

FOCUS



STATE AND NATION

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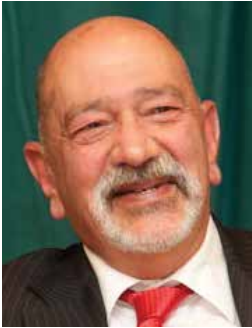
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State and Nation



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The final edition of Focus for 2014 recapitulates and analyses some of the issues which have arisen in the past year with a view to adding new and alternative assessments of South Africa's development as a constitutional state.

But we begin with a commemoration. This year marks the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of World War I. It was, as the American historian Fritz Stern wrote, "the first calamity of the twentieth century, the calamity from which all other calamities sprang."¹ Although the events in Sarajevo were remote from southern Africa, the war which erupted in Europe had major repercussions even in South Africa, beginning with the armed rebellion in 1915, as a consequence of South Africa's entry into the war. South African conquest and occupation of German South-West Africa would eventually develop into a long-standing feud between South Africa and the international community when the matter of Namibian independence arose.

Jack Spence focuses on the problems around crisis management during the First World War. For Spence one major obstacle to successful management of the crisis was the division of the great powers into two hostile camps, the Triple Alliance *versus* the Triple Entente. He argues further that the balance of power, successful as it was in maintaining order in the 19th and early 20th centuries was, by 1914, relatively inflexible. He poses the question of what lessons, if any, the failure of crisis management, both before and during WWI, have for the current international scene. For Spence, old-style crisis management has had to give way to a regime of constant and sophisticated management based on the recognition that crises of one kind or another are likely to remain a permanent feature of the international landscape. (Indeed, the ongoing regional problems in the Middle-East can be traced back to the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in the course of WWI, and will be with us for the foreseeable future.)

David Everatt reflects on Gauteng and the arrival of uncertainty. He argues that the 2014 election was the most contested in Gauteng's history and that "substantive uncertainty" appears to have arrived in Gauteng. He is not solely concerned about the politics of the 2014 elections, but more about their consequences. For Everatt, when votes are analysed at municipal level using provincial ballots, it is notable that the ANC got 49% of the Tshwane vote, 52% in Johannesburg, and 55% in Ekurhuleni. Everatt argues that the Gauteng ANC leadership may have to contemplate the possibility of governing Gauteng, but not ruling one or more of the major municipalities that form its core. He concludes that if this were to happen, then governance will take centre stage and the notion of "autonomous but interdependent" spheres of government will become a key object of focus.

Wim Louw considers the problem of electoral reform in South Africa. Much has been said and argued about the problems of accountability in the PR system. But Louw cautions that changing the electoral system is not a solution to solving general problems around accountability. Something more is needed.

Gavin Keeton considers the problem of inequality in South Africa. He draws the necessary distinction between wealth and income. And then poses the question: Why does inequality matter? In a discourse familiar to most economists, he juxtaposes the views of Kuznets with more recent views of Thomas Piketty. And he considers the implications for South Africa. His thoughtful account extends to a consideration of raising taxes and reviewing social grants. But, following Servaas van der Berg, Keeton argues that fixing South Africa's education system is necessary to reduce both unemployment and inequality. He concludes that it is only with greater political will and focus that we can address these problems.

Tom Lodge reviews public education and the public health sector. He is forthright in his concerns about our public education system. Comparing South Africa to other African countries, our public education is relatively well resourced. Why, then, have we not been able to do better? The great achievement in public health over the last seven years or so has been the halting of the death rate from HIV/AIDS and, Lodge argues, while there are still serious short-comings in the provision of healthcare, it's a qualitative and quantitatively different picture from education. He poses the central question: Why is this so?

Anele Mtsweni reviews the key institutions and policies which go to make up the legislative and strategic interventions for youth development. This survey covers some seventeen years since the first development of a National Youth Policy. But the harsh conclusion is that there is neither a degree of policy coordination nor sufficient evaluation and monitoring to suggest that these policies have been successful.

Gavin Davis reviews some of the ongoing dramas currently taking place at the SABC, specifically around the Board. He argues that the capture of the SABC by factional interests is mirrored in the politicization of other state institutions important for President Zuma's political survival.

Peter Franks discusses the crisis of the South African public service. Franks reviews the history of the civil service since 1995, but his conclusions are deeply disquieting. Nearly two decades of cadre deployment and redeployment, inadequate training, management and discipline, and the increasing evidence of the corruption of public funds and processes, have been met by increasing service delivery protests and the dislocation of labor relations. For Franks, this is a critical moment for South Africa with a public sector wage bill at least 11.5% of GDP – which is nearly three times that of South Africa's BRICS partners (Brazil and Russia). His impassioned plea that the DPSA look carefully at the campaign to assert ethical standards within the public service, is one which will find great resonance with South Africans.

We conclude with reviews by **Anthony Egan**, **Dennis Davis**, and **Dickie Davis**.

Notes

1 Cited in Clarke C, *The Sleepwalkers* (HarperCollins 2014) pxxiii

Crisis Management – Then and Now



JACK E SPENCE

OBE was educated at the University of the Witwatersrand and the London School of Economics. He is a Visiting Professor in the Department of War Studies, King's College, London. He taught at the University of Leicester where he was Pro-Vice-Chancellor (1981-85); Director of Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (1991-97); Academic Advisor to the Royal College of Defence Studies, London (1997-2008); currently Senior Visiting Fellow, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom.

1914

First a brief definition: "crisis management is the attempt to control events during a crisis to prevent significant and systematic violence occurring."

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Imperial throne on 28 June 1914 was the trigger which set in motion a major European crisis. This was contrary to past experience and early expectations and could not be managed by orthodox diplomatic compromise short of war. After all, between 1898 and July-August 1914 the six European great powers (The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) had all endured several major crises in which one or other of their number had been forced to climb down, suffering a degree of mortification as the price of peace and the restoration of European order. It followed, therefore, that the manifest threat to this order – precarious as it was in 1914 – involved a determination by the ruling elites in these states to avoid a second bout of national humiliation even if the refusal to reach a diplomatic compromise led to war.

One major obstacle to successful management was the division of the great powers into two hostile camps: the Triple Alliance (Germany, Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire versus the Triple Entente of Britain, France and Russia). This balance of power, successful as it was in maintaining order throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was, by 1914, relatively inflexible; thus a conflict between any two members of rival alliances (in this instance Russia and Austro-Hungary over Serbia's alleged involvement in the assassination of the Archduke) risked what otherwise might have been a limited conflict in the Balkans becoming a general one. The one exception to this principle was Britain's lack of commitment to supporting its Entente partners – France and Russia in the event of general war. Thus British policy remained ambiguous until very late in the crisis of August 1914.

There were, however, wider forces at work propelling the European powers into war. These were historical in origin resulting from nineteenth century industrial development, the spread of communication by land, sea and rail and the growth of a profound sense of national identity. Thus by 1914, the European states had embraced modernity; each of the six great powers were – in varying degree – characterised by (a) a massive increase in the size of their respective militaries armed to the teeth with weapons of mass destruction, the product of technological innovation in providing rapid and massive fire power via the machine gun and artillery in particular; (b) the creation of reasonably efficient bureaucracies capable of mobilising millions of men and women and rushing them by road and rail to the battleground. As an American civil war general remarked, it was crucial to get to the front line "fastest with the mostest". So important had this vital railway network become that the German General Staff had a special railway section devoted to the intricate planning required to move armies East to confront Russia and West to invade France via Belgium.

And once mobilisation was underway, governments were unwilling to reverse the process; this was an example of technology trumping diplomatic efforts to end the crisis by calling a halt to mobilisation. Finally – and perhaps most important in this context – was the potent force of a nationalist ideology which inflamed the perception of the belligerents as they squared up to each other in the crucial weeks before war began.

And yet the question still remains: why did the great European powers lumber into war? After all, Europe was the epicentre of a civilisation, the political and aesthetic culture of which had extraordinary achievements to its credit. Think of Vienna in the years before 1914, the home of Freud, Wittgenstein, and a host of intellectual luminaries; the music of Mahler and Schubert, think of Russia in the same period, the home of Tolstoy and Tchaikovsky; think of France, the impact of Impressionism, the novels of Flaubert and Zola; think of the German state, the birthplace of Beethoven, Goethe and Bismark, the greatest diplomat of the nineteenth century; think of Britain, the music of Elgar, the novels of Thomas Hardy; and the influence of liberal ideas on how best to order the business of domestic politics to provide welfare, education and good governance in general for the mass of the citizenry.

And for many among the elites in the major European capitals, war seemed a remote prospect. This – mistakenly as things turned out – was argued in Norman Angell's famous work *The Great Illusion*: mature states were so intertwined by ever increasing ties of trade, investment and other economic linkages that war between them would shatter a rapidly globalising international economy. Hence rational, liberal assumptions would ultimately prevail over aggressive warlike instinct. What this optimistic view ignored, following Clausewitz, was that war was regarded as a legitimate instrument of policy when all other diplomatic initiatives failed to avert it. There was also a widespread assumption among military elites that future war would be short following the examples of the Austro-Prussian war of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71. Yet the lessons of the three year long Anglo-Boer war and the five year long American Civil War were largely ignored.

In this particular context strategy and technology were at odds with one another: a war of manoeuvre and rapid deployment was deemed to be the likely outcome, one aimed at breaking the enemy line of resistance by superior weight of numbers surging across national borders.

Similarly, policy makers failed to acknowledge that in any future war defence would triumph over the offensive. In this particular context strategy and technology were at odds with one another: a war of manoeuvre and rapid deployment was deemed to be the likely outcome, one aimed at breaking the enemy line of resistance by superior weight of numbers surging across national borders. What emerged instead was two lines of trench emplacements stretching from the North Sea to the Swiss border. These successfully withstood regular and indeed fruitless attempts to break the enemy will to resist. Thus on the first day of the Somme campaign in July 1916 the British Army incurred some 24,000 casualties as it failed to overcome the defensive advantage enjoyed by massed German rifle and machine gun fire.

There was also a failure of grand strategic thought; the German General Staff for example, was committed to the Schlieffen plan devised in 1904 and modified before 1914. It was based on the assumption of a German attack via Belgium on French fortifications followed by an attack on the rear of the French armies facing east. The assumption was that war on two fronts against France in the West and Russia

in the East required the rapid elimination of France before turning to deal with a Russia that was slow, in any case, to mobilise. This strategy seemed sensible in purely military terms, but it broke Clausewitz's golden rule: always bear in mind the political implications of grand strategy in both planning and execution. Belgian neutrality was, after all, guaranteed by solemn treaty signed in London in 1839 by the great powers, including Germany. Violation of this treaty via the operation of the Schlieffen plan finally persuaded Britain to support France with the despatch of the British Expeditionary Force to the Continent. Thus Germany faced two enemies on the Western Front rather than one – a direct result of ignoring the importance to Britain of what Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, disparagingly called a "scrap of paper". Thus morality, legal obligation and national self-interest coincided for a Britain always committed to preventing the Channel ports falling into a continental enemy's hands and threatening the English Channel and the North Sea. Similarly, German participation in a naval arms race with Britain from 1898 was a military strategy devised without thought to the possibility of permanently estranging Britain thereby strengthening of the Entente Cordiale. Finally, British participation was implicitly encouraged by the staff talks between Britain and France from 1911 onwards; these, in effect, agreed where the two countries armies and navies would be deployed in the event of war with Germany.

"I adore war. It's like a big picnic without the objectlessness of a picnic. I've never been so well or so happy... One loves one's fellow man so much more when one is bent on killing him...."

Thus by July 1914, a series of developments some long term in origin had conspired together to bring the great powers to the brink of war. 'Soft power' diplomatic initiatives to avert war were fruitless as was a half-hearted attempt at mediation by Britain. In the closing days of the peace these efforts had no prospect of success in the absence of that crucial "overlapping interest" in preventing the outbreak of conflict. Austro-Hungary was, for example, spoiling

for a fight given the harshness of the ultimatum to Serbia, regarded as the sponsor of the terrorist group responsible for the Archduke's assassination. Indeed, some commentators have argued that elements in the Austro-Hungarian ruling class preferred glorious defeat in war to slow ignominious decline and ultimate imperial collapse. This – one might argue – was a product of that Romantic sensibility which swept through influential cultural elites in late nineteenth century Europe.

Similarly, France was not averse to war given French desire for revenge for the 1871 defeat and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. Germany, too, or at least some of its key decision makers, saw war as inevitable contributing to assured recognition of its status as a great, indeed the dominant European power. There was, as well, in some quarters a belief that war would purge the body politic of the dross and boredom of everyday life and the messy compromises of domestic politics. This point is difficult to quantify, but contemporary poetic imagery produced a rough if highly selective guide to this particular reaction. Thus the poet Rupert Brooke wrote "now God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour, and caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping ...". Note, too, Julian Grenfell's extraordinary statement in a letter home: "I adore war. It's like a big picnic without the objectlessness of a picnic. I've never been so well or so happy... One loves one's fellow man so much more when one is bent on killing him...."

Of course, it could be argued that there was still a role for crisis management once the conflict had begun. Yet despite the fact that by 1916 the protagonists on

the Western front were enduring "a mutually hurting stalemate" , calls for such negotiation were ignored by the protagonists for two reasons: first, the advantage enjoyed by Germany given its occupation of Belgium and part of northern France was likely to be a powerful bargaining counter in any negotiation with the Entente powers; secondly, electorates, aware of the carnage and massive casualties, might well have jibbed at a compromise peace with no real gains to justify such enormous sacrifice of human and material resources. And this perception was sharpened by a strident popular press promoting passionate nationalist feeling. Thus Germany was portrayed as the 'anti-Christ' the 'devil incarnate' with whom no deal could be done short of unconditional surrender.

Why did the war last as long as it did? Why were mutinies few and far between? Principally because despite the poets' view that the war was an exercise in futility, many on both sides were convinced that the enemy had to be defeated, that the war was just. There was also a belief that German victory would wreck the balance of power principle, so essential for maintaining order in the past. There was, too, the notion of 'primary group cohesion' those bonds men established even in the acute stress of trench warfare and the implicit acknowledgement that one could not let one's comrades down.

The contemporary international scene is riddled with crises, some acute such as in the Middle East, Ukraine and West Africa; others festering over the long term, as in the Israel–Palestine case.

The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The peacemakers, in effect, made future crisis management the responsibility of the international community rather than the individual states or coalitions of the willing: hence the provision in the Covenant of the newly established League of Nations for collective security ("one for all and all for one"). The assumption being that all states shared a common interest and moral commitment to manage crises and avoid war via the institutions of the League. Moreover, the League was provided with the right to take firm action via economic sanctions or the use of force to deter and defend against aggression. It's underlying philosophy was liberal in essence, but its efforts to manage crises in the 1930s failed with the emergence of totalitarian regimes committed – by war if necessary – to revising what was perceived to be the harshness of the Versailles Treaty. Moreover, the Anglo-French appeasement strategy of the 1930s (in part a response based on liberal guilt about that treatment) failed because of Nazi Germany's exploitation of such crises to its own very considerable advantage.

2014

The contemporary international scene is riddled with crises, some acute such as in the Middle East, Ukraine and West Africa; others festering over the long term, as in the Israel-Palestine case.

What lessons, if any, does the failure of crisis management both before and during World War I have with respect to its utility for the current international scene? Clearly during the Cold War its employment was relatively straightforward. Both superpowers had an overlapping interest in avoiding MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction) as demonstrated in crises over Berlin and Cuba in the early 1960s. We note, too, the combined efforts of the two superpowers to restrain their proxies – Israel and its Arab opponents - from pushing early military advantage to overwhelming victory and in the process forcing a superpower to come to the aid of its defeated ally.

Matters today are more complicated: so-called 'new' security threats have emerged which have become persistent and disturbing items on the international agenda requiring at the very least constant vigilance and a variety of countermeasures. Examples include 'apocalyptic terrorism' (Al Qaida and ISIS); enforced migration from the poor south to the rich north; protracted civil wars (eg Syria); disease which knows no boundaries (Ebola in West Africa); state failure (Somalia). These have all had the potential to erupt into full blown crises; successful management requires – at the very least – a high level of international co-operation. Thus, in coping with international terrorism, for example, sharing intelligence with allies and the co-ordination of police and military strategies across national boundaries are obviously crucial for success. (By contrast during the Cuban missile crisis President Kennedy handled the management process single handedly without asking advice from his NATO allies. They were informed, but not consulted. Thus, talking to Khrushchev his

Russian counterpart was considered more important than talking to General de Gaulle, the French leader, whose country was not a NATO member, but who nonetheless approved America's unilateral strategy).

By contrast the apocalyptic terrorist is rarely, if ever, interested in such compromises; the suicide bomber, for example, prefers death and eternal salvation regardless of whether the objective is achieved or not.

The contemporary management process is different in kind in many respects from its Cold War counterpart. This is the case because traditional inter-state crises, however intense, have often occurred between protagonists who are essentially conservative in the sense that their governments want to maintain security,

jurisdiction over the territory and the citizenry. This elementary commonality helps to promote diplomatic compromise in the event of an acute crisis of a traditional kind. By contrast the apocalyptic terrorist is rarely, if ever, interested in such compromises; the suicide bomber, for example, prefers death and eternal salvation regardless of whether the objective is achieved or not. It is this element of irrationality, the refusal to weigh up costs and benefits of a terrorist campaign which ultimately distinguishes modern day crises from its cold war counterparts or – as in the 1990s – organisations such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the African National Congress (ANC) with whom negotiation was ultimately possible.

Finally twenty-first century terrorism can and does make effective use of the benefits of ever increasing globalisation: the development of social media as a means of mobilising support, planning and executing a campaign; the capacity to launder money at the press of a computer button and the ease with which terrorists can move speedily from one country to another – all these factors make current management difficult whether attempting to deter terrorist violence or defend against its use. Thus contemporary crisis management has to draw on the skills and competence of a range of public and private actors both at home and abroad: immigration and customs officials; bankers; climate change experts; medical expertise and law enforcement agencies. The distinction between the demands and constraints of foreign policy and its domestic counterparts has, in effect, been completely eroded.

Conclusion

In July/August 1914 a local Balkan crisis escalated rapidly to a wider pan-European conflict and one that, in time, involved external powers such as Turkey, Japan and the United States and far flung reaches of empire. Does the arc of regional instability stretching from Ukraine to the Middle East to West Africa have the potential to

ignite a global conflict comparable to 1914? Probably not, providing governments and international agencies faced with crisis proliferation devise strategies to contain. At the very least, their impact and limit damage to the regions where conflict is most acute. Those concerned with this formidable task will have to recognise that the international community is faced with what David Cameron, Britain's Prime Minister, calls "a generational struggle", the management of which will inevitably be continuous and long term requiring the use of soft power, diplomatic negotiation on issues such as climate change and the spread of disease and hard power (military interventions by coalitions of the willing, witness the current campaign against IS). Old style crisis management, often successful in achieving short term results and a return to a degree of international order has had to give way to a regime of constant and sophisticated management based on the recognition that crises of one kind or another are likely to remain a permanent feature of the international landscape. Plus çā change...?

NOTES

- 1 Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, Penguin Books, London, 1998, p.104
- 2 Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society – A Study of Order in World Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1977, p.164
- 3 Jon Stallworthy, *Anthem for Doomed Youth – Twelve Soldier Poets of the First World War*, p.16, p.25.
- 4 W.I. Zartman's phrase, Evans and Newnham, *op.cit.* p.320

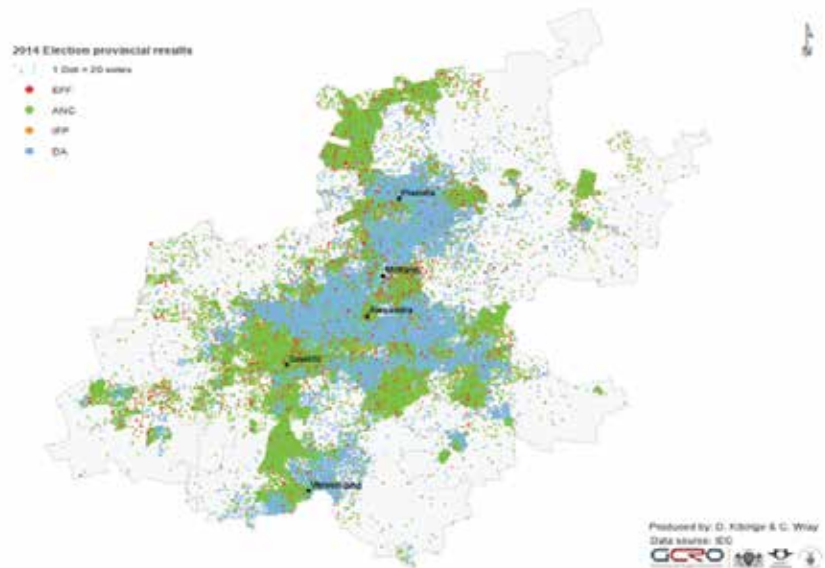
Gauteng and the arrival of uncertainty



DAVID EVERATT is the Executive Director of the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO), has over 17 years of experience in applied socio-economic and development research, designing and implementing monitoring systems, and programme evaluation. He was responsible for path-breaking research into youth marginalisation and out-of-school youth in South Africa in the early 1990s; his research into political violence was quoted by Nelson Mandela at the UN; he was the chief evaluator of the South African Constitutional Assembly between 1995 and 1997; and has served on successive ANC election polling teams since 1994 until the present.

Introduction

2014 saw the most contested election in Gauteng's history. The ruling African National Congress (ANC) saw its support drop to 54%, down 10% on the previous election. The Democratic Alliance (DA), the national and provincial opposition, increased its vote share to 31%, while the Economic Freedom Fighters outstripped all previous new parties by garnering 10% of the vote despite being in existence for only a few months (the Congress of the People (COPE) had managed 8% in the previous provincial poll, and the Independent Democrats 2% five years prior to that, both after only a few months of formal existence)¹. "Substantive uncertainty" – called for, many years back, by Adam Habib² – appeared to have arrived in Gauteng, with a bang, in electoral terms at least. The past sea of green (ANC) votes was suddenly awash with blue and red.



(Election 2014: Gauteng. Votes for 3 main parties: Data source: IEC, Map Source: GCRO)

'It's more complicated than that...'

This brief article is not solely about the politics of the election, and the questions it raises, fascinating though those are. How did the DA virtually double its vote

share while being viciously attacked by its own supporters and former staffers on a near-daily basis, accused of lack of principle, lack of strategy, lack of vision and lack of liberalism.²³ How did the EFF gain and the ANC lose so many votes when both were led by men who had in common a history of allegations of corruption and a familiarity with court-rooms, albeit one of whom could bring a crowd to life in seconds, a skill the other notably lacked? How did COPE manage to lose virtually its entire voter base, not winning 1% of the ballot (with the big-hearted ‘Terror’ Lekota having the decency to actually eat his hat in public, as he threatened to do if this voter catastrophe occurred)? How did the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) continue its slow decline that seemed to march in step with the age of its leader – but head-off the electoral grim reaper and retain almost a per cent of the Gauteng vote? By the same token, how did the Freedom Front Plus, once thought extinct, out-perform the IFP?

Was this election the death-knell of smaller parties retaining any significance whatsoever – or will future elections be so close that coalitions give these tiny parties enormous influence? These – and in particular the political and governance implications of the last point – all deserve far more rigorous analysis, which hopefully will appear in time.

During elections, most commentators understandably focus on rallies and marches, statements, bloopers, rumours, scandals, and the trading of insults (and/or blows), they follow party leaders and focus almost entirely on the electoral process itself. Many lack accurate polling data, and so resort to whatever is ‘newsworthy’ that day, regardless of its real or long-term significance. And, of course, pollsters – who make sure they keep their data locked up – know that Robert Orben was entirely rhetorical when he asked: ‘Do you ever get the feeling that the only reason we have elections is to find out if the polls were right?’

“Do you ever get the feeling that the only reason we have elections is to find out if the polls were right?”

By commingling foci on socio-economic and attitudinal issues within the province and the election results, we suggest some of the answers to the questions posed above are beyond party politics. Looking at the just-released ‘Quality of Life’ survey conducted by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO), and accounting (albeit briefly) for social change and class formation as well as attitudinal shifts over time, we find a more complex story. The survey, with a sample of some 27 000 respondents, is a measurably accurate barometer of public sentiments. The story it tells is one of:

- growing *satisfaction* with service delivery (measured against a basket of 14 services);
- contrasted with growing *dissatisfaction* with all three spheres of government;
- compounded by a pervasive belief held by 90% of respondents in our just-released ‘Quality of Life’ survey that ‘corruption is the biggest threat facing our democracy’;
- coupled with growing unhappiness at rough treatment at the hands of public officials, of whom 79% of respondents said they failed to live up to Batho Pele (people first) principles; and
- hardening racial attitudes, reflecting the fact that
- 20 years of democracy has delivered little to a great many black people locked into spatially and racially demarcated areas created for them under apartheid but which have survived long after its formal demise.

In sum, the majority of Gauteng residents are positive about service delivery, but deeply dissatisfied with both government itself, and the corruption and disregard they see operating within it. People don't merely want an efficient government, they want one they can trust.

Old research tropes such as the racial census as punted for years by R W Johnson and Lawrence Schlemmer, Tom Lodge, Bob Mattes and many others, are withering on the bough, and new analytic lenses are needed.⁴ With votes splitting many ways – and the ANC in particular losing votes on both flanks, to the DA and EFF, and black voters (the essence of the 'race' in 'racial census') having left the ANC for COPE staying away from the ANC and preferring other parties – clearly something more is happening than 'the sins of incumbency' and voter fatigue with a long-dominant ANC. Black voters didn't refuse to vote, if they had lost confidence in the ANC – they voted for other parties, to its left and right. According to the IEC, 4 382 163 valid votes were cast in Gauteng, with just 42 261 spoilt votes despite a campaign that called for ballots to be spoiled or cast for small parties, led by former ANC luminaries (though voter turnout in the province was 72.97%, down from 75.6% in 2009).

Change – the core message of the ANC's 1994 campaign – was in the air during election 2014, and on the ground; nonetheless, the Gauteng election results were received with some surprise.

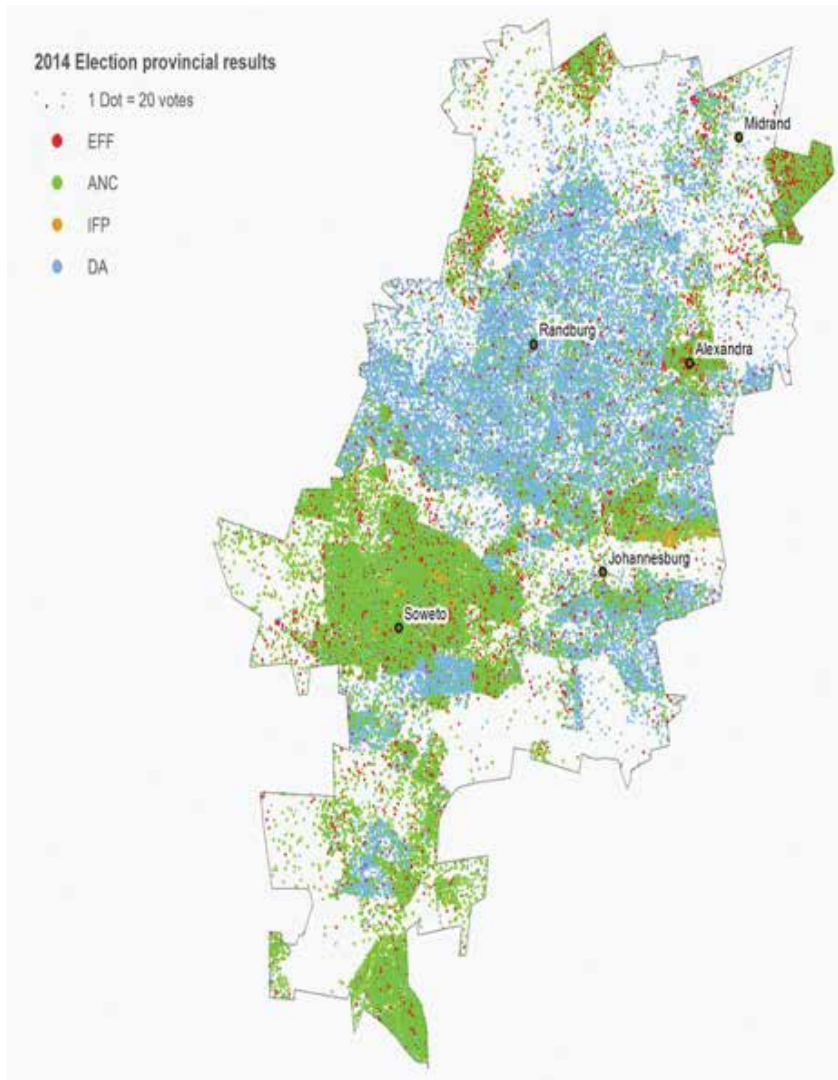
The irony of this election was that it can be argued the 'racial census' thesis proved to be a redundant analytic tool – for African voters (if it had ever been a useful tool). Africans voted the ANC back into power, certainly; but large numbers also voted DA, and large numbers voted EFF. Africans do not blindly vote ANC because they are African or because the ANC is the ANC. But the racial census beautifully captures how whites, coloureds and Indian voters flocked to the DA in massive numbers.

If anyone voted because of their race, it was the so-called 'minorities'.

Change – the core message of the ANC's 1994 campaign – was in the air during election 2014, and on the ground; nonetheless, the Gauteng election results were received with some surprise. Particularly noteworthy was the fact that more Gautengers cast their national than their provincial ballot for the ANC, suggesting they were more comfortable with Zuma's scandal-ridden ANC than the Gauteng ANC, which has long prided itself on being both modern and progressive. If the election were about national corruption scandals around Nkandla or the person of the President – which was the core message in the DA campaign – these seemed to matter less to Gauteng voters than their local circumstances which, ironically, were better than almost anyone else's in the country in terms of the delivery of services, availability of employment, and so on. This, in itself, seemed counter-intuitive. Could it be that people were torn between old political loyalties and new class interests?

After all, "Election 2014 will be won in Gauteng", a Gauteng ANC pamphlet had asserted; and the Gauteng ANC had a reasonable expectation that it would stand somewhat above the mud being slung at the ANC's national leadership, given that the Gauteng ANC had consistently maintained both an independent and progressive stance. Gauteng was one of only a couple of provincial party structures that did not support Zuma's re-election at Mangaung, preferring then Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe; had previously bucked the trend under Mbeki and initiated a mass anti-retroviral roll-out programme while the then President,

backed by other ANC structures, was still trying to prove that a syndrome could not be caused by a virus; had publicly named and removed corrupt members; and generally may have felt that if a dividend for remaining principled was available, the Gauteng ANC should be the beneficiary.



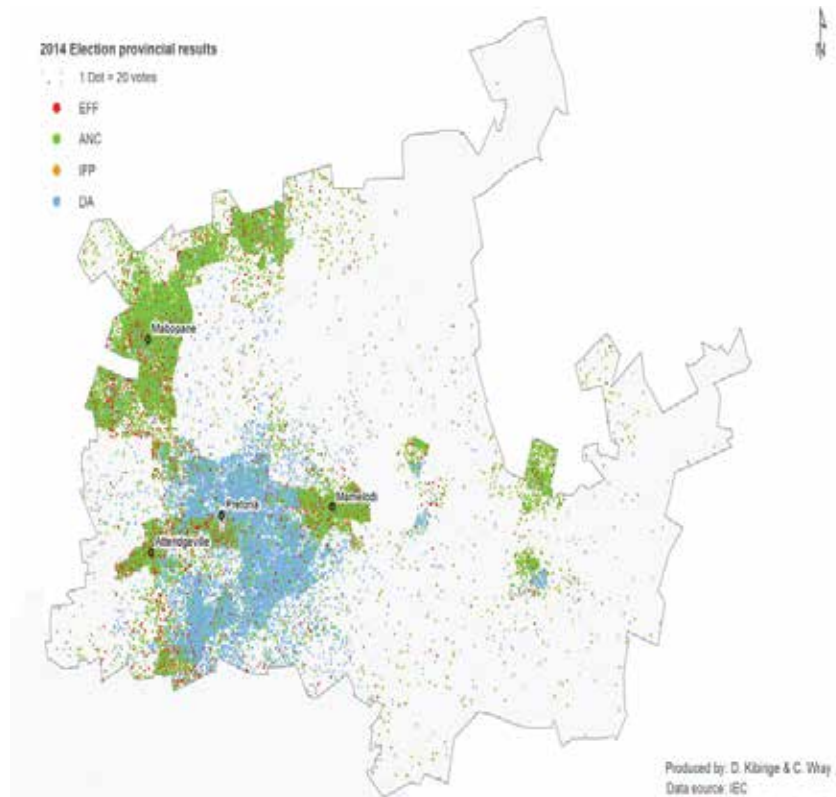
(Election 2014: Johannesburg. Votes for 3 main parties: Data source: IEC, Map Source: GCRO)

But it was not: quite the opposite, as the map of votes for the three main parties in the three metropolitan centres (above and below) suggest.

Gauteng: driving change, losing (ANC) votes...

Perhaps an error the ANC in Gauteng made was to misunderstand the impact, depth and spread of change in the province, and the broader city-region in which the province is located; and, in particular, the policy choices this requires of the ruling party. This tiny space, occupying 1,4% of the national land mass, holds the largest population share in the country (a fifth of South Africans live in Gauteng), and the population grows at 2,6% per annum⁵ while helping generate 36% of national Gross Domestic Product.⁶ Tellingly, Gauteng has no rural areas worth

speaking of, though it sees the tail end of former homelands at the northern borders of Tshwane.



(Election 2014: Tshwane. Votes for 3 main parties: Data source: IEC, Map Source: GCRO)

The ANC now has a large suburban constituency – not just domestic workers and gardeners, but black middle class residents – but has struggled to find ways to reach them in face-to-face campaigning, the most effective ANC tool.

Nonetheless, it has performed well in delivering basic needs.⁷ Gauteng also has a distinctive demographic profile: Africans make up three-quarters of the population (in a majority of provinces, this figure exceeds 90%), meaning that so-called ‘minorities’ (coloureds, Indians and whites) are significant and in many wards, are in fact majorities. While poverty has kept many Africans locked in the townships racially demarcated for them by apartheid, many more have moved into (old and new) suburban areas, and into

professional occupations. In brief, Gauteng is complex, modern, heavily urbanised, and highly contested.

If old research tropes no longer work, in Gauteng, neither do old campaign strategies and messages; or, at least, their traction is slipping. The ANC now has a large suburban constituency – not just domestic workers and gardeners, but black middle class residents – but has struggled to find ways to reach them in face-to-face campaigning, the most effective ANC tool. The DA trotted out its repeated corruption accusations, but talk of ‘taking Gauteng’ rapidly dwindled as the party struggled to mobilise in the townships and informal settlements, having botched its position on redress and diversity. Both parties faced the same problem, in reverse: the DA didn’t seem to know how to campaign in townships and informal

areas, while the ANC didn't seem to know what to do in suburbs.

The EFF, the surprise package of the election, picked up (overwhelmingly African) votes across the board – its message may have been ostensibly pro-poor, but it was also anti-white, with a fuzzy mix of nationalisation and immediate redistribution, riffing on Marx, Fanon and a whole gamut of liberation icons. It also played a brilliant media game, refusing to be cowed by other parties while leader Julius Malema titillated all with his insider stories about 'how we did it in the ANC', compounding common assumptions about cronyism and heavy-handed tactics (for example, requiring stories to get top billing on SABC news). As such, the EFF could appeal as much to the black middle class as to the black poor, equally sick (though from different perspectives) of white racism and economic domination, and similarly wanting a more responsive ruling party that was seen to be fair and not favour only its supporters. It is worth noting that the English word 'nepotism' became part of (non-English) focus group patter as early as 2011, as black middle class participants turned on the party that had allowed their class to emerge but then refused to allow them to thrive.

In those focus groups, run among participants drawn from the black middle class (defined by occupation) to talk about the meaning of being middle class, politics was more than evident. The ANC, the party of liberation, was accused of 'nepotism', used by focus group participants to describe their failure to win government tenders and thus to occupy a middle class position with the confidence that it is a secure, long-term move and not a fragile, easily reversed one, while those close to ANC leaders (local or national) were able to secure such resources and their new class position. The global financial crisis had of course heightened this sense of economic insecurity, making Barbara Ehrenreich's famous 'fear of falling' very real. Many black middle class participants complained that despite (in their view) being professionally and racially qualified to win government tenders, in particular, or benefit from affirmative procurement in general, they were outside the charmed circle of ANC insiders in their locale, and thus shut out of access to government resources – obviously a critical revenue stream for the emergent black middle class. As one young woman (an IT specialist) from KwaZulu-Natal said: "I wish my dad was in exile", because she would now be in the charmed circle and able to win tenders. The sacrifice, pain and suffering of exile have been reduced, among many former ANC voters, to a meal-ticket they lack.

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As a result, a middle class 'alliance' was slowly emerging as the new millennium began, picking up speed as its first decade ended. This was not a conscious alliance, and not a comfortable one either, but one driven together by a set of shared grievances, at the heart of which is the way the ANC is seen variously as corrupt, nepotistic, incompetent, and so on – common to middle class voters across the board, regardless of race. That 'alliance' is about class interests – but it remains deeply rent by race-based suspicions (hence the discomfort). The uniting factor is the ANC: in each instance, those who feel themselves to be

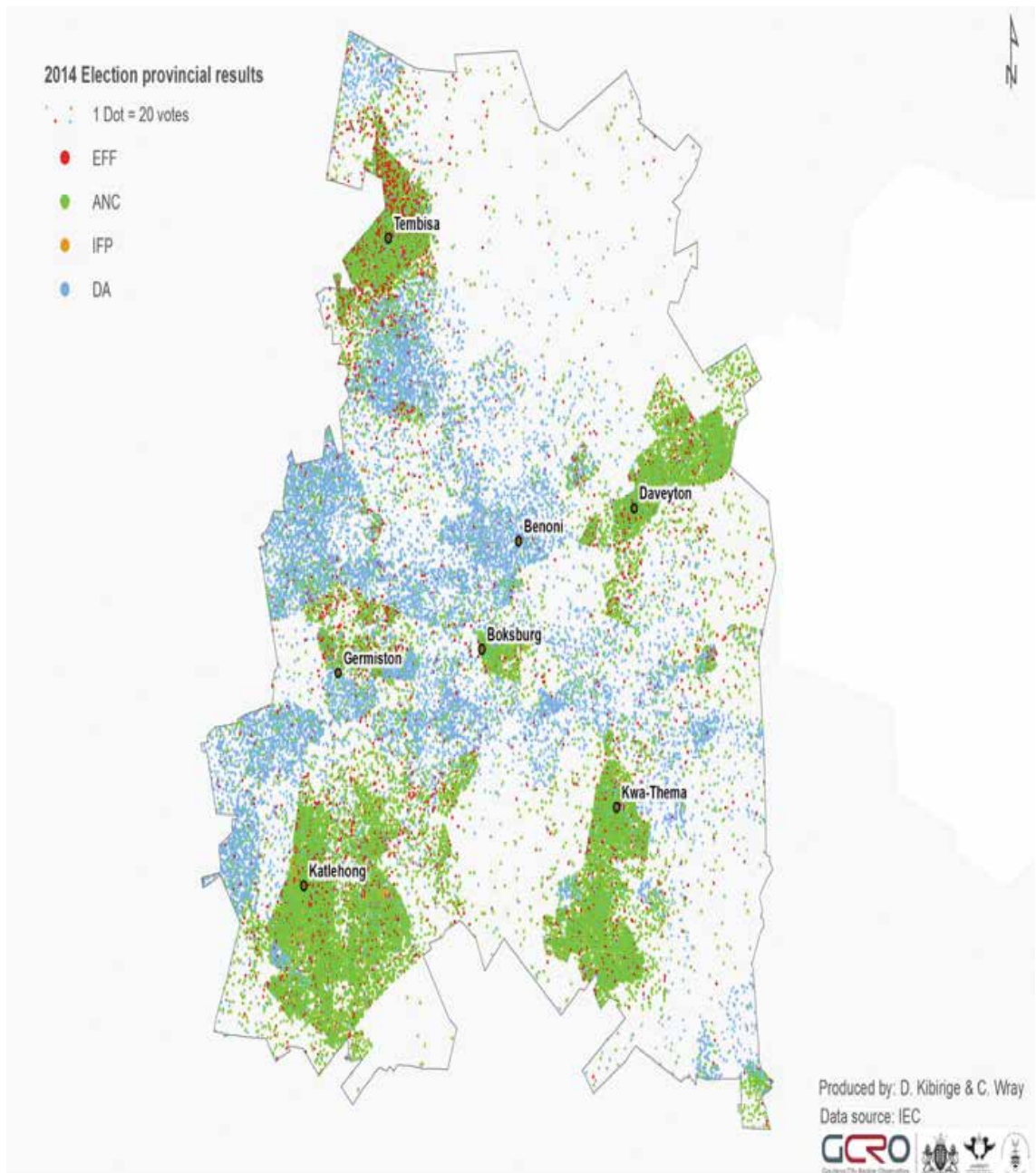
‘victims’ (whether complaining of ‘reverse racism’ or ‘nepotism’ and so on) hold the ANC responsible. A non-racial middle class anti-ANC alliance – an alliance of complainants or whingers, if you like – was steadily emerging, bound together by a common class position and a shared sense of grievance of being cut out of economic advancement by ANC nepotism, but divided by race and the unhealed wounds of a violent, racialised past. In 2012 it could still be argued that: “It is not yet an electoral threat to the ANC; and it lacks the internal coherence or stability that permit easy organisation or mobilisation behind common objectives. That day, however, is not far off.”

Election 2014 was in fact won for the ANC in the less-developed, more rural provinces, most with former homelands and massive ‘pockets’ of poverty, which continue to serve up large – but shrinking – majorities for the ANC. Which merely reinforces the point that the ANC cannot forever remain a broad church, playing on legacy and history, but will have to make policy choices that will cost it a portion of its historical voter base.

Indeed it was not far off at all. But the simple narrative – where the DA, as a party of the free market with at that point some kind of attachment to affirmative action and/or redress – would provide the natural home for disaffected black middle class voters, was speared by the EFF. The media face of the EFF, as the home of the angry (anti-white, anti-establishment, etc.) lumpen-proletariat, is not necessarily borne out by the data. It is worth noting that the last IPSOS poll conducted before election 2014 – which had the EFF slightly below the 10% of the vote it eventually garnered – did not find a single EFF voter who had an education level below incomplete secondary education. Those with no education at all (4% of Gauteng’s population), or with primary only, were still voting ANC. The disaffected middle class certainly moved to the DA in numbers – but many moved across to the EFF who were busy belittling both ‘butternut head’ (Zuma) and ‘the madam’

(Zille). Race and class continue to bedevil South Africa, and throw up interesting if not confounding outcomes.

Race and class played out differently in different provinces, many containing large rural areas, or large coloured and/or white populations alongside Africans; but in none were the stakes (or vote share) as high, nor the economics and demographics as challenging, as in Gauteng. In sum, Gauteng does not look like much of South Africa; and, worryingly for the ANC, if the rest of South Africa develops at anything approaching the rate of socio-economic change and development in Gauteng, old certainties will be gone. Election 2014 was in fact won for the ANC in the less-developed, more rural provinces, most with former homelands and massive ‘pockets’ of poverty, which continue to serve up large – but shrinking – majorities for the ANC. Which merely reinforces the point that the ANC cannot forever remain a broad church, playing on legacy and history, but will have to make policy choices that will cost it a portion of its historical voter base. This is a tough position to occupy – losing voters is an inevitable outcome, whatever the ANC decides – but the ANC can either proactively make those choices itself and stomach the electoral results, or (as in 2014) it can allow other parties to make those choices for it, and see sections of its voters hive off for what seem to be more amenable pastures to the left or the right.



(Election 2014: Ekurhuleni. Votes for 3 main parties: Data source: IEC, Map Source: GCRO)

Finally, the development and size of the black middle class – and their attitudes towards the ANC – are one among many signals that ‘substantive uncertainty’ has arrived (and had arrived, years before the election). Using a clumsy reductionist approach that looks merely at average household income, it is clear that Gauteng has a large black middle and wealthy class, using average household incomes (from Census 2011). The data suggest that if we posit middle class incomes between R9600 and R38 400 a month, this accounts for some 615 000 African households; with another 58 000 earning far more. This is certainly a small-ish portion of the African population – some 22% - but that is an awful lot of votes to lose...

Conclusion

The Gauteng electoral battle showing how future elections will be fought and won or lost, as the processes of urbanisation and social change impact on other parts of the country, and deepen their impact in Gauteng. And we should be clear: 2016 is almost upon us, and when votes are analysed at municipal level, using provincial ballots, it is notable that the ANC got 49,5% of the Tshwane vote, 52% in Johannesburg, and 55% in Ekurhuleni. No-one knows how the EFF will perform at local level; and traditionally, this is where the DA has performed best (and the ANC worst). The Gauteng ANC leadership has to contemplate the possibility of governing Gauteng, but not ruling one or more of the three major Metropolitan Municipalities that form its core. If that were to happen, and there seems no reason why it should not, then governance will take centre stage, and the notion of 'autonomous but inter-dependent' spheres of government, will become a key object of focus for all.

NOTES

- 1 Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD) Territorial review of the Gauteng City-Region (OECD, Paris, 2011)
- 2 Gauteng City-Region (2014) State of Gauteng City-Region review 2013 accessed at <http://www.gcro.ac.za/stateofgcr> on 13/03/2014.
- 3 Statistics South Africa Census 2011: Gauteng results (Pretoria, StatsSA).
- 4 Executive Director, Gauteng City-Region Observatory, a partnership between the University of Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Gauteng Provincial Government and SA Local Government Association
- 5 All voting results are rounded off.
- 6 Habib, Adam (2004) 'The politics of economic policy-making: substantive uncertainty, political leverage, and human development' in *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 56, 2004 pp. 90-103.
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- 8 See for example Johnson, R.W., and Schlemmer, L. eds. 1996. *Launching Democracy in South Africa: The First Open Election, April 1994.* (New Haven: Yale University Press.); Lodge, T. 1999. *Consolidating Democracy: South Africa's Second Popular Election.* Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University
- 9 Press; Mattes, R. 1995. *The Election Book: Judgement and Choice in South Africa's 1994 Election.* Cape Town: Idasa; Mattes, R. 2005. "Voter Information, Government Evaluations and Party Images in the First Democratic Decade" in *Electoral Politics in South Africa*, eds. Piombo, J and Nijzink L. New York: Palgrave, pp. 3–22; Mattes, R. and Piombo, J. 2001. "Opposition Parties and the Voters in South Africa's General Election of 1999" in *Democratization* 8: 101–28; Mattes, R., Taylor, H. and Africa, C. 1999. "Public Opinion & Voter Preferences: 1994–1999." In *Election '99 South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki*, ed. Reynolds, A. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 37–63.
- 10 Everatt, D. (2012) 'The black middle class and the future of politics in South Africa', paper presented to a conference on 'the new middle classes in South Africa, Indian and Brazil' in Sao Paolo, September 2012, commissioned by the Centre for Development and Enterprise.

Electoral reform and South Africa

A defining feature of modern democracies is regular ‘free-and-fair’ elections – elections that are seen as legitimate by the general populace. In modern representative democracies, as far as most decisions and decision-making is concerned, citizens participate indirectly through elections.¹ Voters “choose parties or individual candidates, [thereby] authorizing them to make decisions on behalf of the collectivity [my emphasis]”², for a set amount of time. ‘Collectively’, citizens therefore authorize and legitimize the state’s ability to make certain decisions for all, and to use coercion to enforce them.

When it comes to selecting political representatives, an electoral system is a cheap and stable way to place, and to remove people in power – compared to alternatives like military coups, or civil war.³ In the end, the electoral system expresses *distributions* of individual preferences by *aggregating* (i.e. adding-together) individual political preferences across the entire voting population.⁴ Although no individual *interest* can prevail as society’s *interest* – because society is composed of multiple (often clashing or irreconcilable) interests – it is possible to identify dominant voting patterns.⁵ The relationship between individual interests and political preferences is complicated, and I will not discuss it here.⁶ I will simply say that every electoral system will produce winners and losers, and some interests and preferences will prevail over others. This is unavoidable. Regular elections, in theory, balance this out over the long-term and although individual interests and preferences are subject to certain compromises, the policy direction pursued by those in power cannot fall too far out of sync with general or dominant preference distributions without consequences – electoral or otherwise.⁷

A particular electoral system might emphasise or de-emphasise certain distributions of preferences, depending on *what* may be voted upon, *how* it is voted upon, and what the *aggregation* rules are. Electoral design – along the dimensions of ballot structure, district structure, and electoral formula – is thus no trivial matter.

While an electoral system is only “...one square⁸ of an interrelated patchwork of government systems, rules and points of access to power”⁹, it is the configuration of the system that “...can shape the coherence of party control of government, the stability of elected governments, the breadth and legitimacy of representation, the capacity of the system to manage conflict, the extent of public participation, and the overall responsiveness of the system.”¹⁰ And, because an electoral system also affects the pay-offs in competitive politics, it affects the way political actors campaign and respond to issues, and how they are ultimately held to account.

There is no perfect or un-biased electoral system; there are always trade-offs to be made in modifying, for instance, the ballot structure, or the electoral formula. The question is: Which biases are we, as a society, willing to live with?



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Democratic South Africa

South Africa's electoral system was carefully considered during the transition to democracy. As a newly democratic country, millions of new voters were to join the political process. The challenge faced by the participants at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) was to select an appropriate electoral system for a divided and highly unequal society in the process of a delicate transition.¹¹ South Africa took a pragmatic and accommodative approach to negotiating the sharp divisions created by the Apartheid regime, bringing together many contradictory interests for the sake of stability and making many uneasy compromises.¹²

Previously, South Africa used a Westminster-style, constituency-based system which excluded most inhabitants of South African. Given the social geography of the time, the system severely distorted preference distributions among voters – culminating in the National Party's rise to power in the 1948 Parliamentary elections.

This rural/urban split meant that much fewer votes were needed to win a constituency seat in rural areas than in urban areas. In addition, South Africa also saw a clear division in social geography: National Party (NP) support was highly concentrated in rural areas, and United Party (UP) support in urban areas.

During this time, South Africa used a Single Member Plurality (SMP) system with Single Member Districts (SMD). In such a system, contenders win a district if they have the most votes relative to other contenders in the district, and the winner-takes-all. This system rewards a large majority in Parliament to the winner of the most districts – an 'artificial' majority, since it does not reflect the popular vote (i.e. the votes across the country as a whole).¹³ One benefit of a first-past-the-post system like this, in theory, is that government becomes both more *responsive* – a small swing in district wins translates to a big change in the composition of Parliament – and more *effective* – government is able to pursue unpopular policies with

minimum resistance in Parliament, for a time. The South African context – and a country's context is crucial – provided for a particularly perverse result.

Manuel Álvarez-Rivera (2010) explains how a provision in South African electoral law – which found its basis in a 1909 report by J. P. Smith to the British Royal Commission on electoral systems¹⁴ during South Africa's Union – meant that urban constituencies could be 'overloaded' with fifteen percent more voters and rural constituencies could be 'underloaded' by the same percentage.¹⁵ This rural/urban split meant that much fewer votes were needed to win a constituency seat in rural areas than in urban areas. In addition, South Africa also saw a clear division in social geography: National Party (NP) support was highly concentrated in rural areas, and United Party (UP) support in urban areas.¹⁶

Gouws and Mitchell (2005) recount how in 1948, under this system, the NP/Afrikaner Alliance came to power with 42 percent of the vote and won 79 seats (52 percent) in Parliament. In contrast, the UP/Labour party won the popular vote with 52 percent, but was rewarded with only 71 seats (46 percent) in Parliament.¹⁷

For a democratic South Africa, the design of the electoral system had to take into account the systems of government in place, as well as the racial, ethnic, political, and socio-economic divisions created by the Apartheid system, and how these might impact a range of factors including district structure, voting patterns, and stability. The natural choice was a Proportional Representation (PR) system. A PR

system maximizes inclusivity and emphasises broad representation by establishing large multi-member districts and filling seats with reference to the *proportion* of votes a party receives. This means that votes are not excluded (or ‘wasted’), as in a winner-takes-all system – all votes are taken into account, and even small parties have a chance to gain representation.

In South Africa’s National elections¹⁸, citizens cast a vote for a single party of their choice; the country is divided into 10 large multi-member district regions: 9 corresponding to the 9 provinces (with a total magnitude of 200 seats, ranging from 5 to 48 seats in each region¹⁹), and 1 national district for the country as a whole (with a magnitude of 200 seats). Seats on the National Assembly are allocated in direct proportion to the number of votes a party received.

With the fifth democratic election behind us, it is clear that the current PR system has proven robust. But has the South African context changed enough to start considering the question of electoral reform more seriously?

Electoral Reform

The issue of electoral reform again received some attention in the run-up to the 2014 elections; but it has been a regular one around election time.

In 2002 Cabinet resolved that an Electoral Task Team should be established to “draft the new electoral legislation required by the Constitution” for the upcoming 2004 elections.²⁰ This process produced the 2003 Report of the Electoral Task Team (the ‘Van Zyl Slabbert Report’), which suggested a number of changes to electoral system including a ‘mixed’ system. The ‘mixed’ system proposed to transform the 9 multi-member ‘regional’²¹ districts already in existence (1-tier of the National Assembly) into 69 smaller multi-member districts with closed lists. Each district constituency would therefore end up with 3-7 MPs representing their district. The Assembly seats were then to be split so that 300 seats are filled with reference to regional constituency winners, and the 100 seats (the other tier of the National Assembly) would be filled proportionally, with reference to national votes. These recommendations were never adopted – it was too close to the General elections at that point, but many argued (including participants in the Report itself) that there was no reason for reform at the time. The Van Zyl Slabbert Report still remains alive in the electoral reform debate today.

In 2013 the Democratic Alliance submitted a Private Member’s Bill to Parliament calling for electoral reform, to allow for constituency-based representation.²² Later that year, Dr Mamphela Ramphele stated that AgangSA’s ‘first order of business’ would be electoral reform, with similar concerns.

In 2009, an Independent Panel Assessment of Parliament also emphasised a need for electoral reform – echoing concerns raised by the Van Zyl Slabbert Report. In 2013 the Democratic Alliance submitted a Private Member’s Bill to Parliament calling for electoral reform, to allow for constituency-based representation.²² Later that year, Dr Mamphela Ramphele stated that AgangSA’s ‘first order of business’ would be electoral reform, with similar concerns.²³

However, the relationship between voters and representatives, and the perceived issues around it, has been around since the very beginning of our democracy. In 1999, in the last sitting of the first democratically elected Parliament, President Nelson Mandela raised the point:

“...we do need to ask whether we need to re-examine our electoral system, so as to improve the nature of our relationship, as public representatives, with voters.”²⁴ [My emphasis]

Design

In choosing or modifying an electoral system, a country must choose one set of biases over another. As mentioned before, no electoral system is without trade-offs. The following account of electoral systems is, by no means, a comprehensive overview – its purpose is merely to illustrate some aspects and components of electoral systems, and how they fit together.²⁵

Some considerations to take into account when choosing or modifying an electoral system are:

- **Decisiveness** – does the system produce a clear winner, relative to other competitors?;
- **Effectivity** – does the system empower winners to make decisions once elected?;
- **Stability** – will the result be considered legitimate by a large enough majority? Does it take into account inter-religious or ethnic conflict?;
- **Representivity** – does the system ensure that minorities are included? Does the system promote a demographically representative assembly? Does the system ensure that all regions are represented?;
- **Proportionality** – is the result ‘fair’? Do the electoral rules enable a result that corresponds to vote share?; and
- **Accountability** – to what extent can voters influence the composition of assemblies? What is the reach of their veto power?

Electoral systems can be compared and modified along three broad dimensions²⁶:

A system may choose to allocate seats only to parties who pass a certain formal threshold, or impose no threshold at all.

The **ballot structure** determines *what* citizens cast their vote for, and *how* they vote. Voters could vote for a party, or an individual, or both. Votes may be ranked in order of preference – they may be ‘ordinal’ (as in the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system used in Ireland, for example) – or one choice may be selected among others – it may be a ‘categorical’ vote. Voting may take place in one stage or in multiple stages – it

may be once-off, or there may be multiple rounds (such the Two-Round System (TRS) used by Brazil and France in their presidential elections).

Determining a **district structure** entails deciding how many *districts* there are, and the number of seats per district – what is called the district ‘magnitude’ – and this may be more or less inclusive. Districts may be single member districts where the winner-takes-all (as in a first-past-the-post system), or multi-member districts where all votes are taken into account (as in a proportional representation system).

The **electoral formula** determines how votes are calculated, included or excluded, and converted into seats on the assembly. Seats may be awarded *proportionally* as a percentage of total vote share, or by an artificial majority as percentage of districts won by plurality (a ‘relative’ majority not an ‘absolute’ majority), or it may be a *mixed* system, incorporating elements of both. A system may choose to allocate seats only to parties who pass a certain formal threshold, or impose no threshold at all. Seats may be allocated based on vote quotas determined by a variety of specific formulas

(a Droop quota or a Hare quota, for instance), after such a process is exhausted, allocation may incorporate other ways of filling seats (a ‘largest remainder’ method or a ‘highest averages’ method – the D’Hondt, or Sainte-Laguë methods, etc.)²⁷.

There are infinite variations of electoral systems that can be designed, depending on how these components are configured and combined.

Each one of these dimensions entails different trade-offs – as does the configuration of the electoral system generally.²⁸ For example, a system where voters must choose a **political party** to represent them may sever the link between individual representatives and voters, diminishing the voters’ say in which *individual* represents them, but is likely to generate a representative and proportional assembly (the case of South Africa, for instance). While a PR system in which no party gains a big enough share of the vote, or parties fail to form strong enough coalitions, will produce an assembly that is too fragmented to be effective (Bulgaria is a good example²⁹). Conversely, a system in which voters must

select **an individual** to represent them might increase the ability of voters to hold such an individual personally accountable, but generates an assembly that is less representative, and disproportional, but freer to pursue policy objectives (the British system, for instance). A mixed-system might strike a healthy balance – but involves its own trade-offs (the German system, for example).

Hence, one might ask some questions about the complexity of the ballot, or the magnitude of districts, or the fairness of the electoral formula. And then one might want to ask questions about inclusivity, proportionality, responsiveness, representation, efficacy, accountability, etc.

Accountability

Regarding calls for electoral reform in South Africa, a common theme throughout has been the issue of the accountability of representatives – specifically the direct *personal* accountability of representatives to a specific constituency.

One might want to ask then, whether a closer link between individual representatives and their districts/constituencies would encourage greater accountability. This is not clear.

Despite the absence of something like direct *personal* accountability, there are, nonetheless, accountability mechanisms in place for representatives. First, MPs are accountable to their parties, and despite political agendas and the incentives of furthering one’s career within the party structures, political parties themselves cannot be said to completely disregard the preferences of their voter base (since they rely on their votes). Secondly, MPs are expected, outside of their Parliamentary duties, to report to constituencies during ‘constituency periods’ on a regular basis.³⁰ During constituency periods Members of Parliament (MPs) and Member of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs) have a duty to be available to the public, to help solve problems, and to inform citizens of matters in Parliament.³¹ There are about 350 Parliamentary Constituency Offices (PCOs) around the country.³² These operate

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on a provincial level – which means that the constituencies are quite large. It is a clear attempt to incorporate a constituency element into the current system. The effectiveness of this initiative is open to debate. But already it is clear that the issue of accountability is not so straight-forward. Furthermore, a productive conversation could be had about accountability outside the topic of electoral reform. Broader electoral topics, like party funding for instance, might be addressed.³³

It is important to remember that the electoral system – by giving people the power to vote representatives out of office – is only one accountability mechanism in a modern democratic system. Changing an electoral system is not a solution to solving general problems around accountability. The limits of electoral systems (i.e. what they can and cannot do) and electoral reform must be considered with the desired and appropriate objectives.

Concluding remarks

The 2014 election results invite closer scrutiny of both South Africa's political demography and political behaviour and preference patterns. Two trends are already clear: The disparity between the number of eligible voters and registered voters, and the steady decrease in African National Congress (ANC) support coupled with a steep rise in Democratic Alliance (DA) support.³⁴ An interesting development is the extent to which the ANC support-base has shifted away from urbanised, organised labour to rural and peri-urban 'outsider' constituencies.³⁵ It is not yet clear what the consequences might be for the upcoming Local government elections, and the 2019 General elections and how this might affect the South African context.

NOTES

- 1 There are of course other ways, outside of competitive politics, to participate in (and to influence) the running of a country – the policy consultation process, lobbying, through the courts, referendums, or the media, for instance. Special interests are also pursued in other ways – buying influence.
- 2 Przeworski, 2010: 99
- 3 Przeworski (2003), refers to elections a cheap 'technology' for replacing rulers (p. 93)
- 4 Przeworski, 2010: 14
- 5 See Przeworski (1999)
- 6 It should be noted that there are problems with establishing anything like 'society's interest'. The proximity of individual preferences to general preference distributions becomes problematic. See Arrow (1951), but also Przeworski, 2010: 57-61.
- 7 See, for instance, Przeworski, 2003 Chapter 5: 'The state' (pp. 79-98)
- 8 The nature of a country's electoral system is also shaped by the structure of the Executive and the vertical distribution of power: Does a country have a parliamentary or a presidential system? (How is the head of the executive elected?); Is power concentrated centrally, or is it fragmented regionally – and are the regions uniform, or are some regions more dominant than others? South Africa has a parliamentary system – the president is chosen by the National Assembly. Furthermore, SA's power is concentrated centrally with relatively weak regional powers, despite exhibiting those characteristics usually associated with decentralized power (see Lijphart, 1999: Chapter 10); principally, a formal division between central and regional governments, additionally, a bicameral legislature, a written constitution, and a special 'constitutional' court.
- 9 New IDEA Handbook, 2008: 7
- 10 Diamond & Plattner, 2006: ix
- 11 <http://www.sahistory.org.za/codesa-negotiations>; Lodge (2003)
- 12 See Jung & Shapiro (1995)
- 13 Some benefits of a first-past-the-post system, in theory: Government becomes more responsive – a small swing in district wins translates to a big change in the composition of Parliament – but also that government is able to pursue 'unpopular' policies unimpeded, for a time. The South African context provided for a particularly perverse result.
- 14 See the 'cube rule' – the cube rule predicts that in a two party first-past-the-post system, as far as seat-allocation on the assembly is concerned, the winner will get significantly over-represented, while the loser will get under-represented.
- 15 Álvarez-Rivera, 2010: 10
- 16 Gudgin & Taylor, 2012: 136, 137.
- 17 Gouws & Mitchell, 2005:355
- 18 Voters elect the national and provincial legislatures simultaneously during the General Elections. Voters are presented with two separate ballots – a national ballot, and a provincial ballot. 'National election' here refers to the national ballot and the national legislature.
- 19 <http://www.gov.za/documents/download.php?i=210704>
- 20 See the 2003 Report of the Electoral Task Team
- 21 These 'regions' correspond to the provinces, but they concern the national (and not provincial) legislature – hence the distinction between 'regions' and 'provinces'. Currently, SA is divided into 10 large multi-member district regions: 9 corresponding to the 9 provinces (with a total magnitude of 200 seats, ranging from 5 to 48 seats per region) and one national district (with a magnitude of 200 seats).
- 22 Selfe, 2013
- 23 <http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/politics/2013/02/18/mamphela-ramphele-launches-new-party-political-platform>
- 24 Re-quoted from Matshiqi, 2009: 1
- 25 I direct the reader to the New IDEA Handbook (2008); Gallagher & Mitchell (2005)
- 26 See Teorell & Lindstedt (2010); Horowitz (2006); New IDEA Handbook (2008); Gallagher & Mitchell (2005).
- 27 See Gallagher & Mitchell (2005), "Appendix A: The Mechanics of Electoral Systems" (pp. 579 - 597)
- 28 Norris, 1997: 297-312
- 29 See Andrew MacDowall's article in the Financial Times (Oct 6, 2014), "Bulgaria's election: lack of clarity threatens governability", URL: <http://blogs.ft.com/beyond-brics/2014/10/06/bulgarias-election-lack-of-clarity-threatens-governability/>
- 30 http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=29
- 31 <http://www.pa.org.za/info/constituency-offices>
- 32 http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Item_ID=3881; <http://www.pa.org.za/info/constituency-offices>
- 33 See the work of the My Vote Counts campaign on the topic of party-funding and transparency: <http://www.myvotecounts.org.za/>

34 <http://www.elections.org.za/content/Elections/Results/2014-National-and-Provincial-Elections--National-results/>
 35 De Kadt (2014); David Everatt (2014)

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Inequality in South Africa



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South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world. It is often said to be the most unequal, but that is incorrect. A number of countries, for example Namibia and Seychelles, have higher gini coefficients (the measure most often used to measure income distribution) than does South Africa¹. There are a number of other countries that are clearly very unequal – some major oil producers for example – but, for obvious reasons, choose not to measure the extent of their inequality.

It should be noted that published gini coefficients measure distribution of income not distribution of wealth. This is because household wealth is notoriously difficult to measure. Other than the value of property, and possibly share ownership on the stock market, it is hard to know how wealthy individuals are. Even property and shares may be held in trusts that are not easily linked to individuals. Prices of assets, including shares, may fluctuate considerably and the values of, say, paintings or jewellery cannot be determined until they are sold.

Wealth is also not the same as income. There are many examples of wealthy individuals living in homes that have over time appreciated hugely in value, but whose incomes are dramatically lower than their wealth suggests. Many individuals with high incomes consume all they earn and may even borrow heavily to support lavish lifestyles. Their wealth may actually be very low. Despite these problems, many commentators switch between talking about income and wealth inequality as if the two terms are synonymous. The importance of distinguishing between the two will become obvious later.

Inequality Matters

Why does inequality matter? For decades following the work of Kuznets² many economists argued that inequality was an inevitable part of economic development. Kuznets argued that in developing countries economic growth initially leads to increasing levels of inequality. Rich people save more than poor, so inequality aids the process of capital accumulation in poor countries. But as economies develop, larger portions of their populations move from agriculture into other sectors of the economy and their skills bases expand. Therefore a point is reached where inequality falls. Rich countries, according to Kuznets, should be more equal than poor countries.

In the 1960s and 1970s this observation was supported by the empirical evidence. But more recently inequality has clearly been increasing in developed countries. A number of developing countries, such as Brazil and indeed most of Latin America, have substantially reduced their levels of inequality. Processes other than those identified by Kuznets have clearly been at work.

There are also clear moral and political reasons why inequality is bad. The Financial Times' Martin Wolf notes that rising inequality is "incompatible with true equality as citizens"³ which is a central tenet of democracy. A 2012 World Bank report on South Africa⁴ traced the differences in life opportunities for South African

children and unsurprisingly found large differences based on race, gender, location and household income. It notes:

“An equitable society would not allow circumstances over which the individual has no control to influence her or his basic opportunities after birth. Whether a person is born a boy or a girl, black or white, in a township or leafy suburb, to an educated and well-off parent or otherwise should not be relevant to reaching his or her full potential: ideally, only the person’s effort, innate talent, choices in life, and, to an extent, sheer luck, would be the influencing forces. This is at the core of the equality of opportunity principle, which provides a powerful platform for the formulation of social and economic policy—one of the rare policy goals on which a political consensus is easier to achieve.”⁵

Such differences of opportunity are morally reprehensible. Also, by preventing an economy’s best talent from expressing their true potential, economic and social development are retarded.

A further reason why inequality is bad, especially when the inequality is easily identifiable along racial lines as in South Africa, is that it enables politicians to dodge difficult economic questions and promote seemingly simple solutions to what are very complex problems. Poverty, lack of job creation, lack of public service delivery can all be blamed on inequality rather than policy or political failure. If inequality is the cause of all problems, then the solution to all problems must be to take from the rich and give to the poor. It can then be argued that it is the selfish unwillingness of the rich to share what they have gained at the expense of the poor that holds back economic salvation.

In South Africa the former President of the ANC Youth league, for example, was able to promise university students that all education in SA would be free if the mines were nationalised,⁷ even though the arithmetic shows that this clearly would not be possible.

Chang *et al*⁶ have shown that nationalisation of mines occurs most often in economies that are unequal. In South Africa the former President of the ANC Youth league, for example, was able to promise university students that all education in SA would be free if the mines were nationalised,⁷ even though the arithmetic shows that this clearly would not be possible. So high levels of inequality mean that necessary, but difficult, policy decisions are avoided. Economic performance and welfare suffer as a consequence.

The focus on inequality received new impetus with the onset of the global financial crisis in 2007/08. Exposure of the enormous bonuses and salaries earned by the financiers whose excessive risk taking had plunged the developed world into crisis provoked public outrage. This was compounded when the costs of rescuing the financial system from implosion were absorbed by taxpayers, but the risk takers who had caused the problem almost immediately started earning large bonuses again. Organisations such as the “Occupy Movement” enjoyed widespread sympathy in this environment.

Capital in the twenty first century

Against this backdrop, the publication of the book “Capital in the Twenty-First Century” by French economist Thomas Piketty⁸ earlier this year enjoyed instant acclaim. Piketty has been described by some commentators as enjoying “rock star status” in the capitals of the West, including Washington. Former US Treasury

Secretary Larry Summers has described his work as having “transformed the discourse and is a Nobel Prize-worthy contribution”⁹.

In a complete reversal of the arguments of Kuznets, Piketty argues that inequality is the inevitable outcome of capitalism. He argues that periods of falling inequality – as in Western Europe in the 1950s and 1960s – are aberrations caused by particularly aggressive policy (steeply progressive income tax and the welfare state).

This country will benefit from inflows of wealth and of the wealthy who are typically high mobile, but at the expense of those countries seeking to reduce their inequalities of wealth.

Falling inequality over this period, he argues, was also caused by the massive destruction of the inherited property of the wealthy during World Wars 1 and 2. Central to Piketty’s thesis is that the returns on capital always exceed economic growth. Thus the earnings of the owners of capital (the rich) always grow faster than the earnings of labour (the poor). The rich save enough of their earnings to ensure that their stock of capital always grows at least as fast as the economy and so inequality widens.

To combat widening inequality Piketty calls for much higher marginal income tax rates for the wealthy and for a global wealth tax. The wealth tax is needed because in Piketty’s view wealth is the source of income inequality. Without taxing wealth, inequality cannot be reduced because of the ability of the wealthy to hide their true income. The tax must be global because wealth is highly mobile and the wealthy will move it to more favourable tax regimes should individual countries seek to tackle the sources of inequality on their own.

Herein lies a critical weakness in Piketty’s remedy. Because wealth is highly mobile it is clearly in an individual country’s interest to break ranks and not impose a wealth tax. This country will benefit from inflows of wealth and of the wealthy who are typically high mobile, but at the expense of those countries seeking to reduce their inequalities of wealth.

Larry Summers points to a more fundamental concern with Piketty’s analysis. Noting that after Piketty’s work on rising inequality “there can never again be a question about the phenomenon or its pervasiveness”¹⁰, he argues that Piketty’s central belief that the return on capital always exceeds over time the rate of growth in the economy is supported neither by economic theory nor by the large bulk of empirical research. Once capital depreciation is taken into account, Summers warns that he knows of no study that supports Piketty’s claim that the return on capital exceeds growth of the economy. But he knows of “quite a few suggesting the contrary”.¹¹

Summers also questions Piketty’s claim that the rich always save and reinvest a substantial proportion of the income they receive from their wealth. He notes, for example, that the Forbes list of the 400 wealthiest Americans in 1982 and 2012 found that less than one tenth of those on the list in 1982 were still there in 2012. Instead of growing their wealth, as Piketty claims, Summers notes that “they did not, given pressures to spend, donate, or misinvest their wealth”¹².

If Piketty is wrong about the causes of the growing inequality which he has so clearly identified, what then is the true cause? Summers confesses that “no one really knows”¹³. Summers warns, however, against the assumption that the obscene bonuses generated, for example, in the financial services industry must be unrelated

to productivity. Technology and globalisation have made it possible for innovators to operate on a global stage, generating previously unthinkable returns as a result. This has benefited the top “1%”. Globalisation has moved low-skilled jobs to developing countries such as China where wages are much lower. He warns that technology and automation are likely to work increasingly against those performing relatively low-skilled repetitive tasks such as in manufacturing. In this regard he warns that “the trends are all in the wrong direction, particularly for the less skilled as the capacity of capital embodying artificial intelligence to replace white-collar and as blue-collar work will increase rapidly in the years ahead”¹⁴.

What are the implications of this analysis for South Africa?

The first point to note is that just as Piketty turned Kuznets’ analysis on its head by showing that inequality is growing in developed countries, so it has also been challenged by the narrowing of inequality in many developing countries where previously it was greatest. 20 years ago most Latin American countries rivalled South Africa’s high inequality. While inequality remains very high it has narrowed virtually across Latin America over the past decade. Social transfers and higher minimum wages have helped increase the income of the poorest. Probably the most important cause of reduced inequality in Latin America was rising employment.

In South Africa, by contrast, income inequality has hardly changed despite the introduction of social transfers that now reach 16 million poor South Africans. Inequality remains high partly because the number of jobs created over the past 20 years barely kept pace with growth in the labour force. As a result, unemployment remains between 25% and 35% depending on whether one counts as being unemployed discouraged workers who have given up looking for a job. Our transfers system provides only for children from poor households, the elderly and the disabled. No provision is made for the unemployed. As a result, inequality in South Africa is so high both because of high wage inequalities within the workplace as well as the wide gap between those who are employed and those who are unemployed.

The impact of the possible higher taxes on the rich on government’s ability to expand the existing grants system is therefore negligible.

What if social transfers were raised to improve income distribution and taxes on the rich were raised for this purpose? An analysis of who pays tax reveals that even much more punitive marginal tax rates on the rich make little difference to government’s ability to spend on transfers. Tax collection statistics¹⁵ show that in 2010 only 2.3% of South African taxpayers earned more than R750 000 per annum. These 100 312 taxpayers earned 17.8% of taxable income and paid 30.3% of personal tax. Their average rate of tax paid was 35.2%. To estimate the impact of raising this rate of tax, two sets of calculations were made in which this average rate is raised by raising tax rates across the highest income brackets. If the average rate of tax for those earning more than R750 000 in 2010 rises to 41% this brings in only an additional R8.1 billion in income tax – or 1.4% of total tax revenue. A more dramatic rise in tax rates so the average tax rate for those earning above R750 000 rises to 46% raises an additional R16.0 billion – just 2.7% of total taxes. R84.8 billion was spent on existing social grants in 2010. The impact of the possible higher taxes on the rich on government’s ability to expand the existing grants system is therefore negligible.



A recent study by Statistics South Africa¹⁷ shows that 76% of the 6.2 million jobs created in South Africa between 1994 and 2004 were skilled or semi-skilled. 2 million skilled jobs were created over this period compared with just 1.4 million low-skilled jobs.

If social grants cannot be extended to the unemployed by taxing the rich, the answer to inequality in South Africa then appears to be to generate millions of jobs, no matter how low paying they might be, so that the 8 million people currently unemployed can start earning at least some income. Such a strategy would reduce poverty, but work by van der Berg¹⁶ shows that its impact on income inequality would actually be quite modest. This is because of the high degree of income inequality within the workplace. The largest cause of income inequality in South Africa lies within the workplace. Thus, even if all those currently

unemployed earn the current incomes of low-skilled workers, overall income inequality in South Africa will fall only modestly and will still be very high by global standards. The unemployed need to move also into higher wage jobs for the impact on reducing inequality to be substantial.

This need is borne out also by the current realities of the South African labour market. A recent study by Statistics South Africa¹⁷ shows that 76% of the 6.2 million jobs created in South Africa between 1994 and 2004 were skilled or semi-skilled. 2 million skilled jobs were created over this period compared with just 1.4 million low-skilled jobs. South Africa needs to grow faster and generate many more jobs, but without significant structural changes in the economy a high proportion of these will be skilled and semi-skilled jobs. To fill these positions the unemployed and new entrants into the labour force require the necessary skills. Such skills are sadly lacking as a result of South Africa's poorly functioning education system.

Fixing South Africa's education system, van der Berg¹⁸ argues, is therefore necessary to reduce unemployment and inequality in South Africa. The unemployed will gain access to semi-skilled and skilled jobs only if they are better educated. At the same time, an increased pool of educated workers will reduce the premia paid to the educated who are currently in short supply. Both poverty and inequality will fall as a result. Van der Berg concludes:

“Job creation, though crucial for poverty reduction, will also do little to reduce overall inequality. The weak endowments of those currently unemployed would not assure them of high labour market earning. Thus even if they were employed, it would probably be at low wages, thus leaving wage and hence aggregate inequality high and little affected. Thus the labour market is at the heart of inequality, and central to labour market inequality is the quality of education. To reduce income inequality substantially requires a different wage pattern based on better human capital for the bulk of the population”¹⁹.

The report by Statistics South Africa²⁰ shows that qualitative changes are required to education attainments as much as quantitative changes. 42% of South African workers with less than a matric qualification are unemployed, but unemployment remains as high as 34% for those with a matric. For those with a matric and some tertiary qualification unemployment is 14%. Unemployment of university graduates is just 5.2%. More matric and tertiary qualifications are needed, but the quality of these passes must improve substantially to provide access to better paid jobs.

Conclusion

There are no quick and easy solutions to South Africa's inequality problem. Without substantive improvements in the human capital of the poor income inequality will remain unacceptably wide. Fixing the education system lies beyond the scope of this article or the competencies of this author. Much is made of the fact that South Africa already allocates a high share of resources to education relative to other developing countries. Given the backlogs and wide disparities in our society inherited from apartheid possibly even greater resources are needed. But even increased resources will help only if they are well used. This will happen only with far greater political will and focus than is currently apparent.

NOTES

- 1 World Bank, 2014. World Development Indicators. <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx?isshared=true> The higher the gini coefficient, the more unequal a society.
- 2 Kuznets, S. 1955. Economic Growth and Income Inequality. *American Economic Review* 45, 1, 1–28.
- 3 Wolf, M. 2014. Review of 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century', by Thomas Piketty. *Financial Times*. 15 April. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/0c6e9302-c3e2-11e3-a8e0-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3EcBAjxuN>
- 4 World Bank, 2012. South Africa Economic Update: Focus on Inequality of Opportunity. World Bank, Washington DC.
- 5 *Ibid.* p. xii.
- 6 Chang, R., Hevia, C. & Loayza, N. (2009). Privatization and Nationalization Cycles. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, 5029. World Bank, Washington, D.C.
- 7 SAPA. 2010. Nationalised mines could fund universities – Malema. <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71651?oid=202880&sn=Detail&pid=71651>
- 8 Piketty, T. 2014. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Harvard University Press.
- 9 Summers, L.H. 2014. The Inequality Puzzle. *Democracy Journal*. 33 (Summer).
- 10 *Ibid.* p.95-96.
- 11 *Ibid.* p.94.
- 12 *Ibid.* p.96.
- 13 *Ibid.* p. 96
- 14 *Ibid.* p.97
- 15 South Africa (2011). 2011 Tax Statistics. <http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/tax%20statistics/2012/2011%20Tax%20Statistics.pdf>
- 16 van der Berg, S. 2010. Current poverty and income distribution in the context of South African history. Stellenbosch Economic Working Papers. 22/10.
- 17 Stats SA, 2014. Youth unemployment, unemployment, skills and economic growth. <http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/presentation/Youth%20employment,%20skills%20and%20economic%20growth%201994-2014.pdf>
- 18 *op. cit.*
- 19 *Ibid.* p.19.
- 20 *op. cit.*

South Africa: Failure and Success in Public Services



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One of the best ways to assess how well a government is performing is the degree to which it meets the needs of its citizens. Most African governments invest their largest budgetary allocations on health and education. South Africa is unusual in the degree to which it also spends on social welfare: only a few African countries can afford the payment for universal pensions and the other entitlements which keep around a third of the South African population dependent upon state grants. But if we want to compare South African state effectiveness with the capacity of other African states, looking at education and health is probably fair and certainly illuminating, particularly as comparisons about quality don't always correlate with relative resource endowment. Within South Africa, contrasting the outcomes and quality of public provisions for education and health also offers its own insights about the reasons of why successes and failures happen.

In this article, two brief overviews of public education and of public health respectively will show, on the one hand, a system that has been failing citizens badly and, on the other hand, public provisions that despite their shortcomings have obtained real gains. The last part of this article will make the case that the main reason for the comparative failure of South African schools and the relative success of South African health services is political.

Public Education

Opposition party politicians often claim that South Africa's system of public education is close to being the worst in the world. It's a view that was confirmed recently by a ministerial task team.¹ We know from international comparative data that South Africa's public schooling performs very poorly. For example, an evaluation by the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality tests grade six students with a standardised set of questions on maths and reading. Out of 15 African countries, South African students' performance was ranked tenth for reading and eighth for maths in 2010.² Annual national mathematics assessment by the Department of Basic Education of grade 9 students generated a 13 per cent score for basic competence in 2012. The same year, nearly thirty per cent of children in Grade Six were illiterate and forty per cent didn't have the numeracy that would be expected at this level.

What is striking about the comparisons with other African countries is that South African public education is relatively well resourced. Per capita expenditure is higher than anywhere else in Sub-Saharan Africa except for Botswana and Seychelles. It represents around 6 per cent of GDP – a much higher proportion than in most African countries, and moreover, since 2008, educational expenditure has been rising. Moreover in the last twenty years expenditure increasingly targets poor schools in

poor neighbourhoods, especially recently. The historic racial inequities in per capita public expenditure ended more than a decade ago and in consequence the provision of state-funded teachers in historically white and black schools is the same, though, of course today's middle class schools have recourse to private resources unavailable to poorer schools to pay for additional teachers. In comparison to elsewhere in Africa, South African teachers are better qualified, trained for longer periods, and better paid – much better paid – and their pay has improved sharply, recently. So what we have is a relatively well resourced system performing badly when it is compared to the way schooling functions in much poorer national settings. And if we extend the comparisons internationally the relative picture is even less flattering. In 2012 the World Education Forum found that only 9 out of 142 national systems were working worse than South Africa's.

Resource-related issues do explain some of the difficulties. Last year it was still the case that 23,000 South African public schools didn't have libraries or book collections. It's still the case that nearly a third of Eastern Cape schools lack electrical connections. Rural teachers are generally less well qualified and when tested often have inadequate subject knowledge compared to their urban counterparts. Too many teachers still struggle with junior classes with more than fifty pupils.

The point is that, notwithstanding the equalisation of expenditure provision, sharp resource inequities remain. Yes, in general, even very poorly resourced South African schools may be favourably endowed compared to schools in other African countries, but in South African inequity has an especially demoralising impact. Reports of high absentee-ism by teachers, overuse of discretionary leave, especially before and after weekends, and strikes are especially concentrated in the more poorly resourced schools. Reflecting this, overall averages indicate that teachers in historically black schools spend much less time in the classroom than teachers working in former white suburbs.

There have been signals of incremental improvement. Secondary school completion rates are rising. Compared to the rest of Africa school enrolment in junior grades is excellent – almost universal. In the last couple of years testing suggests that maths performance has become a little better among students who remain in school in Grade 9, a reflection of ministerial emphasis on “back to basics”, and probably a result of the concerted effort to provide nationally standardised subject workbooks. Fewer students drop out after Grade 9. Improving matriculation results may indicate genuine accomplishment, though experts warn that schools might be weeding out students who might be at risk of failing.³ And, of course, when we consider the totality of South Africa's public education, one sector within it functions rather well. Keeping in mind the demographic changes experienced in student enrolments in South African universities, those among them that have changed most are performing outstandingly well, well up to international standards of achievements, as global higher education rankings confirm.

So it is not entirely a bleak picture. But given the resources that have been expended and the expectations that exist amongst the vast number of South Africans who still believe that education is the key to their children's future, one would expect clearer and less ambiguous evidence of achievement. And when we contrast the quality in public education with the performance of the public health system, its shortcomings appear all the more pronounced.

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Public Health

The great achievement over the last seven years or so in South African public health, has been the halting of the death rate for HIV/AIDS. This is, of course, largely a consequence of a massive growth in the number of South Africans who take antiretroviral medication, around three million today compared to 107,000 in 2005. Much of this medicine is prescribed by public health clinics, 2000 of which now offer the drugs and supply or help to organise the supportive regime that is needed by patients. Virtually all primary health care facilities test for HIV/AIDS: in 2010/2011 about ten million people underwent testing, much of it done by redeployed retired nurses. Infant mortality, up sharply between 1994 and 2003, is now down to 1994 levels as a consequence of treatment and support for pregnant women.

Meanwhile increasingly sophisticated preventative messaging has apparently impacted upon sexual behaviour of younger people and another preventative measure, the provision of circumcision, has expanded very quickly for between 2010 and 2013 more than a million men underwent the operation. Much of this success is attributable to the mobilisation of around 60,000 lay counsellors or Community Health Workers who play a key role in helping to maintain patients' adherence to

the treatment regime⁴ – the “attrition rate” of fall-off from treatment regimes by patients is at 3 per cent comparatively low. To be sure, the availability of these workers has a lot to do with the relative vitality of community based organisation rather than the quality of the state's efforts to engender such support. But even so they are coordinated in a public programme and paid for with state funded gratuities. Of course this effort has resulted in increasing state health expenditure, up to 13 per cent of the budget in 2013 from around 12 per cent in 2010, and the government has begun to depend substantially on foreign aid, though most AIDS-related spending is and will remain exchequer funded.

Of course this effort has resulted in increasing state health expenditure, up to 13 per cent of the budget in 2013 from around 12 per cent in 2010, and the government has begun to depend substantially on foreign aid, though most AIDS-related spending is and will remain exchequer funded.

In other African countries, the redirection of health services to measures to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic has resulted in the erosion of other kinds of health care, most commonly with respect to antenatal care, supported birth deliveries, and immunizations. The evidence from South Africa indicates that these sorts of services have improved or at least expanded. Since 2005 there have been real increases in per capita health expenditure. Increases in the employment of nurses mean that nurses' patient loads in primary facilities have fallen. Usage of hospital facilities has increased, but despite hospitals coping with more patients, Statistics South Africa's general household surveys testify to falling rates of dissatisfaction with the quality of hospital services.

Public health is still beset by inefficiencies including serious shortcomings in the administration of the HIV/AIDS treatment regime. Both the Eastern Cape and the Free State have had to interrupt treatment because of poor supply management and weak financial controls. Even the most favoured urban hospitals are unable to secure equipment replacements as a consequence of unpaid bills. For instance in 2011, Soweto's Chris Hani Baragwanath owed one supplier R8 million. Overworked and consequently overstressed doctors misdiagnose. Even supply of bed linen and food for patients is hostage to incompetent managers in the provincial government who control contracting and tendering for hospitals. Government investment

in capital expenditure on hospital buildings has little impact upon the routine maladministration of hospital services. In general, the Minister, Aaron Motsoaledi, freely concedes that the poor majority of South Africans encounter hospital facilities that by the kindest definition are certainly “second rate”. There is still much that is seriously wrong with South African public health but aggregate statistics on access to services and outputs from these services as well as surveys of citizens’ opinions does suggest a general trend in which public health is working better. It’s a qualitatively and quantitatively different picture from education.

Why, though?

One reason is surely that the nature of the challenges addressed by each is different. In certain respects, and up to a point, in the case of health, some kinds of improvements can be achieved by comparatively simple engagements between the agency providing the service and the people in need. For example the spread of certain diseases can be checked by immunisations that might only be needed once or a few times only. In other words much can be achieved through improving people’s access to health care. Certainly, in the case of HIV/AIDS treatment patient engagement needs to be sustained and regular and supported by monitoring and counselling; not all kinds of public health can be undertaken through one-off encounters. But compared to the long term teaching and learning procedures that are involved in primary and secondary education achieving effective care for many kinds of illness is simpler. Prevention is more complicated and the processes that lead to behavioural change are very comparable with what happens in effective education. But a public health system can register gains in the way that has happened in South Africa while continuing to be weak in many respects.

Achieving comparable aggregate gains in education requires much more thoroughgoing systemic reform. Moreover, there is probably wider disagreement amongst experts in the field as to what is needed.

Achieving comparable aggregate gains in education requires much more thoroughgoing systemic reform. Moreover, there is probably wider disagreement amongst experts in the field as to what is needed. The debate within South African educational circles about the merits or shortcomings of “Outcomes-Based Education” is a good example of this, though now there is general recognition that the curriculum the government launched in 1998 and which it has revised successively since then, in its early versions made very unrealistic assumptions about student willingness and ability to undertake self-directed learning. In any case, too many teachers simply didn’t understand how they were expected to teach the new syllabus.

The deeper reason though for the difference in results in education and public health is, surely, political. President Mbeki’s efforts to limit the provision of anti-retroviral medication to AIDS patients and his questioning of medical orthodoxy certainly did much harm. One calculation is that if medicine had been prescribed on the same scale that it is made available today when it first became really affordable, in the early 2000’s, several hundred thousand lives might have been saved.⁵ But Mbeki’s efforts to change the government’s policy orientation on AIDS had an unintended positive effect. They prompted political mobilisation around the issue, not just through the institutional channels for public participation in policy making but also by extra parliamentary action undertaken by an extraordinarily effective social movement, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC). Protest and citizen sponsored litigation

helped to reshape policy. Litigation by itself would not have been enough, however. Rather the political theatre supplied by TAC's street-based actions helped to open up the kinds of divisions within the ruling party to ensure that, within the executive, there was the necessary political will to act upon and implement constitutional court judgements. But civic action was important in another way too, because the NGO community also supplied through its own programmes models of how mass "roll-out" of treatment could be managed using community support. Here the pioneering experiences of *Medicine Sans Frontieres* and the TAC in organising their own treatment programmes in Khayelitsha and Lusikisiki were especially influential.

Rural schools are especially affected by demoralised and undisciplined teachers – who too often have their behaviour sanctioned by a protective and politically well-connected trade union.

This set of impetuses for effective action has been missing in education so far. Not that there haven't been successful instances of protest. The Equal Education movement assembled thousands of school children in a demonstration outside Parliament in February 2011 to back its complaints about the dilapidated state of the basic fabric in Eastern Cape schools – and indeed in response the government agreed to spend more money on repairing and improving buildings.

One year later Section 27 took the authorities to court over the delays in supplying workbooks. All that is well and good, and certainly correcting inefficiencies in this kind of resource provision may help make education significantly better. But what is needed in public education is the kind of social engagement on changing its functioning that extends well beyond demonstrations and a few court cases.

Rural schools are especially affected by demoralised and undisciplined teachers – who too often have their behaviour sanctioned by a protective and politically well-connected trade union. School Governing Bodies are supposed to check abuses and malpractice by teachers; in the countryside these function poorly, especially in settings in which many adults are illiterate and easily intimidated by patrimonial displays of authority. In the case of HIV/AIDS treatment, as noted above, models of good practice were developed by NGOs within desperately poor communities. In education, debate about its content and methods rarely moves outside the social circles inhabited by the policy elite and academic specialists.

A final consideration that makes the politics of public education different from health is that a massive expansion of bad education has one key success to its credit. It has facilitated very rapid social mobility. South Africans may score at the bottom of the league tables when it comes to proficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic, but access to secondary and higher levels of education has widened and hence the numbers acquiring the formal qualifications needed for entry into white collar jobs has swollen. In public health, the penalties and costs of inefficiencies are immediate and obvious to everybody: people die. In education, the cost are long term, and hence for politicians easier to ignore.

NOTES

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An Overview of Youth Policy

Introduction

This year marks 17 years since the development of the first National Youth Policy (NYP) in 1997¹. The second five year NYP (2009 – 2014)² is currently under review. This provides an opportune moment to reflect on youth policy and development.

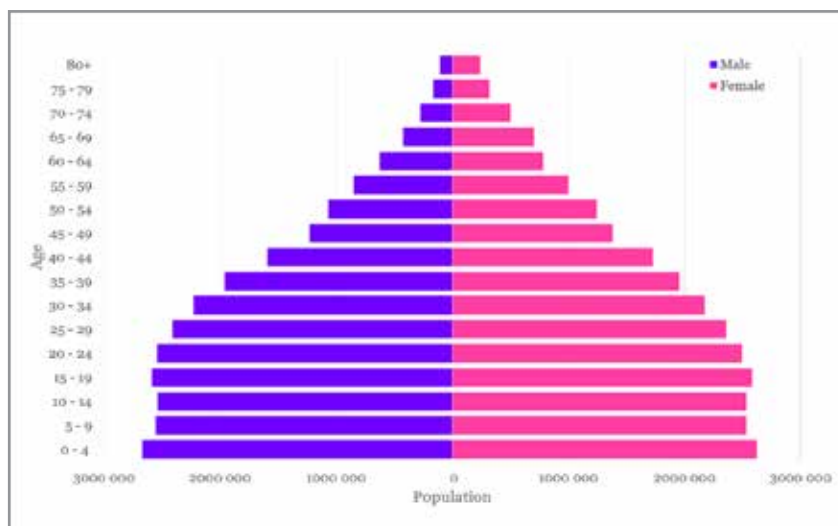
Of course 5 years is not a very long time in the evolution of public policy but “youth” is a transitional phenomenon, time matters and keeping stock of whether progress has been made is important.

Currently, about 29.2% of the population are aged younger than 15 years, and a further 36.4% are aged between 15 and 34 years, and about 7.8% aged 60 years and older [see Figure 1].³ South Africa has unprecedented numbers of children surviving the first five years of life and, as a consequence, more children are making the transition to adolescence and entering adulthood. This poses both opportunities and risks that have long-term consequences for young people. As the National Planning Commission has pointed out “the extent to which South Africa can take advantage of its demographic profile [is] depend on whether it is able to prioritise policies that improve the capabilities and life chances of its **largely youthful population**”⁴ [emphasis added]. The country’s current demographic profile is a time-limited opportunity for human capital development, which will begin to close over time.



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Figure 1: South Africa Population Pyramid - Mid-2013



Source: Statistics South Africa, Mid-year population estimates, 2013

Even though policy and decision makers express concern about the future of young people, few actions have actually been taken to change the economic, political, and social conditions that shape young people's lives. The failure of current policies and programmes to address important quality-of-life issues for youth remains a substantial barrier to their full development and the development of the country. Those in the forefront of national and youth policy development have been unable to exert effective influence over relevant public policy: consequently the various ways in which young people respond to coercive policies, ineffective institutional practices, and bleak economic conditions in their communities has generally gone unnoticed. To put it mildly, the state of youth development, policy and planning in the country leaves much to be desired.

Youth Policies, Institutions and Legislative Instruments

South Africa has a long history of institutional, policy and legislative instruments that have and continue to contribute to youth development. What follows is a brief overview of key institutions and policies which contribute both to the legislative and strategic process of youth development.

The IYDS strategy identified challenges and opportunities for youth as identified by a cross-section of stakeholders, including professional bodies, government departments, civil society, NGOs and youth formations.

National Youth Development Act (2008). The Act makes provisions for the establishment of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), an entity which gives resonance to youth development in South Africa. The Act also provides for the functions and objectives; management and governance; regulation of staff and financial affairs; and administration of funds in the NYDA.

National Youth Development Agency. The NYDA is tasked with initiating, designing, co-ordinating, evaluating and monitoring, and providing oversight to all programmes aimed at integrating youth; developing an Integrated Youth Development Plan and Strategy (IYDS); developing guidelines for the implementation of an integrated national youth development policy and making recommendations to the President; guiding efforts and facilitating economic participation and empowerment, and the achievement of education and training; partnering and assisting organs of state, private sector and non-governmental organisations on initiatives directed at employment and skills development; initiating programmes directed at poverty alleviation, urban and rural development and the combating of crime, substance abuse and social decay amongst youth; establishing annual national priority programmes in respect of youth development; and undertaking to promote the interests of youth, particularly young people with disabilities.

National Youth Policy (2009-2014). Aimed at closing identified gaps, addressing challenges and recommending new measures to improve and accelerate the implementation of youth policy under the following four pillars – education, health and wellbeing, economic participation and social cohesion.

Integrated Youth Development Strategy (2011). The IYDS strategy identified challenges and opportunities for youth as identified by a cross-section of stakeholders, including professional bodies, government departments, civil society, NGOs and youth formations. This also involved drawing information from various domestic and international instruments, public and research reports. The objective of which was the development of an integrated strategy that responds to the economic structure as discussed in key national policy frameworks including among

others; National Industrial Policy Framework (NIPF), Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP), National Growth Path (NGP), National Skills Development-South Africa (NSD-SA), National Youth Policy (NYP), and NSDS III.

National Skills Development Strategy III. Aims to increase access to high quality and relevant education and training and skills development opportunities, including workplace learning and experience, to enable effective participation in the economy and society.

Employment Tax Incentive Act, 2013 (“Youth Wage Subsidy”). The objective of which is to encourage employment creation and growth (especially in relation to young work seekers), and is a way of sharing the cost of expanding job opportunities with the private sector.

Youth Employment Accord. Seeks to improve education and skilling of young people, helping them to find jobs or start their own businesses. As part of the accord, government commits itself to increasing the number of people employed in the public sector, while certain industries have set youth development targets. All parties (government, organised labour, organised business, and community and youth formations) agree to implement a coordinated Youth Employment Strategy (YES).

The non-delivery on the part of government departments and youth institutions on their mandate with regard to youth programmes is a lost opportunity and represents a failure to fully comprehend the role youth play in society.

There are certainly no shortages of structures, policies and plans for youth development. National youth policies signal all kinds of areas for intervention and priorities for development, but like most government policy platforms, serve largely as political symbols of what is worth achieving than concrete, funded planning mandates for how to get there.

The non-delivery on the part of government departments and youth institutions on their mandate with regard to youth programmes is a lost opportunity and represents a failure to fully comprehend the role youth play in society. While national youth policies and institutional structures are only ‘one part’ of an integrated youth development strategy, they ultimately provide a framework for a country to make available resources, support and services that will allow young people to fulfil their potential and contribute to the social, cultural, political, and economic growth of the country. Failure to successfully implement these policies has both short and long-term consequences for the country.

Youth Employment and Unemployment

South Africa’s official unemployment rate is 25.5%, with an expanded definition of 35%⁵. The unemployment rate, based on the expanded definition, are astonishingly higher for black Africans at 43% compared to their counterparts (coloured: 28%; Indian/ Asian: 17%; and white: 7%)⁶.

Youth unemployment is sitting at a staggering 36.1%, compared to 16.3% amongst the adult population, with absorption rates of 30.7% and 57.6%, respectively⁷. To say these figures are disappointing would be an understatement. These high unemployment numbers amongst the youth have been described as “toxic” and a “ticking time bomb”. While there is no ‘silver bullet’ to address this crisis – government is failing to deal with it effectively. The question is: Whether there is sufficient political will to deal with this?

Statistics South Africa also reports that out of a total 10.1 million individuals in the 15-24 age cohort, 32.7% (or 3.3 million) are neither employed nor attending an education institution.⁸ This means South Africa is not creating enough opportunities for young people to sustain their livelihoods. As has been pointed out, employment is “crucial to most people’s sense of dignity, self-esteem, independence and social usefulness”⁹, failure to create jobs “reflects a tragic loss of potential not only at the individual/ household level, but – on account of the foregone contribution to national output and welfare”.¹⁰

The image of ‘youth as a resource’ prevails in periods of stability, economic growth and societal reforms. When youth is considered as such they represent the idealised future, are the receptacles of the values that each generation transmits to the next, and, therefore, they are a societal resource which are given the best opportunities for development and growth.¹⁴

The introduction and signing of both the Youth Employment Accord¹¹ and the Employment Tax Incentive Act, 2013 (“Youth Wage Subsidy”)¹² were seen as great leaps in addressing the challenge of youth unemployment. These showed great commitment by different stakeholders (in government, organised labour, organised business, and youth formations) to create five million new jobs by 2020. Since the signing of the Youth Employment Accord it has been reported that approximately 420 000 new jobs have been created¹³, but this is just not enough.

Images of Youth

The country’s perceptions of its youth is an important factor both at the policy making level and as a view of how society responds to youth issues.

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Youth can also be perceived with a contrasting image of ‘youth as a problem’ which prevails in periods of economic crisis, political instability, and when youth in society and in the media are presented as “dangerous”, “deviant”, “criminal”, “violent”. With this image youth is perceived as a source of danger or a period of vulnerability in response to which protective measures must be devised.¹⁵

It is important to be mindful of how a country views its young people. This largely has an impact on how it deals with its youth.

Conclusion

The sheer number of young people in our country is significant. This coupled with their growing interconnectedness means that they are part of a larger constituency with local, regional and global roots. The mere factor that the current youth cohort is the best educated, the healthiest sector of the population, are technology savvy, have high hopes and aspirations for the future, and have the ability to influence political processes and civic life makes them a powerful force in our society.

The lack of evaluation and monitoring of current youth policies is a major obstacle, in itself. This not only hinders the correction or reformulation of youth programmes, but also perpetuates errors currently being made in addressing youth issues. This lack of reporting makes it impossible to discuss the effectiveness of youth policies/

programmes. There is a need for an independent set of annual evaluations on youth programmes which would not only provide policy and decision makers with useful information on the degree of fulfilment of intended aims and objectives, but also reinforce transparency and public accountability. This would do a lot to restore young people's trust in public policy and youth institutions.

NOTES

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The Zumafication of the SABC



GAVIN DAVIS is a Democratic Alliance MP and Shadow Minister of Communications. He joined the DA as a Researcher in 2004 and was later appointed Chief of Staff in the Leader's Office. After a stint working in government as Special Advisor to the Premier of the Western Cape, he was appointed as the DA's Director of Communications in 2011. He holds Honours and Masters degrees in politics from Rhodes University and the University of Cape Town.

In June this year at a meeting with traditional leaders in Limpopo, it was reported that SABC Acting Chief Operations Officer Hlaudi Motsoeneng was presented with a cow, a calf and – bizarrely – a wife. According to the traditional leaders, Motsoeneng was given these gifts because he was “committed to his job and understands the strategic objectives of the SABC”.¹ In July, it was reported that a stadium in the Free State was to be named after Motsoeneng. The story quoted a provincial official who said the community had taken the decision “because the people felt he had done a lot of good things in Qwa Qwa.”²

All this seems incredible for a man who is, on the face of it, a mere functionary at the public broadcaster. But the truth is that Motsoeneng is far more than that. He is the ‘big man’ of the SABC who has been protected and promoted for protecting and promoting an even bigger man, President Jacob Zuma. Motsoeneng’s questionable appointment, his controversial utterances and the reign of terror he is said to have waged at the SABC have put him firmly in the public spotlight.

Arguably, Hlaudi Motsoeneng is just the most visible manifestation of the ongoing ‘Zumafication’ of the public broadcaster: Zuma’s allies are carefully constructing a powerful propaganda machine that places the SABC – with some 17 million TV viewers and 20 million radio listeners³ – at the centre of its plans to manipulate public opinion.

The Mbeki years

The politicisation of the SABC started some time before the ascendance of Jacob Zuma, with the ANC accused as far back as 2003 of attempting to influence the portfolio committee in its nominations for the SABC Board.⁴ Alarm bells rang later that year when SABC Board Member Thami Mazwai said: “As a broadcaster, you have to be very flexible when you deal with these issues... You can’t afford to be driven by old clichés, such as objectivity (and) the right of the editor.”⁵ In 2004, the ANC’s election launch was controversially covered live – a privilege not afforded to any other party. Some claimed the decision was taken because the Chairperson of the SABC Board, Eddie Funde, had also been in charge of the ANC’s party list selection process.⁶

In the latter years of the Mbeki presidency, the SABC was seen to be taking Mbeki’s side in the fierce factional battle between him and Jacob Zuma. In 2005, following Mbeki’s axing of Zuma as Deputy President, the SABC failed to show footage of Zuma’s supporters booing new Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka at a rally. The SABC’s Head of News Snuki Zikalala initially claimed that there had been no SABC cameras present, but was found to have lied when E-TV showed footage of SABC cameramen at the event.⁷ In 2006, the SABC refused

to air a documentary it had commissioned that contained criticism of President Mbeki. A year later, it emerged that Zikalala had instructed the SABC to 'blacklist' political commentators critical of the President.⁸

The onset of Zumafication

After Zuma's election as State President in 2009, the ANC in Parliament rushed through the Broadcasting Amendment Bill in the record time of three months. This gave Parliament the power to replace the SABC Board with an interim Board to make executive appointments sympathetic to the Zuma faction of the ANC.⁹

The interim Board's first order of business was to appoint Solly Mokoetle as SABC group Chief Executive Officer. In 2010, the Chairperson of the new SABC Board, Dr. Ben Ngubane (a Zuma appointee) worked with Mokoetle to appoint Phil Molefe as Head of News, without consulting the rest of the Board. Ngubane told the Board that he was "operating under the direct instructions of the President of the Republic and that he was resolved to appoint his preferred candidate."¹⁰ Molefe did the job he was appointed for, allegedly instructing senior executives at the SABC to stop giving favourable coverage to former President Mbeki. According to a *Sunday Times* source, Molefe told SABC executives that "he got his instructions from Luthuli House."¹¹

The rise and rise of Hlaudi Motsoeneng

In 2011, the Ngubane Board appointed Hlaudi Motsoeneng Acting COO of the SABC. Motsoeneng's first brush with controversy had been back in 2007 when, as an Executive Producer at Lesedi FM, he was dismissed following charges of racism, dishonesty, and promoting staffers without following due process. Motsoeneng was re-appointed a year later by SABC Chief Executive Dali Mpofu in what was perceived as caving into pressure from the ascendant Zuma faction. This was not the last time that Motsoeneng's career would be rescued by higher powers.

In early 2013, the SABC Board requested that Motsoeneng report on an SIU investigation into SABC corruption dating back to 2008.

In early 2013, the SABC Board requested that Motsoeneng report on an SIU investigation into SABC corruption dating back to 2008. A row ensued with Board Members after Motsoeneng allegedly offered to protect them from the findings of a separate investigation he had commissioned. The Board members interpreted this as a bribery attempt and, on 25 and 26 February, voted to have him removed as Acting COO.¹³

On 26 February 2013, Deputy Chairperson Thami Ka Plaatje advised Communications Minister Dina Pule that the Board had resolved to fire Motsoeneng. Shortly after that, Ngubane was quoted in a newspaper report as saying Motsoeneng had been reinstated, claiming that Ka Plaatje had made the decision.¹⁴ On 1 March 2013, Ka Plaatje withdrew the letter calling for removal of Motsoeneng, without the knowledge of the Board.¹⁵

The SABC Board distanced itself from Motsoeneng's re-instatement, telling the media: "[It] is regrettable as neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson have the power or authority to unilaterally change a board resolution." Before the Board could seek clarity from Ngubane and Ka Plaatje regarding the newspaper report, they resigned. Some days later, the Board re-affirmed its decision to remove Motsoeneng.

Mysteriously, within days of the Board reaffirming its decision to remove Motsoeneng, most of the members of the Board resigned. It was alleged by COPE MP Juli Killian that this had been under instruction from Luthuli House.¹⁸ The new interim Board immediately voted to reverse the decision to remove Motsoeneng as acting COO.¹⁹ In the end, the only person to survive this unsavoury episode was Hlaudi Motsoeneng himself. It was the second time that Motsoeneng was to miraculously survive at the SABC but not the last.

The Public Protector directed the Board to take disciplinary action against Motsoeneng, to recover all wasteful expenditure incurred as a result of irregular salary increments ...

The Public Protector's report

In November 2011 two senior SABC employees requested an investigation into financial mismanagement at the SABC, undue interference by the Minister, Motsoeneng's allegedly fraudulent appointment as Acting COO, and his unlawful activities while occupying that position.

The Public Protector's report issued on 17 February 2014 made several damning findings about

Motsoeneng's appointment and conduct, including that he:

- lied about having obtained a matric certificate and made up imaginary grades on his application form for the position of COO, as well as earlier positions held at the broadcaster,
- abused his power by having his salary increased three times in the space of one year, from R1.5 million to R2.4 million,
- Was responsible for the unlawful appointment of Ms Sully Motsweni to various positions and for her subsequent unlawful salary increases between 2011-2012. Motsoeneng was also, in part, responsible for the unlawful appointment of Ms Gugu Duda as CFO,
- "purged" senior staff leading to "the avoidable loss of millions of Rand towards salaries...and settlements for irregular terminations of contracts" and
- unilaterally increased some staff members' salaries without following the SABC Personnel Regulations, leading to the SABC's "unprecedented salary bill escalation by R29 million."

The Public Protector directed the Board to take disciplinary action against Motsoeneng, to recover all wasteful expenditure incurred as a result of irregular salary increments and for the Minister to take urgent steps to fill the position of COO within 90 days of the report.

To date, no disciplinary action has been taken against Motsoeneng and no attempt has been made to recover the wasted money. One recommendation that was complied with was the appointment of a permanent COO – although it is unlikely that it was the appointment that the Public Protector had in mind.

At a SABC Board Meeting on 7 July the Board resolved to appoint Motsoeneng as the Chief Operations Officer in a permanent capacity. Minister Faith Muthambi reportedly arrived at the SABC at around 19h00 and entered into a private conference with the SABC Chairperson, Ellen Tshabalala, prior to the Board Meeting. When the Chairperson emerged from that conference at about 21h00, she proposed to the Board that it immediately appoint Motsoeneng as the permanent COO – even though the question of filling the COO post was not on the meeting's agenda.²⁰



Several Board Members objected on the grounds that the position had not been advertised, and no candidates were shortlisted or interviewed as stipulated in the SABC Articles of Association. Five of the eleven board members did not support his appointment: two abstained and three voted against. The remaining six board members voted in favour of the appointment. Muthambi duly announced Motsoeneng's appointment the next morning.

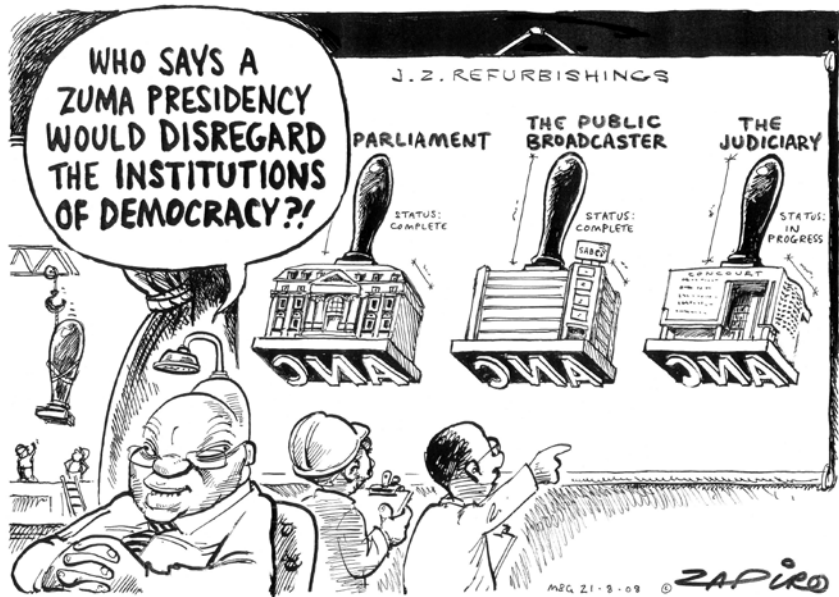
President Zuma has never been so embattled. Guptagate, Nkandlagate, Marikana, the arms deal and the spy tapes saga have cast a dark shadow over his presidency.

This was the third time that Motsoeneng had survived at the SABC against all odds. Instead of being fired, he has been protected and promoted by high-ranking politicians. It is not hard to figure out why.

The perfect functionary

President Zuma has never been so embattled. Guptagate, Nkandlagate, Marikana, the arms deal and the spy tapes saga have cast a dark shadow over his presidency. Many in his own party hold him responsible for heavy electoral losses in the 2014 election – from 66% to 62% nationally, and down 10% in Gauteng to 53%. This is why Zuma needs a loyalist at the heart of the SABC to help him survive the inevitable internal backlash.

There is more than enough evidence to suggest that Motsoeneng's unswerving loyalty to the President has helped him keep his job. It is reported that Motsoeneng has been known to boast about his strong ties to President Zuma.²¹ It has also been suggested that he ensured favourable SABC coverage for Zuma to help see off Kgalema Motlanthe's challenge for the ANC presidency at Mangaung.²² When Zuma was booed at Nelson Mandela's funeral, Motsoeneng saw to it that the spectacle – widely reported on at home and abroad – never made it on to the prime time SABC news bulletins. The parallels with the SABC's non-coverage of the Mlambo-Ngcuka booing incident some ten years earlier are striking.



But it was the job that Motsoeneng did during the 2014 election that must have really endeared him to the ANC leadership. Early on in the campaign it was reported that SABC staffers were instructed not to show crowd shots of opposition party rallies or carry footage of service delivery protests.²³ The SABC also caused controversy when it pulled DA and EFF television adverts critical of Zuma's record on corruption and job creation.

Motsoeneng has couched the pro-government agenda of the SABC as a commitment to reporting on positive news stories. As he said in August last year: "The media normally focus on the negative publicity. I believe, from the SABC's side, 70% should be positive news stories and then you can have 30% negative stories."²⁴ Motsoeneng went further with his attack on the media in July this year when he told a conference that the print media only reports on corruption because the government is black. He also said that journalists should be licensed, a practice commonplace in repressive regimes such as Iran, Myanmar and Zimbabwe.²⁵

Motsoeneng is the perfect functionary to ensure positive reportage of the President – ruthless and calculating. But it would be a mistake to think that President Zuma's plan to control the airwaves ends with Hlaudi Motsoeneng.

A new propaganda ministry

Government sources suggested in May this year that President Zuma was waiting until after the election to establish an Orwellian-sounding 'Information Ministry'.²⁶ On 16 July, the President proclaimed that the old Department of Communications would become the new Department of Telecommunications and Post. The SABC would move to a newly constituted Communications Department that would include the Government and Communication Information System (GCIS) previously housed in the Presidency.

Industry experts were quick to point out that the proclamation made no sense in a world in which digital and broadcast technologies were rapidly converging. Despite widespread criticism of the departmental split, no rational and compelling

explanation from the government has been forthcoming. And so we are left to speculate about the President's motives in creating a new Department of Communications with unprecedented control over the crafting and dissemination of government's message.

It is of some concern that the same Minister in charge of the GCIS and the SABC is also able to exert influence over the broadcast regulator, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, as it falls under the aegis of her Department. Perhaps even more alarming is the shifting of the Film & Publications Board from the Department of Home Affairs to the Department of Communications. The Film & Publications Board's wide-ranging powers to classify and proscribe virtually any content has led some to speculate whether it has been set up to be the censorship arm of the new 'Ministry of Propaganda'.

The deployment of Zuma-ally Faith Muthambi to head up the Department of Communications adds further credence to the idea of a propaganda ministry. Shortly after assuming office, Muthambi announced that she would be reducing the number of SABC Board Members from 12 to 5, and transferring Parliament's powers to hire and fire the Board to herself.²⁷ Her role in the appointment of Motsoeneng discussed earlier confirmed her complicity in the ongoing politicisation of the SABC.

Conclusion

Hludi Motsoeneng is the personification of a renewed and far-reaching assault on the independence of the public broadcaster. But his protection and promotion is just one component of a plan to ensure that the entire state communication apparatus sends out a positive message about the Zuma presidency – a “good story to tell” in ANC parlance.

The capture of the SABC by factional interests is mirrored in the politicisation of other state institutions important for Zuma's survival, including the prosecuting authority, the intelligence services and the police. This process of Zumafication should be of concern to every South African with an interest in protecting our constitutional democracy. Indeed, it is going to take the collective effort of the media, civil society and political parties to stop it.

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The Crisis of the South African Public Service



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The early years of public service transformation

Democratic South Africa inherited a racially skewed public service in which 95.5% of the top 3,239 civil servants were white, and only 0.6% black African. Black Africans made up the vast majority of public servants in the lower ranks, with a few middle and senior level public servants in the homeland governments.

The size of the task facing the new government was daunting. South Africa had to merge the many administrations of the central government and the various homelands into one coherent, vastly extended administrative system, and at the same time develop policies and practices to ameliorate the ravages of Apartheid and its colonial and settler predecessors. To add to these difficulties, the ANC was faced with an administrative system and top civil servants who they felt they could not trust. Nonetheless, an effective restructuring occurred in which a three sphere system (national, provincial and local government) was created, incorporating all the previous administrations and rationalising the previously fragmented local governments. The three spheres are independent and interdependent which makes central control difficult and some in Government would therefore have preferred them to be tiered.

In transition negotiations, it was agreed that a Government of National Unity would be formed for the first five years. The so-called Sunset Clause, which guaranteed public servants their jobs until 1999, was an important compromise. The settlement was reluctantly accepted by the ANC, although many within the broad coalition remained allied to the idea of the national democratic revolution, requiring the dismantling of the racial/class system fostered by capitalism. As Fraser-Moleketi (2006) put it, "When the time came for a negotiated settlement, the ANC and its partners had to consider a more strategically informed settlement rather than the initial desire for a clean break" (p. 14). In the 1990s, a number of policies were speedily produced in order to bring about the desired transformation of South Africa, in general, and the Public Service in particular.

The 1996 Constitution provides a clear idea of the kind of Public Service management that was envisaged, and a clear goal for the transformation process (Presidential Review Commission 1998):

- Professionalism, impartiality and excellence;
- Accountability and transparency;
- Participatory policy-making;
- Efficiency, effectiveness, and equity;
- A developmental and service orientation.

In addition, section 195(1) of the Constitution prescribes basic values and principles for public administration.

The framers of the constitution could never have envisaged the way the ‘participatory’ in participatory policy-making enabled distortion in practice. Participation was not only perceived as a process for establishing policy and legislation for the general good, but became a justification for particular interpretations, undermining management in the process. This was further exacerbated by the lack of a clear delineation between political and administrative affairs – which confounded politics with administration, leading to tensions, and/or collusion, between ministers and their directors general.

The Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) promised an extensive program of Affirmative Action, including training and support, and stated further that within two years of its implementation, “...recruitment and training should reflect South Africa in terms of race, class and gender” (1994, p. 127). Despite warnings of the need to support appointees (Franks 1995), the training and support promised was seldom forthcoming; nor was the situation adequately managed or monitored, as promised. Furthermore, the concept of ‘potential’ became a favoured loophole through which kin, friends, and comrades were advantaged over more competent applicants.

At first, the new government was careful in its deployments. However, many skilled and experienced public servants left the service after the introduction of the Voluntary Severance Packages in 1996. Some took the packages and later came back as consultants, while much of the dead wood from the old regime remained.

“The failure to focus on institutional strengthening in the first decade of non-racial government may have long-term implications for South Africa”.

By 1998, the Presidential Review Commission noted that the benefits of the voluntary severance packages, such as opening spaces for the appointment of black South Africans, were “...far outweighed by the disadvantages,” including a number of “...undesired and serious adverse effects,” or so-called unintended consequences. Picard (2005) warned prophetically that, “The failure to focus on institutional strengthening in the first decade of non-racial government may have long-term implications for South Africa” (p. 370).

In this rapidly changing and confusing environment, public service has been overwhelmed by the political, as with the Apartheid regime before. Loopholes were exploited as public servants interpreted policy in terms of their own ideological bent and/or personal interests, as well as those of their kin and comrades. The problems inherent in this corruption of management cascade down the ranks, and compound throughout the public service system. Incompetent managers hire even less competent subordinates in order to safeguard their position. Centres of excellence and commitment become swamped by the malaise.

Although the ANC took the reins of government as a movement of liberation, it had to transform itself into a pragmatic ruling party. The ANC has always maintained that it is a ‘broad church,’ a ‘coalition’ of a broad variety of ideologies, centring on the Tripartite Alliance with the South African Communist Party, and the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The challenges of a broad coalition, containing such diverse and even opposing value systems and interests, make coherent policy making and effective administration enormously difficult.

In particular, the contradiction between the responsibility to the constitution and that to the national democratic revolution has compromised the ANC Government’s ability to maintain well-functioning management. Kader Asmal,

a former ANC minister, warned in 2010 that the national democratic revolution creates a fundamental, "... conflict of interests because the values of the revolution are incompatible with those of the constitution" (In Hoffman 2010, p. 1).

The entire process of change in the public service has been bedevilled by a conflict between the need for an efficient, professionally and technically competent and politically neutral public service, on the one hand, and the desire for political alignment, cultural change and patronage on the other.

Policy was distorted; firstly, at the level of formulation by an over-reliance on foreign models, romantic ideals and a failure to develop truly contextual policies; and secondly, in implementation, where particular interpretations and interests have distorted the original intentions and spirit of these policies.

The conflicts of interest are further complicated by what Mthembu, Chairperson of the PSC, describes as "...a lack of clarity on what constitutes good practice and what is not acceptable" (2013). As he explains: "In African culture we believe in taking care of people who are important to us, by ensuring they are fed and provided with opportunities. We know this has limits,

but what are they? It is important that we have a conversation about how far well-intentioned and good-hearted cultural practices should extend in the professional realm and where they must stop." (p. 1). South Africa has to establish an ethical framework, based in the values of the Constitution, so as to govern and manage conflicts of interest so as to achieve public service delivery for the public good.

The entire process of change in the public service has been bedevilled by a conflict between the need for an efficient, professionally and technically competent and politically neutral public service, on the one hand, and the desire for political alignment, cultural change and patronage on the other. Both themes are present in an incoherent and confused process.

In October 1997, the Department of Public Service and Administration, recognising the need for an ethos of service delivery, launched the Batho Pele initiative (a SeSotho phrase meaning "putting our people first"), aimed at improving efficiency and accountability. The initiative failed to take root or show significant results in changing the politico-administrative culture.

Instead, recruitment of public servants through political processes and affirmative action congealed around the notion of cadre deployment (i.e., selection of party-loyal members in senior administrative positions). The unintended consequences of these practices began to be noticed by some commentators; this was initially met with denial from the ruling party, but later implicitly acknowledged (Fraser-Moleketi 2006, p.6).

The Department of Public Service and Administration Review 1999-2000 (2000) identified the following shortcomings of the transformation project: time lines were overly optimistic; it tackled too many interventions at the same time in an unplanned fashion; the need for management development had been underestimated; and that, in hindsight, some interventions could have undermined the resilience of the bureaucracy. A Public Service Job Summit was held in 2001 successfully reaching a framework agreement with labour.

In 2001, the Senior Management Service (SMS) was introduced, which developed a Handbook (2003) defining a competency framework for the 10,000 senior managers in the Public Service (directors, chief directors, deputy directors general, and directors general) as well as the 250,000 junior managers. The competency

framework (2002) identified ten core managerial competences. Only in 2008 did they add, ‘honesty and integrity’ as a core competency.

Public service training

In preparation for taking over governance, the ANC set up “...a group to explore post-Apartheid public administration in South Africa” which concluded “...that public administration policies should be redirected to development management through education and training” (McLennan 2007, p. 41), and called for the establishment of a Civil Service College.

Much enthusiasm was generated by the establishment of democratic South Africa, worldwide, in Africa and within South Africa itself. The various schools and departments of public management or administration were quick to contribute to and experiment with the training of public servants. The Department of Public Service and Administration was also intent on developing public servants. While the academics concentrated on general competencies such as critical thinking and policy analysis, the Government trainers concentrated on general skills training. Debate and dialogue was dynamic and vibrant, if influenced by theoretical discussions from elsewhere. In the euphoria for the new South Africa not many predicted the poor level of service, or the greed and avarice that South Africa has witnessed. The warning of Adu (1965) that, “Africanization for the sake of Africanization only, without relating it to a well-considered plan, would undermine this policy” was overlooked (p. 115).

In the euphoria for the new South Africa not many predicted the poor level of service, or the greed and avarice that South Africa has witnessed. The warning of Adu (1965) that, “Africanization for the sake of Africanization only, without relating it to a well-considered plan, would undermine this policy” was overlooked.

Academics specialising in public administration, assisted by various funding agencies, held a number of conferences and workshops and set up the New Public Administration Initiative (NPAI). Academics became training and research beneficiaries of the foreign aid funding released by the coming of democracy.

The Winelands Conference, which continues as a biennial conference, was launched at Stellenbosch in 1987 with the theme, “South African Public Administration – Past, Present and Future.” In 1990, a “Co-ordinating and Consulting Working Conference on the Teaching of Public Administration in South Africa,” funded by Liberty Life, facilitated “discussion on new forms of public administration teaching” (McLennan 2007, p. 42), and led to the formation of the New Public Administration Initiative and the Joint Universities Public Management Education Trust (JUPMET). The first Mount Grace conference was held in 1991, providing input from academics and practitioners which, according to Schwella (2013, p. 15), influenced the framers of the new Constitution. Mount Grace 1 also incubated the formation of the Association of Southern African Schools and Departments of Public Administration and Management and *Administratio Publica*, its academic journal.

In 1992, the Harvard/Otis workshop was initiated by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, with funding from Otis Elevator Limited. The workshops trained public management academics and practitioners in Case Study and other interactive methods of teaching and learning so as to prepare people for the new public service and its challenges, stimulating dialogue concerning key public service challenges.

The Otis Workshops continued after 1996 as the South African Public Management Workshops facilitated by South African academics. This period coincided with a rise in concern for issues of service delivery, and the workshops became dynamic annual conversations among academics, practitioners, and civil society of the challenges facing the public service.

The ANC embraced an emphasis on popular participation, citizen-oriented service delivery, and management empowerment. Fraser-Moleketi (2006) noted: "... not surprisingly the minimalist, neo-liberal ideology of new public management approaches clashed with the democratic and radical approaches of the ANC especially with regard to the 'macro' sides of reform." (p. 62). Levin (2004) suggested that the NPM emphasis on "decentralisation and deregulation" ran "counter to the

Because public service placement became so politicised, incumbents too often spent their time garnering political favour and looking for their next position.

central tenets of developmental statism, which are based on coordinated planning from a central level and greater regulation." (p. 78). The NPM competed with other models, notably the developmental state model with its Japanese origins (later influenced by Deng Xiaoping's vision of state-led capitalism), and also the centrally planned economy of communist regimes. Rothstein (1968) discusses China's cadre deployment with reference to the concept of 'enfeoffment' (the

deed by which a person was given land in exchange for service) describing situations in which the incumbent views their position in the Public Service as, "... something they could use more or less as their property to extract private resources from." (p. 184). South Africa has many examples of such entitlement from the highest level.

Efforts to develop senior management have been hindered by rapid turnover, with about 30% of senior managers transferring *per annum*. It has been acknowledged that there is a crisis of standards within the public service, resulting from the decentralisation of human resource functions, whereby differing standards in different departments and spheres have contributed to the rapid turnover of senior personnel. People took advantage of lower standards elsewhere to apply for transfer, even at the same level, and achieved a much improved remuneration package. Others left for the private sector and parastatals.

Because public service placement became so politicised, incumbents too often spent their time garnering political favour and looking for their next position. Many senior managers enrolled for MBA degrees with an eye to moving into the private sector.

Coming together, these issues have resulted in poor management, deficient and partial decision-making, casual selection and placement of staff, excessive staff turnover, frequent misuse of training opportunities, and high levels of financial and administrative corruption.

The ANC deployed cadres throughout government and the public service training institutions. JUPMET was established with a large donation from the European Union. As Clapper (2007) has commented, JUPMET's "...dominance in the market of academic consulting to the public service resulted in them managing to monopolize consultation and training" which in turn resulted in resentment from those academic Departments of Public Administration that were excluded (p. 38). JUPMET collapsed around 2000, because, "the consortium was seen to be rather exclusive and parochial; contrary to some of the inclusiveness and developmental objectives they subscribed to" (Clapper 2007, p. 38).

JUPMET collapsed around 2000, because, “the consortium was seen to be rather exclusive and parochial; contrary to some of the inclusiveness and developmental objectives they subscribed to” (Clapper 2007, p. 38).

In 2003 South African Public Management Workshops were institutionalised in the Department of Public Service and Administration as the South African Public Management Conversation and was able to facilitate dialogue and conversation among academics and practitioners until 2006.

There has been much discussion of the academic/practitioner interface and arrangements which would allow for academics to experience practice and for practitioners to get some time for reflection in an academic setting. This rotation has not yet been realised.

As unintended consequences emerged, the Department of Public Service and Administration introduced a number of initiatives aimed at improving the situation. The Public Finance and Management Act was introduced in 1999 to ensure fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost effective procurement by all organs of state.

Attempts to motivate performance through the rewarding of excellence were hampered by implementation challenges. For instance, the Minister of Education found that teachers all evaluated each other as excellent. Performance Management was attempted, but was undermined by the same solidarity, a mixture of favouritism, solidarity, and fear.

The South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) was founded in 1993 as an independent institute under the Public Service Commission. The training reach was wholly inadequate. By the end of 1994 SAMDI’s composition, structure and role was under review and in December 1998 almost all its training activities were suspended. Thereafter it functioned as a department of the Department of Public Service and Administration.

In 1999, at the second Mount Grace Conference, public servants were no longer present (McLennan 2007, p. 44). However, dialogue between public servants and academics continued until 2007, when Fraser Moleketi’s term of office as Minister of Public Service and Administration ended abruptly with the ousting of Thabo Mbeki as President. Dialogue fell off considerably, subduing the acknowledgement of serious issues faced by the Public Service. Since 2004, public service protests have increased exponentially, with 2012 experiencing nearly 30% of all such protests.

In November of 2006, SAMDI was reconstituted as the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) and was formally launched in August of 2008. PALAMA is a SeSotho word meaning ‘arise’ or ‘get on board.’ PALAMA changed its focus from being a training provider to that of facilitating leadership development and management training, in collaboration with other training institutions significantly increasing its offerings and reach. An assessment conducted by the Public Service Commission in 2011 found that 90% of the departments sampled indicated that they did not use PALAMA for training, rather using Higher Education Institutions, private training institutions and in-house capacity.

The skills gaps among senior managers were assessed, and the Department of Public Service and Administration established national norms and criteria applicable to all

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three spheres of government, and made training and development mandatory for induction and career progress.

By the time of the watershed ANC Conference at the University of Limpopo in 2007 (the Polokwane Conference) it was clear that there were serious challenges in the

Public Service at all levels. This conference, building on the work of Fraser Moleketi's term as Minister of Public Service and Administration, set out the attributes of the developmental state. It emphasised "... proper training, orientation, and leadership of the public service" and the state's "...ability to translate broad objectives into programmes and projects and to ensure their implementation" (ANC 2012, p. 59). This was reaffirmed at the ANC Conference of 2012 together with the National Development Plan.

The Diagnostic Overview of the National Planning Commission identified "deeply rooted systemic issues," which require, "a long-term and strategic approach to enhancing institutional capacity.

The Diagnostic Overview of the National Planning Commission identified "deeply rooted systemic

issues," which require, "a long-term and strategic approach to enhancing institutional capacity." The Commission addressed "a set of interrelated issues including instability resulting from repeated changes in policy, under staffing and skills shortages, obstacles to building a sense of professional common purpose in the public service, political interference, lack of accountability, and insufficient clarity in the division of roles and responsibilities" (National Planning Commission 2011, p. 26).

The Public Administration Management Bill

The National Development Plan has been accompanied by the launch of the Public Service Charter, the Year of the Public Service Cadre and the Public Administration Management Bill (2013). This Bill, in consultation since 2007, initially provided for the following (later developments indicated in parentheses):

Establishing a single public Service (National, Provincial and Local 'spheres') with national standards and systems;

- Establishing an Office of Standards and Compliance to establish and monitor standards as well as oversee and promote quality assurance in service delivery. (Becomes a unit)
- Extending the role of the Public Service Commission to all spheres of government and makes the commission's directions binding on the State. (Dropped)
- Outlawing public servants, their families or relatives doing business with government; (Dropped)
- Establishing an Anti-corruption bureau; (Becomes a unit)
- Mandating all public servants to attend the School throughout their careers
- Establishing a National School of Government (launched 21 October 2013) to enhance the quality, extent and impact of the development of human resource capacity in institutions through education and training by:
 - In-sourcing expertise, especially experienced public servants for facilitation and curriculum design.
 - Issuing, or causing to be issued, diplomas and certificates
 - Interacting with and fostering collaboration among training institutions, higher education institutions, further education and training institutions and private sector training providers in furtherance of such education and training.

Even as amended, the Bill may begin a process toward good governance. However, it remains to be seen whether the response can ameliorate the soft issues which ultimately determine how these interventions will be interpreted and implemented. The Bill attempts to confront corruption, non-management, and mismanagement directly, ultimately providing a legal framework wherein a senior manager can be dismissed for not instituting anti-corruption and other disciplinary measures.

The former Minister of Finance, Pravin Gordhan, has acknowledged that previous efforts, “have not matched the size and complexity of the challenge” and appealed for “a special effort from all of us in government, assisted by people in business and broader society”. He conceded, “...it will take time. But we are determined to make progress.” (p. 28).

Conclusions

The racial and gender composition of senior management was quickly transformed so that, by 2011, 72% were black African, 10% coloured, 5% Asian (87% black) and 13% white. In 2011 63% of senior managers were male and 37% female.

The public service consists of more than 1.6 million employees, spread across all spheres of government, leading to a heavy state wage bill of at least 11.5% of GDP and expected to increase. This, is nearly three times that of either Brazil or Russia, South Africa’s BRICS partners, and even larger than that of the UK or USA. Because of high unemployment and the relatively small tax base, this is unsustainable (Schüssler 2012). The need for training 10,000 senior managers and 250,000 junior managers in all spheres of the public service, despite contributions from many sources in the public, private, civil society and academic sectors has not been met.

The current government finds itself immersed in a sea of unintended consequences, with unaccountability, corruption and particularism embedded in the very fabric of public service and the State.

The current government finds itself immersed in a sea of unintended consequences, with unaccountability, corruption and particularism embedded in the very fabric of public service and the State. Nearly two decades of cadre deployment and redeployment, inadequate training, management and discipline, and the increasing evidence of corruption of public funds and processes, have been met by increasing service delivery protests and somewhat of a breakdown of the labour relations system.

It is a critical moment in South Africa. If the public service issues faced are not confronted, they may continue to undermine the technical and legal efforts to deal with symptoms of poor management.

The Public Administration Management Bill 2013 may well establish the basics of a disciplined and managed Public Administration and stop procurement and services corruption, but can it come to terms with the fundamental conflict about the public service itself? South Africa is heading towards a form of state-led development, which requires a high level of public service expertise – technical, professional and managerial. The emergence of an impartial civil service requires, “... both a legal framework to make civil servants accountable and a conceptual development of the importance of ethics in the public service” (Rothstein and Teorell 2008, p. 185). This conversation will require exemplary and bold leadership. The Bill, while rushed through Parliament in March 2014, has still not been approved as at September 2014.

The difficult issues are the soft issues which have to be carefully managed to avoid undermining technical expertise through so-called ‘unintended consequences’. These soft issues are political and social. It is important that the DPSA look carefully at a campaign to assert ethical standards within the public service and to make sure that integrity is ensured through disciplinary procedures which have been so difficult to get public service managers to implement in the past.

What will emerge remains to be seen. The stakes are high.

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BOOK REVIEW

ANTHONY EGAN

A Catholic priest and HSF Research Fellow, Anthony Egan SJ is based at the Jesuit Institute South Africa in Johannesburg. By training a historian and ethicist, he has studied at the Universities of Cape Town (MA in History), Witwatersrand (PhD in Politics), and at London (Philosophy & Theology) and Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge Massachusetts (STL in Moral Theology). His work as a Jesuit has included pastoral ministry as a student chaplain, spiritual direction, journalism and academia. He teaches medical ethics part-time at the University of the Witwatersrand Faculty of Health Sciences and participates in the Fordham University (NY) exchange programme at the University of Pretoria. The author of three short books, over ten book chapters, numerous academic and popular articles and over 1000 book reviews, his current research interests include medical ethics, Vatican II and church reform, and the history of white resistance politics in 20th Century South Africa.

State of the Nation “1974”: *The New Radicals and The Vision of an Unachieved Future* by Glenn Moss

*“God, how I miss the Cold War!” mutters M (played by Dame Judi Dench) in the 2006 James Bond film Casino Royale. This line reverberated in my mind as I read a new book, **The New Radicals: A Generational Memoir of the 1970s** by Glenn Moss¹. Though it would be obscene to say that one misses apartheid, there is much to learn of the state of the nation today by looking back to the 1970s, not at the state itself (an authoritarian monster) but at the dynamics of a diverse and creative internal opposition struggle that was slowly gaining in momentum.*

From the perspective of the state, South Africa in “1974” (the early Seventies in general) seemed a place of near-totalitarian order. Despite attempts at international sanctions, the late 1960s had been a good time for the economy. The white trade unions were largely behind apartheid, the black unions non-existent. The African National Congress and Pan Africanist Congress were banned, its top leaders in jail or under house arrest. The armed struggle was all but extinguished: the ANC’s activity in South Africa was largely reduced to the occasional pamphlet bomb – a packet of roneoed leaflets scattered by a large firecracker in public places, often done through the kind support of left-leaning British tourists helping the Movement in exile. And the PAC was already in the process of internal meltdown, riven by internal conflicts.

Internally, the homeland policy was being implemented with ruthless efficiency. The Liberal Party, the last non-racial party in the country, had been hounded by legislation into self-dissolution in 1968. Parliament for the most part – the National Party Government and the United Party ‘opposition’ – was complacent, apart from a pesky MP named Helen Suzman who used every bit of Parliamentary privilege to challenge the state. The two big forces of opposition were the Churches and the (mainly white) students. Thankfully, despite a handful of individuals (like Beyers Naude and Catholic Archbishop Denis Hurley) and a few organisations (like the Christian Institute), most of the time the churches just talked – and fought amongst themselves, particularly where they were dominated financially by white members enjoying the benefits of apartheid. Similarly, the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), it seemed, was in crisis: its black members had broken away, influenced by a medical student named Steve Biko, whose ideas came together under the rubric Black Consciousness and seemed to advocate racial separatism as the state did!

Into this milieu, in 1970, a liberal alumnus of Pretoria Boys High, Glenn Moss, starts his studies at the University of the Witwatersrand and gets involved in student politics...

As he recounts it in this memoir, Moss soon realises that beneath the vision of order was a creative and dynamic culture of resistance emerging from the 'defeat' of the 1960s. Having recovered from the shock of the split, NUSAS is slowly developing new means of political engagement, an engagement more radical than ever before in its history. Black Consciousness (and the South African Students Organisation (SASO)) is not apartheid's handmaiden, but a new way of organising people for liberation – and it's not anti-white or anti-NUSAS either.

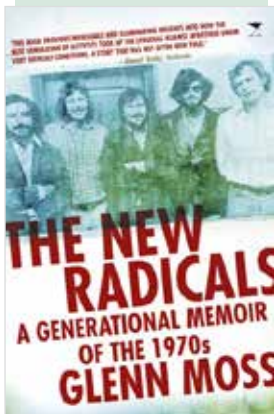
Moss recounts his journey through Wits University SRC and national NUSAS structures into a new way of opposition. He participates in joint NUSAS-SASO meetings and leadership seminars as they evolve a more radical programme for the student movement. His honesty about his political naivety is met with warmth: Steve Biko hugs him and proclaims "This one, this one understands".

Moss' political naivety is soon replaced by a talent for organising. Through Wits SRC he gets involved in campus campaigns that highlight the situation of political prisoners and detainees. Their call for the release of political prisoners reaches Robben Island, inspiring hope. During the early 1970s, following SASO's call for white progressives to engage with the white community and mentored by figures like Biko and the Durban-based academic Rick Turner (both murdered within months of each other in 1977-1978), NUSAS publicly begins to challenge the State. Moss and NUSAS use student media to present to the community the 'hidden' history of apartheid. Cleverly drawing on public records, notably political trials, they present a picture of South Africa which the state, and most whites, don't want to see.

In addition NUSAS (working in tandem with SASO) starts – more accurately restarts – what will become the revitalised black trade union movement of the 1970s and 1980s. NUSAS Wages Commissions investigate the conditions of workers and suggest ways in which workers might struggle for their rights. The Durban Strikes of 1973 are among the first fruits of this revived unionism. Another fruit, for Moss and others, is a political shift in thinking from social democratic liberalism to New Left Marxism.

(Here, in fairness, I must interject that the new unions were not solely the work of NUSAS and SASO. A closer study of the evidence (which demands a systemic historical analysis) shows that there were varied strains of trade union thinking operative at the time, drawn not only from the Wages Commissions but through the Urban Training Project from the Christian Socialism of the Catholic-based but ecumenical Young Christian Workers movement, from the Institute for Industrial Education founded by Rick Turner, as well as from the memories of the suppressed Communist Party-influenced SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions) tradition.)

By 1974 (the real year, not the symbolic 1974 of this article) the state has realised that a new opposition politics has emerged – and sets about trying to destroy it. They step up their Security Branch surveillance and infiltration of NUSAS while banning leaders of the Black Consciousness movements. Moss and NUSAS start having to learn the arts of counter surveillance and identifying spies, while not



**THE NEW RADICALS: A
GENERATIONAL MEMOIR
OF THE 1970s** by Glenn
Moss
EAN: 9781431409716
Published by Jacana

letting paranoia cripple their activities. Around the same time, and particularly in the late 1970s, they start developing ties with underground operatives from exile.

On the latter Moss recounts a hair-raising incident in Cape Town of being followed (by the Security police no doubt) in the company of a visitor from overseas – Breyten Breytenbach undercover as part of the ill-fated ‘Okhela’ group.

Inevitably, Moss himself is finally arrested in 1975. He is part of the group (Cedric de Beer, Charles Nupen, Karel Tip, Eddie Webster) charged with subversion ‘and furthering the aims of communism’. By this time a graduate student and moving into what would be part of his career in the 1980s – alternative media and political analysis – he has to move subtly in his defence: by now a Marxist by conviction, he must tread carefully so as not to get himself – and his friends – imprisoned.

He is lucky. As the book draws to a close, the judge rules that based on the evidence the state’s claim that Moss and company had tried to further the aims of the ANC and SACP is unproven and they are released. However noxious the laws they uphold, the South African judicial system proves itself committed to due process of law.

Glenn Moss has written a highly engaging memoir of an era that remains thinly examined by South African historians. Given the way that all too often South African history tends to follow the ‘official version’ of the time – the version of whatever ruling elite – this is not surprising. In an age where history, particularly in media and schools, tells history from the point of view of the dominant, the 1960s and 1970s tend to get short shrift. What Moss’ book, and other books on the period that are available, tell us is how the struggle for freedom involved not simply one movement and a few strategies, but a multiplicity of movements from all sectors of South African society using a pragmatic mix of strategies.

But privilege remains; if anything we are seeing in the last 20 years a growing gap between rich and poor, an inequality which if not addressed is a formula for social chaos.

I must give in the reviewer’s cliché and call it a page-turner; and, as a fan of the genre, I must say, too, that it reads at times a bit like a political thriller, John Le Carré on the Highveld but without his pessimism.

It is also a useful lens through which to look at the state of the South African nation in 2014, not because the era compares favourably to our own, but because of some of the underlying themes that, dare I say it, we may have lost in our age of freedom, apathy and self-aggrandisement.

On a basic level Moss’ book reminds us of where we have come from – and why we must do all in our power to say “Never, never and never again.” White privilege rested then on a combination of oppression rooted in law and enforced by a ruthless security apparatus. Today, granted, privilege is less white. The law is less oppressive and the ordinary security apparatus is less ruthless (and, let’s face it, at times quite incompetent). But privilege remains; if anything we are seeing in the last 20 years a growing gap between rich and poor, an inequality which if not addressed is a formula for social chaos. Today, too, there is a deep sense that privilege has a political dimension: the right connections guarantee advancement, so long as you conform. It can even, it seems, get you out of jail.

One does not have to be a Marxist to hold the view (of *inter alia* Patrick Bond, Martin Legassick, Dennis Brutus and, yes, Julius Malema) that we live in a new apartheid era: of rich and poor, of connected and disconnected. The New Left of the 1960s and 1970s, the people of NUSAS, SASO, Black Consciousness and the Liberal Party of 1968, would understand this. Like the youthful Glenn Moss of this autobiography, we too might admit that we don't have all the answers but that we need to find something workable to address the situation. Pronto!

Secondly, Moss' book reminds us of apathy, then and now. The vast majority of students Moss encountered were uninterested in politics; they wanted to do well, to feather their nests. So too now. It's not that people should all be political animals; politics is not everything. But as many a New Leftie reminded us then, everything is political. Corruption, bad governance, the tendency to authoritarianism that is the temptation of every dominant political party that is not challenged by civil society, all these things thrive when the public is apathetic. There is the risk, and temptation, to co-opt civil society into the ruling establishment too – often in the nation of that last refuge of the scoundrel, patriotism.

Neither Glenn Moss nor Steve Biko, nor any of the thousands of others, made the choices they did to get 'filthy rich'. They were motivated by a sense of justice outraged by an unjust system. And, bit by bit, they changed the system.

Does this sound familiar? It should. The tragedy of contemporary South Africa is how so many within the movements that created spaces of freedom and dissent in the 1970s – the students and churches in particular – have been effectively neutered.

Is it inevitable? Moss' book suggests to me that it is not. His book, describing the creative and challenging student politics of the 1970s, is a case study in how one can challenge everyone, disturb many and mobilise a significant number out of apathy. In a

sense too, the failure to find creative ways of mobilising dissent for change will lead to the collapse of vibrant democracy: rituals of elections engaged in by ever-decreasing numbers of voters, and apathy punctuated by occasional Marikanas.

Finally, let me look at self-aggrandisement. Politics in 2014 seems less about real public service and seeking the common good than about using office and influence for personal enrichment. This is, I'll admit, a sweeping claim but I believe it is nonetheless true. Just read the investigative press every week. At its worst, it seems that many politicians are in politics for what they can get out of it – tender deals, seats on boards, shares. At a lower level, for some it's a job: I have heard people from many parties talk of making a 'career' in politics. My sense of student movements now, based on many I've met in them, is that they are less about changing society than stepping stones into public office.

What Moss' memoir shows, in contrast, is politics as a service to the common good, the promotion of justice. Neither Glenn Moss nor Steve Biko, nor any of the thousands of others, made the choices they did to get 'filthy rich'. They were motivated by a sense of justice outraged by an unjust system. And, bit by bit, they changed the system.

Of course there are exceptions. There are people in the student movement who are involved because they want to see the best fruits of our democracy ripening. There are intellectuals and figures in the religious community who are trying to make a difference. There are public servants and politicians in every political party who

seek the common good. At their best, they are also deeply aware that the problems we face in 2014 admit no easy answers – but they are ready to grapple with the questions. For them Glenn Moss' memoir should be a reminder of the tradition in which they walk and a source of inspiration to carry on.

For the others, one might hope that *The New Radicals* might challenge them to a new radicalism, the commitment we all should have to making democracy work.

NOTES

- 1 Glenn Moss, *The New Radicals: A Generational Memoir of the 1970s* (Johannesburg: Jacana 2014).

BOOK REVIEW

DENNIS DAVIS is a serving Judge of the High Court. He was a member of the Commission of Enquiry into Tax Structure of South Africa (the Katz Commission) and was a Technical Advisor to the Constitutional Assembly where the negotiations for South Africa's interim and final constitutions were formulated and concluded. He also teaches tax law at the University of Cape Town (UCT).

The Judiciary in South Africa: Cora Hoexter and Morné Olivier

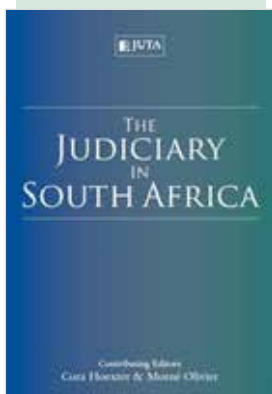
This collection of essays represents a comprehensive examination of the South African judiciary, and could not have come at a more appropriate time. As the editors note in their introduction, during President Mandela's term of office the government showed an admirable level of compliance with adverse court orders and continued to proclaim the centrality of the judicial institution to the constitutional enterprise upon which the country had embarked in 1994.

By the turn of the century, the first warning lights had begun to flicker. The then Minister of Health, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, reacted to a judgment of the High Court – ordering the government to allow the distribution of anti-retroviral drugs for the prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission – with these words: *'the courts and the judiciary must also listen to the regulatory authorities both from this country and the United States'*. When asked further whether the government would respect the court order she said 'no'.

More recently, members of the ruling party have weighed in against the judiciary, notably Mr Ngoako Ramatlhodi – the then Deputy Minister of Correctional Services and now Minister of Mineral Affairs. Mr Ramatlhodi spoke of forces against change which reign supreme in the economy, judiciary, public opinion and civil society, and that *'in the courts forces against change still hold relative hegemony'*. A government commissioned inquiry, conducted by the HSRC and the Law School of Fort Hare, into the role of the judiciary, with regard to assessing its contribution to the promotion of social and economic transformation in South Africa, is expected to report by March 2015.

For these reasons a comprehensive examination of the jurisprudence which has been produced by the judiciary during the constitutional era is to be welcomed, similarly for, the appointment of judges, the role of the Judicial Service Commission in the selection and appointment of judges, broader issues relating to judicial accountability and a specific examination of the Constitutional Court. A reader will find a rich reservoir of information on all of these topics.

The context to the present challenges facing a constitutional judiciary is set out in a chapter penned by Professor Christopher Forsyth. He examines the judiciary under apartheid. Forsyth shows how the record of the judiciary during this era was both complex and contradictory. On the one hand, courts retained a formal independence and judges were never corrupt in a sense that they took orders directly from politicians. Although trials before the courts may have been unjust, they were never a formality and, on occasion, there were principled liberal judges that found against



THE JUDICIARY IN SOUTH AFRICA contributing editors Cora Hoexter & Morné Olivier
ISBN: 9781485101710
Published by Juta & Co Ltd 2014

egregious action of the apartheid regime. But, as Forsyth also notes, ‘we should not overlook the many occasions in which a court, faced with a choice, chose to adopt the most pro-executive interpretation of the law. Here the judiciary facilitated the implementation of the policy of apartheid. More was expected from the judges for *‘avoiding politics meant kowtowing to the government.’*

It was from this legacy that the drafters of the Constitution drew the lesson that there was a need for a new court to develop constitutional jurisprudence; hence the establishment of the Constitutional Court rather than the Appellate Division would be the highest court in respect of constitutional matters.

The book contains a general chapter about the transformation in the judiciary which examines some of the jurisprudence of the newly created Constitutional Court. As is inevitable with an edited collection, there are overlaps between chapters and a reader will be required to read this chapter together with a further chapter which deals specifically with the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court.

The tour through this jurisprudence justifies the conclusion that *‘the Constitutional Court has established a firm foundation and has secured international acclaim and substantial domestic legitimacy’*. What the chapters in this book fail to do, an omission which is sadly reflective of the poverty of intellectual ambition in South African academic life, is to engage in an examination of whether the methodology (and hence the approach) to law, which was inherited from the apartheid regime, has been sufficiently transformed.

This problem has been illustrated in a most thoughtful review of a work devoted to the life of Professor J C De Wet, the review having been written by Constitutional Court Judge Johan Froneman. (2014 South African Law Journal 474) In his review Justice Froneman engages with the importance of legal methodology; in particular, the extent to which regard must be given to the social role and context of law, especially in private law such as the law of contract. To date the Constitutional Court has not embraced this challenge as might have been expected when the country began its constitutional journey in 1994. The authors of this book do not deal with this particular problem, save for a brief discussion of the concept of transformative constitutionalism in the chapter written by Mtendeweka Mhango. This is a useful contribution but it is regrettable that this concept was not invoked as the means to focus critically on the development of an appropriate legal methodology for all South African law as a result of the introduction of the Constitution.

Any reader wishing to understand the manner and the selection appointment of judges and the role of the Judicial Service Commission therein will not be disappointed. These chapters are a font of useful information and considerable insight. In particular, a chapter by Professor Catherine Albertyn on judicial diversity is deserving of a careful read. Those wishing to understand the implications of section 174 of the Constitution, which raises challenges for the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) to give sensible meaning both to the concept of merit and that of representivity. Professor Albertyn suggests that merit should be redefined to include an appreciation of South Africa’s different communities and an understanding

Any reader wishing to understand the manner and the selection appointment of judges and the role of the Judicial Service Commission therein will not be disappointed. These chapters are a font of useful information and considerable insight.

of the values of the Constitution. Section 174 (2) which provides for a need for the judiciary to reflect broadly the racial and gender composition of South Africa enables, in her view, the adoption of a flexible approach to appointing black and women judges when the JSC is presented with a list of promising candidates.

A transformed judiciary is therefore not only a representative one but also a diverse institution. Diversity is sourced in multiple differences including differences in values and judicial philosophies. It can only be hoped that the members of the JSC will carefully examine these observations since they provide considerable guidance towards fashioning a coherent approach to the constitutional mandate to appoint members of the judiciary.

Professor Hugh Corder wrote a typically comprehensive chapter on judicial accountability. His chapter raises a host of interesting questions, and I would like to mention two, briefly.

The question which arises is whether this attack, vicious in content and intemperate in tone, was appropriate for the exercise of curing a judicial error, no matter how egregious it may have appeared to the appellate court, particularly as the broader legitimacy of the judicial institution needs to be balanced against the principle of accountability when judges are criticised by a higher court.

First, he canvasses the question of judicial error and the importance of the appeal process. Here there is an interesting discussion about the legal process that resulted from Mr Zuma (before he was President) seeking to set aside a set of charges that had been brought against him by the National Director of Public Prosecutions. While he was successful before the High Court, the decision of Judge Chris Nicolson was set aside by the Supreme Court of Appeal. Criticisms contained in the judgment of Harms DP on behalf of the unanimous Supreme Court of Appeal were extremely harsh, culminating in the conclusion *'the trial court, again failed to comply with basic rules of procedure. Judgement by ambush is not permitted.'* This was the most robust exhibition of judicial accountability over a High Court judge that I can recall. The question which arises is whether this attack, vicious in content and intemperate in tone, was

appropriate for the exercise of curing a judicial error, no matter how egregious it may have appeared to the appellate court, particularly as the broader legitimacy of the judicial institution needs to be balanced against the principle of accountability when judges are criticised by a higher court.

Second, Professor Corder deals with the cases relating to Judge President John Hlophe and Judge Nkola Matata – both individuals have been required to respond to charges of judicial misconduct brought against them by the JSC. On dealing with the Hlophe case, Professor Corder writes:

'One is constrained to ask whether the composition of the JSC allowed the institution to be manipulated for sectional purposes which in turn led it to take decisions for unlawful reasons. By contrast the response of the courts has been to remain true to the constitutional project affirming the values of the Constitution as well as the specific requirements laid down for the role, composition and functioning of the JSC.'

This passage refers to the various challenges which have been brought against decisions of the JSC, all of which have flowed from the Hlophe enquiry. The

reader is left with the question of what the appropriate steps to be taken are, in the light of this saga, to ensure that any complaint against a judge is dealt with expeditiously, and fairly – with fairness being accorded to both complainant and to the judge in question. In other words, the mechanism of accountability must be sufficiently improved to prevent the kind of debacle that has flowed from these initial complaints. It may well be that the new system devised for the JSC to deal with complaints will solve the problem.

I hope, by virtue of this brief examination of some of the key chapters in this book, to have given sufficient proof of this important work – the very first to survey the democratic South African judiciary as an institution. It provides the reader with sufficient information to participate in an essential debate about the performance, composition, accountability and the ultimate role of a judiciary in vindicating our constitutional vision.

Apart from the few conceptual complaints that I have voiced, my only remaining criticism is that the text, unfortunately, is written in language which is overly skewed in favour of a legal audience; hence it is, at times overly technical and does not promote reading for the lay reader. However, as a site for research of the present judicial system, this book makes an invaluable contribution to the broader democratic debate.

NOTES

1 As cited at xxviii – xxx in the Introduction.

BOOK REVIEW

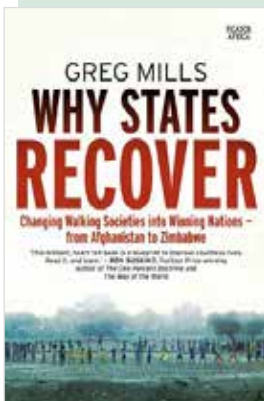
DICKIE DAVIS is a Major General in the British Army. Having started his career as military engineer he served extensively on operations over the last 30 years in wide a range of appointments from the tactical to the strategic.

Why States Recover by Greg Mills

For once we have a book that is much more than just a critique of what went wrong in a particular country. What makes Greg Mills' book unique is the number and depth of the case studies, the overview of the topic this generates and the way he brings them together to pull out the threads of potential success.

Starting with nine case studies entitled 'Pathologies and Threads of Failure' Greg takes a critical look at why countries become failed states and the routes to becoming one. Each is fascinating, very readable and filled with the insights of someone who has travelled in and studied the countries. I was particularly struck with the study of Haiti: why is it that the fortunes of Haiti and the Dominican Republic have been so different when they share the same island and the same forces of nature? "Better evidence of the importance of human development and an attitude of self-help and local ownership would be difficult to concoct," Greg concludes. Of moving forward he remarks: "Getting there requires acknowledging why things went wrong. It also requires building a competitive economic base. Above all ... it demands changing the Haitian mindset, from victim to being in charge." Often people shy away from telling the truth in a relationship for fear of confrontation, when what is needed to move forward is an honest appraisal: this is something of which Greg cannot be accused, for he does not pull his punches.

He moves on to examine seven recent examples of intervention, some of which are still ongoing and about which all readers will have some knowledge. Again the insights are thought-provoking and the critique robust. The chapter on Liberia highlights what can be achieved with long term sustained engagement combined with a Government determined to improve the country. Contrast this with the chapter "Libya after Regime Change", in which Greg remarks, the international community approached the challenge with "short arms and deep pockets". As a boy I grew up in Libya and vividly remember rushing, with my family, to Benghazi airport to catch the last flight before the revolution that brought Col Gaddafi to power. It is such a beautiful country; but it has been so misunderstood by the West. For me, Greg is spot on when he quotes an African Development Bank specialist as saying: "Thus, when people refer to the need to rebuild the Libyan state after Gaddafi...what they are really referring to is the need to build the state from scratch." Here is the rub: often events happen so quickly that those empowered to intervene often do so on fairly thin knowledge, when what is actually required is a very deep understanding of the way the country operates. Greg is right: here money is not the issue. Libya is not poor, but unless a basic level of security can be achieved thus enabling a political process, the future looks bleak. Time will tell but intervention from the air has its limits and what a small ground force could have achieved at the beginning may now take a much larger one later on if, indeed, it is even an option.



WHY STATES RECOVER
by Greg Mills
ISBN: 9781770103252
Published by Picador
Africa

Having served in Kosovo I read the chapter with interest and was pleased to see that it homes in on what was, undoubtedly, the most challenging area for this intervention: delinking politics from the black economy and corruption. Many recent interventions have tried to ignore all but the most blatant corruption, regarding it as too difficult an issue to tackle – only to realise too late that, ultimately, it can undermine everything the intervention seeks to achieve. For it is, in many respects, the acid test of how a government relates to its people. Finding an effective way forward is not easy when the sums of money are so huge relative to the wages of those trying to enforce the rule of law. It is an issue that plays into how aid money flows into a country; do the donors trust the government enough to manage the money or do they want to channel it direct to projects? If you have deep knowledge of a particular case study you might find some of them a little short on detail, but from my personal dip-test Greg's analysis captures the big issues.

The last set of 10 case studies picks up on aspects of recovery. Unsurprisingly the chapter on South Africa and the remarkable contribution of Nelson Mandela in fostering forgiveness and in starting to move his

Nation on from a legacy of past wrongs stands out. Indeed what is disturbing about the evidence presented in this book is how much a lack of ability to move on from past wrongs and a 'victim' culture plays into the problems of failed and failing states. It is about the government deflecting the blame rather than taking responsibility and striving to deliver a better service to its people. Why, for example, do some of these failed or failing countries impose a system of visas on foreign visitors and thus deter tourism and investment by making travel harder?

The chapter on Colombia records the Government's progress in running a counter-insurgency campaign that has now brought the FARC to the negotiating table in search of peace. Having recently spent a week in Colombia studying the campaign, I was struck by how much there is to learn from the progress of the last fourteen years. While there is a danger that the peace could be a victor's one with all the potential for future problems that this entails, the fact is the Government has done much right and the country is recovering fast. As Greg notes: "It highlights many lessons of relevance to dealing with Boko Haram in Nigeria or Al-Shabab in East Africa."

In pulling the threads together Greg arrives at some relatively straight forward conclusions: the mind-set of the government is vital: they must be in it for their people not themselves; the solution must be locally owned and driven; to be of help outsiders need a deep knowledge of the country, its issues and must support a local lead; and getting the economy going is key. Of security he notes that "Little progress can be made without security, although security by itself is not enough to ensure recovery, and has to be integrated closely with civilian action around the economy and governance, and be part of a wider political framework." Of course there are a range of other more detailed observations, but it is the weight of underpinning evidence and the recognition that recovery is a highly complex, localised task that cannot be reduced to a list of actions to fix the problem that makes this section remarkable. On intervention he observes: "And forced state-building involving major social, political, economic and cultural change, cannot be managed relatively quickly, and not by outsiders. Indeed, remedying state weakness is fundamentally a

"Little progress can be made without security, although security by itself is not enough to ensure recovery, and has to be integrated closely with civilian action around the economy and governance, and be part of a wider political framework."

political act ... Even so, it is often conceived as an apolitical exercise, one driven by technocratic imperatives, not least because these are easier to deliver." Oh how true, I found myself thinking!

Having been engaged in a series of intervention operations, I recognised instantly many of the mistakes and difficulties that Greg highlights in this book: what I had not realised was how widely repeated they were. I found myself reflecting that I wished I had read such an overview at the start of my military career, for I might have avoided a few of them myself. You might not agree with everything in this book, but it will certainly get you thinking and, as a result, enhance your understanding of the world we live in and how to help those less fortunate than ourselves.



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