated with success.

Ultimately, the stored perceptions from the apartheid regime reinforce the idea that education given in indigenous languages is inferior and that given in English is more advanced.

Since the attainment of democracy in 1994, we have not had an honest, open conversation, inclusive of all stakeholders in society about the role of language in the country's oppressive past and how it can be inclusively transformed in the democratic dispensation to bring unity in a manner which does not hold divisive attitudes and consequences such as tribalism. The success and failure of any language policy are largely dependent on the attitudes held against those languages, and its users. The government needs to run educational workshops, seminars, etcetera, where people's negative attitudes are engaged and countered. This would ensure a smooth development of not only language diversity policies but the realization of a multilingual united nation.

In addition, it is valuable for the government to consider research into language patterns, attitudes, and practices in South Africa – with the intention of drawing further comprehensions into contributing factors to languages policies, particularly in the education sector and the complex relations between English, Afrikaans, and indigenous languages in the background of South Africa's racial, ethnic history and present multilingual aspirations.

In trying to resolve which indigenous languages should be developed, I concur with the two-propositions presented by Jacob Nhlapo in the 1950s to combine our linguistic groups.

Nhlapo<sup>4</sup> asserts that 'Nguni (e.g. IsiZulu, IsiNdebele, IsiXhosa, Xitsonga, SiSwati, etc.) and Sotho (e.g. Sepedi, Setswana, Sesotho), etc.) languages should each be harmonized and standardized to produce two African languages since there are a lot of similarities amongst the Nguni languages; and the same applies to the Sotho languages. Secondly, Nhlapo argues that, "*Alternatively, South Africa could develop either a new African language to be developed at the continental level; or adopt Swahili, which is widely spoken in almost sixteen African countries, including Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, DRC, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi, Rwanda, Somalia, Zambia, and Mozambique.*"

By adopting one of these propositions, I believe we would be setting the tone to solve the language question in South Africa and making strides to overcoming our divisive and exclusionary legacies and promote a common South African and even African identity. It will set a tone where our nationhood is not defined by our differences but instead foster a nationhood where people's linguistic, cultural, religious, etc diversity are appreciated and protected but not used as a basis for belonging to a nation.

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# AFRIKANER CAPITALISM AND ITS NATIONALISM

- *...during the two World Wars South Africa produced Afrikaner capitalist. They emerged in the financial sector by establishing the Boere Saamwerk, Avbob, Sanlam, KWV, Volkskas and Uniewinkels, to name a few. The state on the other side created institutions like ESKOM in 1923, SASOL in the 1950s as well as ISCOR.... Exploitation of African people was one of the cornerstone for the emergence of Afrikaner capitalist. This was done through what Marxist calls primitive accumulation*

By **PULE THULO**



## What is Afrikaner Nationalism?

It is important to note that there is no universal definition of nationalism. Webster Dictionary defines nationalism as “a feeling that people have of being loyal to and proud of their country often with the belief that it is better and more important than other countries”. However, this concept derives its origin from the nation which is defined by the state (government and bureaucracy), its geographical boundaries, its populace and other elements that can include language and believe systems to some countries.

Hist, in his analysis of origins of Afrikaner Nationalism, provides two forms of nationalism, namely inclusive and exclusive. Inclusive for Hist is no exceptions or less than full rights because of ‘racial’, linguistic, gender, etc. differences. However, exclusive nationalism may not require a state or geographical boundaries. Nor do all states accord full membership to people living within their national boundaries.

Lawson further articulates this position well when he argues that “there is a well-known distinction between the

broad, humanistic kind of Nationalism that seeks to further the well-being of all the people and the narrow, exclusive kind of Nationalism, also known as chauvinism, which seeks to advance the interest of one section of humanity at the expense of everyone else”.

In trying to define what Afrikaner Nationalism is, the latter view presented by Lawson assist us. Their

nationalism was based on narrow and exclusive and sought to advance interest of one section at the expense of us all. Their nationalism was exclusive and not inclusive. But what necessitated this kind of exclusive nationalism, it is something that need to be looked at.

## Origins of Afrikaner Nationalism

Its origins can be traced to the late 1800s. The movement that promoted Afrikaner Nationalism was founded by Jacobus Du Toit where he argued that Afrikaners or Boers are a chosen nation of God who must lead. He established the Afrikaner Broederbond and promoted this through his newspaper called **Die Afrikaanse Patriot**. This movement was based on anti-British sentiments of the time.

It is important to note as well that these anti-others was not based on Britain as the colonial master, but to African people generally. Hist points it out that *"the trekboers certainly had important feelings of group identity: a belief that they were not only different but also superior to the indigenous peoples, a sense of difference from the British, and an abhorrence of the so-called 'liberal' policies in the Cape Colony"*. Important to mention is that South Africa was divided into Cape (Eastern, Western and Northern) Colony, the Free State, Transvaal and Natal. Natal and Cape were British colonies and both Transvaal and the Free State were ruled by Afrikaners.

A number of factors that have led to emergence of such sentiments and can be summarised as follows:

- Discovery of gold and diamond led to alienation of the farming community as the Cape Colony flourished while the other republics, as they were called, languished in poverty.
- Lack of land by subsistence farmers as a results of both mining conglomerates and emergence of agricultural capitalist.
- Failing to adapt the Bywoners, as they were called, who had to relocate to other parts of the country in search of what they termed vrygrond (free-land).
- The Jameson Raid of 1895/96 and Anglo-Boer War of 1899/02 led to distance between the two white groups.
- Imperialist tendencies of Cecil John Rhodes.
- Anti-African posture on all fronts was another factor that led to Afrikaner Nationalism.

### Afrikaner and Volks Kapitalisme

*Kapitalisme* is used to indicate capitalism in Afrikaans and the term *Volks* means peoples (Peoples Capitalism). There are many interpretation of what is meant by capitalism. Since there are different definitions, let's use the Thesaurus Encyclopaedia's definition which defines capitalism as *"an economic system in which the means of productions and distribution are privately or corporately owned and development occurs through the accumulation of profit gained in a free market."*

The Afrikaner community consisted of the subsistence farmers (farmers who farm for instant survival). However, they were not directly involved in the actual work. African labour was used and highly exploited. Things changed with discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886, respectively. The demand for agricultural products in the mining belts of Kimberly and the Rand made some Boers profiteers as Lawson argues that *"they were transformed into entrepreneurs, rural capitalist, who produced, not merely to satisfy their own needs, but in order to a profit out of sale of their goods on a market."*

These changes led to two important two elements. One was the intensification of African labour, coupled with that was the legal basis of land dispossession of African people through the 1913 Land Act. The second consequences was the evolution of inequalities amongst

the Boer community. Given the survival of the fittest character of capitalism, those who did not adapt had to leave rural areas and came to the cities to work in mining and manufacturing industries that emerged after the diamond and gold rush.

Those who remained in rural areas became wealthier and became rural capitalists of note. However, this rural bourgeoisie, as Lawson laments, was very slow in developing into a fully-fledged capitalist class. Thing started when it then diversified its economic interest in other areas of trade, finance, manufacturing and other investments. This also led to emergence of urban capitalist and entrepreneurs. Their main objective was to dislocate the English capitalist class that was already entrenched.

As a result, during the two World Wars South Africa produced Afrikaner capitalist. They emerged in the financial sector by establishing the Boere Saamwerk, Avbob, Sanlam, KWV, Volkskas and Uniewinkels, to name a few. The state on the other side created institutions like ESKOM in 1923, SASOL in the 1950s as well as ISCOR.

This became possible through investment by these former subsistence farmers with the assistance by the Nationalist Party with its racial ideology. The determination of Afrikaners to out manoeuvre the English was so massive, hence it was regarded as a people's capitalism. Lawson comes to the rescue that the only way to real economic power and to a share in the super-profits of the monopolies lay in the coordination of the limited resources of the Afrikaner capitalist class as a whole.

Thus the creation of the Volks/peoples capitalism was a coordinated efforts by Afrikaner leadership through its chauvinistic Nationalism propaganda machinery. Again Lawson clearly articulates this view that *"the spread of the chauvinistic propaganda of Afrikaner Nationalism was expected to induce an increasing number of Afrikaners to invest their saving and surplus capital with Afrikaans financial institutions, to take out policies with Afrikaans insurance companies, to build their homes through an Afrikaans building society and to do their shopping at Afrikaans shops"*.

As a result more resources were put in place to unleash propaganda. It is reported that there was a rise in the assets of major financial institutions of Afrikaner capitalism during the last ten years. As Lawson put it:

*"The rate of development of Afrikaner capitalism in the decade 1939/40 was considerably greater than the rate of development of the economy as a whole."* According to the figures supplied by A. J. Bosman in a volume entitled *"Die Triomf van Nasionalisme"*, the total turnover of Afrikaans business undertakings increased from 5% of the national total in 1939 to 11% of the national total in 1949. In that decade the number of Afrikaans industrial undertakings rose from 1239 to 3385 and the number of commercial undertakings from 2428 to 9585. The total turnover of Afrikaans industrial undertakings increased from £6 million to £44 million and of commercial undertakings from £38 million to £204 million. By 1949 Afrikaner capitalists



were estimated to be in control of 6% of the country's industry and 25 to 30% of its commerce (*Volkshandel*, Sept. 1950).

*In the same period, according to Prof. Paun, the number of Afrikaner directors and manufacturers increased by 295%, of business managers by 208% and of traders by 212%. In 1939 Afrikaners formed 3% of the directors, 8% of the business managers and 4% of the traders among the white urban population, but in 1949 these proportions had increased to 5%, 15% and 10% respectively”.*

Exploitation of African people was one of the cornerstone for the emergence of Afrikaner capitalist. This was done through what Marxist calls primitive accumulation. David Harvey in his book called *Accumulation by Dispossession* written in 2005 describes primitive accumulation as a process which “*entailed taking land, say, enclosing it, and expelling a resident population to create a landless proletariat, and then releasing the land into the privatized mainstream of capital accumulation*”.

Both the English and the Afrikaner ganged up against the African people to firstly dispossess them of land. Those who refused were uprooted out through various laws which included the poll tax, hut and various land laws. The 1913 Land Act was a pinnacle and changed the political landscape which continues to haunt even the democratic state to this day.

Once Africans were landless, they were forced to be labourers and had to provide labour to these agricultural capitalist. The riches of Afrikaners came about as a result of that ruthless and super-exploitation of the African people.

Part of unseating African people included an unfair advantage in funding agricultural whites against successful African farmers. Other forms of support included research of different soil and its textures, veterinary services for animals, providing seeds and irrigation schemes. In cases of droughts, white farmers were financially assisted by the white government. As a result, many Africans were forced out of their land and became a proletariat and landless.

### **Role of the Nationalist Party in the Emergence of Afrikaner Capitalism/Volks Kapitalisme**

The Nationalist Party, which was established in 1914, held an anti-British sentiments and was vehemently opposed to both Smuts and Botha likings of the colonial master. Hertzog, its founding leader, was always criti-

cal about the concept of payment of allegiance to the queen of England. Importantly, Afrikaners did not forget the brutality of the British during the Anglo-Boer War – the concentration camps for an example.

During the Second World War the Nationalist Party adopted an ideology linked to the Nazi Germany. Since the Boers regarded themselves as superior race to others, it was not surprising with this ideological view.

The Nationalist Party, in conjunction with the new Afrikaner bourgeoisie and inspired by nationalism chauvinism, were determined not to only unseat the British, but to make life of the African people unbearable. This had to be done through a systematic programme. Propaganda machinery was developed and it became clear that for sustainable creation of Afrikaner bourgeois dominance, an Afrikaner state machinery had to be put in place.

The Nationalist Party campaign was based on separate development. Various legislations such as the Group Areas Act, of the 1950s, various amendments to the Land Act of 1913, establishment of Homelands, ghettoization of Africans, pass laws and labour laws. All these laws were implemented violently and those against were maimed, jailed and done all sorts of things to.

Whites who could not make it in the economic mainstream were trained as artisan and integrated in the public service as the replacement of the English bureaucracy. ISCOR was created to supply needed material for artillery during the Second World War and SASOL for petroleum.

Massive infrastructure was invested by the Nationalist government and the beneficiaries were mostly poor white Afrikaners that could not benefit in the wealth creation of some Afrikaners.

### **In Conclusion**

Three things can be deduced. Firstly, the emergence of Afrikaner Nationalism was a well thought and systematic programme started in the 19th century as part of anti-British rhetoric. Secondly, the emergence of the Afrikaner bourgeoisie was a product of both Nationalism and state intervention especially in the 1930's and the 1950's, respectively. Lastly, the emergence of this class was as result of primitive accumulation and super-exploitation of African people.

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