Interpreting the politics of Urbicide in South Africa's democratic era

NT Seemi

orcid.org 0000-0003-2744-1781

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Supervisor: Mr S Motloung

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ABSTRACT

For more than twenty years South Africa has seen profound changes since its independence and adoption of a democratic system. Such changes include the incorporation of equality, liberty, economic freedom, and constitutional supremacy as the core principles of ordering society and public governance. The study considers these reforms as the “democratic opening” This democratic opening did not find complete expression or meet public expectations in a manner that is substantive enough to convince the masses that democracy is a meaningful system to uplift formerly oppressed people to equality with their counterparts. This disappointment with democracy arises from maladministration and moral failings in the public sector. It is possible that democracy has not fulfilled the envisaged hopes of the people due to unforeseen circumstances. When contextualising the rarely used term “democratic opening” the researcher goes on to define democratic opening as a way in which emerging human behaviour and social practices have exploited democratic opportunities in a manner that disrupts or threatens to undermine the gains that present political reforms have brought. The conceptual argument in this study is concerned with democratic opening leading to the intended and unintended destruction of urban spaces, also known as urbicide.

The intended and unintended killing of cities and / or urban spaces is a phenomenon considered relevant to international relations where violence and conflict leads to the destruction of cities and valuable monuments. It is a concept common among scholars in the US and Europe; however, there is little academic interest among political scientists in investigating urbicide in the South African context. Moorcock (1963), Huxtable (1972) and Berman (1996) have contended that urbicide constitutes the intentional destruction of the city usually during wars, social protests, and political contestation. This research study suggests that new forms of unintended consequences have also led to the destruction of urban spaces. Lack of infrastructure maintenance and poor service delivery contribute to urbicide in South Africa. Because of the lack of such studies in the South African context, the researcher followed an interpretivist research design, which is of an exploratory nature, using a qualitative case study approach focusing on the characteristics, meanings, causes, and definitions of democracy and urbicide in South Africa. This research study relied on secondary data collection, a method used by reputable

institutions such as the South African Cities Network, Department of Human Settlements, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, and many others. Academic journals, books and reports have also been used to bring clarity and arguments. Other documents have been accessed through the NWU library, ResearchGate, Google Scholar and other internet platforms. The researcher applied thematic coding to analyse the politicisation and destruction of buildings and infrastructure, foreign nationals, and overpopulation.

The findings of the research concern basic services and law enforcement as primary indicators of the democratic opening of South Africa, which entailed the adoption of the Bill of Rights and the South African Constitution automatically affording rights and privileges to citizens and foreign nationals. The right to basic health services and the right to housing are two of the many rights the government of South Africa is mandated to honour. The need to recognise these rights has placed a great burden on the South African public service because of a shortage of resources. The democratic opening and the civil rights it enabled has led to an increase in the number of foreign migrants coming to South Africa for the purpose of receiving health and social benefits from the South African government. The democratic opening also meant the rights to freedom of expression and association. However, freedom of expression does not imply incitement of violence or war, or the promotion of hatred based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion (RSA, 1996). Freedom of expression has therefore assured people living in South Africa that they can embark on protests without arbitrary violence being used against them by the police. However, violent political protests have become part of the political culture of South Africa. South Africans use protests to express any dissatisfaction about laws, policies, or public services. This form of expression is the only practical option that people believe the government pays attention to. In other words, petitions and litigation against government are seen to be inadequate in addressing people's grievances. Some argue that the high illiteracy rate of adults in South Africa prevent people from being able to fully understand their constitutional rights. On the other hand, others argue that it is government's non-responsiveness that makes people prefer protests as a viable tool.

The critical point of consideration is that of "fragile cities" in South Africa, a phenomenon of "rapid urbanisation and declining governance arrangements exhibiting little willingness

or ability to deliver on the social contract" (Muggah, 2014). This is a worrying phenomenon because fragile cities are sites of violence and instability. The evidence lies in emerging civil conflicts among residents over the illegal use of water and electricity infrastructure. These emerging civil conflicts exist in tandem with thoughts about the freedom of movement and the right to housing that the democratic opening allowed. Freedom of movement is a constitutional right in South Africa and is afforded to everyone living in the country. During the apartheid era this right was limited by travel passes and racial discrimination laws. The democratic opening saw government relax law enforcement related to both internal and external human movement; such decision-making led to significant population increases in urban areas – population increases that that have coincided with maladministration at local government level and poor service delivery. This has led to the destruction of cities, manifested in decaying city centres, high incidents of crime, and collapsing critical infrastructure. Because of the discomforts of overpopulation and decay in the city, residents (South Africans and foreigners alike) have begun to clash over resources and accepting culpability for the unfolding destruction.

Urbicide thus manifests in the politicisation and destruction of buildings and infrastructure. Because of South Africa's political history many buildings and statues have been politicised as memories of a dark past. Because it is not possible for one to rename a statue, there is growing frustration about apartheid monuments. Hence the recent wave of destroying statues in the name of decolonisation. There is also the possibility that local municipalities neglect the maintenance of buildings associated with the apartheid legacy. But the attack on buildings is not an anti-colonial programme: some people attacked buildings symbolic of the democratic order following the court ruling in 2021about the imprisonment of former South African president Jacob Zuma. The attacks took the form of the violent looting of businesses and burning of assets, which became an extravaganza for thieves and for those who killed people at Phoenix.

The research study also highlights the intentional neglect of cities by the ruling party as a political strategy to "punish" those that favour opposition parties, thereby deliberately creating city decay.

The researcher ends by recommending that, in the shaping of public spaces, (a) civic education about xenophobia should be mainstreamed; and (b) an awareness of urbicide

should be embedded in the public policy imagination, especially in South African municipalities.

Keywords: Democratic failure, democratic opening, migration, political negligence, urban geopolitics, urbicide, service delivery.

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1.1 Background to the study

The establishment of a democratic dispensation that presents new possibilities not enjoyed or accessible during a preceding despotic dispensation is what explains the concept of the democratic opening. The democratic opening is about establishing a democratic era. The widespread promotion of democratic governance processes as the legitimate and most suitable governance processes for stable and prosperous societies is what constitutes the democratic era; this, despite reservations about the efficacy of democracy as an ideal mechanism for political organisation (Moreno-Jimenez & Polasek, 2003; Held, 1993). However, there are "complex economic, organisational, administrative, legal, and cultural processes and structures which limit and check its [democracy's] efficacy" (Held, 1998:71). Democracy refers to a political system in which sovereign power resides with the people (Heydenrych, 2018). In its simplest and oldest definition, it is about the rule by the people for the people within a specific state or territory (Lincoln & Ter Haar, 2018) – meaning that people have the right to take part in elections and the state protects and prioritises their liberty.

South African society was for many years under a political system of racialised segregation for "separate development" (Apartheid) (Smith, 1992), where the white minority population enjoyed more freedoms and human dignity compared to the subjugated non-white population (Smith, 1992; Larson, 2019). Forced removals of non-white people from residential areas, monitoring travel documents of non-white people, heavy-handed policing, and neglecting the development of non-white residential communities were among the features of the apartheid regime (Reed, 2013). As a result, the stark contrast of general squalor in non-white residential areas (colloquially known as townships) versus the beautification of white residential communities (colloquially known as towns) is typical of South African urban spaces (Smith, 1992). In 1994 a newly elected government ushered in a new political system in South Africa, and with it the development of a sovereign constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The assumption behind the design of the South African constitution was that it would be difficult to repeat certain inhumane practices that were normal under the apartheid regime, such as the violation

of human rights (Serfontein, 2019). Conceptually the post-1994 sovereign constitution created a “democratic opening” (Erbey, 2011) in the South African political system. The administration of public affairs to realise the principles of the democratic dispensation has led to both intended and unintended consequences (Carothers, 2007). Intended consequences include the reduction of mortality due to better health services and improved standards of living, better political participation for non-white communities, better living conditions due to more investment in non-white communities, and less arbitrary use of force by security agents. The unintended consequences are evident in the evaluation of the democratic outcomes measured against the rule of law, the quality of governance, economic performance, and service delivery standards.

One of the principles of the South African democratic opening is the declaration that South Africa “belongs to all who live in it” (RSA, 1996), a phrase that activists have used to claim the protection of human rights by government (Mothapo, 2021). That South Africa belongs to all who live in it at a political level implied a democratic transition that did not call for the victimisation and forced expulsion of white people, who had presided over and benefitted from the subjugation of non-white people. On the other hand, that South Africa belongs to all who live in it has social ramifications, allowing non-white people to reside, and not only move about in, communities known to be for white people only. Other non-white people (Indian, Chinese, and Coloured) could move about freely, relocating from rural to urban spaces without government restrictions on their movement or settlement (Mlambo, 2018; Reed, 2013). The incumbent government did not rush to implement decisions that would ensure the mass deportation of or restrictions for irregular migrants, instead facilitating the integration of external migrants (Jackson & Hoque, 2022; Chiumbu & Moyo, 2018).

Among the notable features of the democratic opening is normalised acceptance of mass human movement previously restricted by the apartheid regime (Tati, 2008; Ree, 2013; Wa Kwabe-Segatti & Landau, 2008). The first wave of human movement was internal, where non-white South Africans living in homelands moved to urban areas, seeking better living conditions. The second wave of human movement was that of external migrants. Chiumbi and Moyo (2018:139) claim that “In the first decade following the end of apartheid in 1994 alone, legal migration increased ten-fold.” Both strands of human movement have

resulted in increased informal settlements on the outskirts of cities in South Africa. The human movement to cities has over time led to the emergence of frustrations about foreign nationals (Landau et al., 2011). The frustration arises from competition for resources like job opportunities and from increased crime, for which foreign nationals are blamed. External migrants are involved in informal trade in city centres and take on manual labour tasks that South African citizens had neglected (HRW, 2020; eNCA, 2022b). Also, foreign nationals have replaced South African citizens in operating tuckshops in townships and other businesses in city centres. Citizen's frustrations have led to the governing party and some opposition parties reflecting on protectionist policies, leading to the South African police shutting down shops operated by foreign nationals (Carciotto, 2020). These events have erupted into several incidents of violent attacks against foreign nationals. The South African Parliament Ad Hoc Joint Committee on Probing Violence Against Foreign Nationals has indicated that foreign nationals "had contributed to the violence by dominating trade in certain sectors in informal settlements. The committee also concluded that migrants had used business models to discourage competition such as forming monopolies, evading taxes, avoiding customs, and selling illegal and expired goods" (Carciotto, 2020). Some critics have argued that the state's poor governance record has led to social tensions between citizens and foreign nationals and that the state is blaming foreign nationals for the violence (Newman, 2019).

Poor governance is another consequence of the democratic opening because government has not effectively planned and coordinated human movement to allow for dignified settlement. Cities are not coping with overpopulation and the service delivery burdens placed on them. Endemic corruption in municipalities is also undermining the level of service delivery in communities; as a result, social conflict has emerged between citizens and foreign nationals over public services (Shaidi, 2013). Poor service delivery has led to public concerns about what the benefit of democracy is when the material conditions of the majority poor have not improved. Material conditions have not improved; there are signs that government has failed to ensure safe living environments for the country's inhabitants (Kotze, 2020). Factors that bolster complaints about poor governance include city centres as sites of common crime, illegal trading, and violent protests. The general maladministration by local government has become a normalised phenomenon in South Africa. This has enabled lawless conduct by residents – conduct

such as deliberate destruction of water meters and illegal connections to electricity and water networks (Chiwarawara, 2021). In arguing for a new conception of vandalistic protest as opposed to violent protest, Chiwarawara (2021:136) claims that:

> Gugulethu and Khayelitsha activists protest against the slow pace of development. In Gugulethu, Siya, a male protest leader who actively participated in the anti-apartheid struggle best explained the slow pace of delivery with a train metaphor: “Development in Gugulethu is like a slow-moving train; it is a train that delays and when it delays – people get angry. They end up destroying the railway line.”

From a scholarly perspective, it is possible to consider irregular human movement, poor service delivery, municipal maladministration and violent protests as causes of urbicide in South Africa’s democratic era. Urbicide can therefore be referred to as the intended and unintended killing of the city. The main objective of this study, then, was to investigate the extent to which the democratic regime has enabled the destruction of cities in South Africa.

Michael Moorcock (1963) coined the term “urbicide”, a term later used by critics of 1960’s urban restructuring in the United States (Lawrence, 2018). These two critics opposed the aggressive capitalist urban reforms that had destroyed communal living and displacement of people for development projects. As Berman (1996) “The term has come into being in an age of rapid globalisation and urbanisation” (Huxtable, 1972). Urbicide (from the Latin “urbs”, city, and “caedere”, to cut, kill) means killing, wrecking, or simply “violence against the city” (Moorcock, 1963). Urbicide is also related to that which destroys the quality of the city, such as infrastructure and its overall urban space.

The issue of poor of service delivery has added to the internal destruction of cities, an emerging and increasing problem in South Africa. In this context there appear to be two forms of urban destruction, the ‘intended’ and the ‘unintended’ destruction of the city. Inner city or urban decay is now a persistent challenge in South Africa. A factor contributing to urbicide is maladministration at the local government level and poor enforcement of by-laws. This is a niche area in South African political science scholarship that is under-researched and which the current study sought to address.

1.2 Rationale for the study

The research study assessed the phenomenon of urbicide and its relevance in a South African context. It sought to show the possibility of theoretical expansion of urbicide beyond the context of the destruction of buildings. Where political science literature considers urbicide in the context of war and terrorism, there has been scant literature approaching the topic from an urban geopolitical point of view; hence the significance of this study's focus on the South African context. The study sought to inspire new thinking about the drivers of urbicide in South Africa through the lens of the democratic opening, seeking to demonstrate that democracy is not an excuse for political negligence in the areas of law enforcement, public administration, and migrant decision-making.

The study recognises that the term "democratic opening" refers to the expansion of basic human rights in a democratic setting, the intention being to create inclusivity within the democratic space. The process by which this concept has been administered, however, has posed what the researcher terms unintended consequences of this democratic opening. Examples of the expansion of the human rights accompanying the democratic opening are the free movement of rural settlers within the country and of foreign immigrants to urban spaces, creating overpopulation and hence placing a burden on local government to provide basic services for migrants. The unexpected inflation in the population has made it difficult for government to allocate finances to provide basic services. The issue is exacerbated by government's mismanagement and maladministration of its finances. These issues have resulted in inefficient and ineffective delivery of services to the people. With demands not being met, citizens have acted out their frustrations through political protect and acts of destruction. An example of protest and minor civil conflict includes what transpired in the community of Pomeroy, where three community members were arrested by the police for the destruction of the R33 main road, residents having claimed that they were protesting against local government non-response to a petition about the poor service delivery of water and electricity (Zuzile, 2020). In their frustration over increased criminal activity and lack of action by law enforcement agencies, South African nationals then act out their grievances, blaming foreign nationals for allegedly worsening the crime rate in the country. In another instance, Johannesburg inner-city South Africans destroyed the residences and places of business

of foreign nationals (Oliver, 2020). Public sentiment about foreign nationals' role in business and criminal activity has led to calls for the South African government to tighten border controls. It was only recently that the minister of defence, Ms Thandi Modise, admitted that "government sometimes does not have the courage to call out foreign nationals who engage in criminal activities, for fear of being labelled xenophobic" (Modise, 2022). Minister Modise conceded that there had been an erosion of responsibility in relation to promoting security. This relaxation of the security apparatus in relation to migration control has confirmed public suspicion that the South African government has neglected border control and the deportation of undocumented foreign nationals at the expense of national security, even where levels of crime have increased. The government's negligence in making decisions about migrants has inspired movements like #OperationDudula and #PutSouthAfricaFirst, which target foreign national-operated business and call for the deportation of undocumented foreigners. Service delivery concerns confirm that urban politics has become an area of crucial interest in South Africa's political science scholarship. Response to such issues protests break out led by South African citizens' therefore leading urbicide which occurs through the deliberate destruction of property during protests. Government neglect of pollution and of derelict or overcrowded buildings can also contribute to the destruction of the city's image and life (Coward, 2009).

1.3 Problem statement

Increased human movement and aspiration for better living conditions came about through the establishment of the democratic dispensation in South Africa. Such movement led to overpopulation in cities and increased strain on public services. Illegal survival practices, along with municipal maladministration, exacerbated the degradation of cities. With deteriorating municipal services and infrastructure and socio-economic stresses there arise social conflicts that lead to urbicide.

Destruction of the city is also evident in attacks on foreign nationals, based on public frustration over increasing socio-economic challenges (Oliver, 2020). Urbicide also arises from poor service delivery and the abandonment of cities by local government (Graham, 2004), where municipalities do not remove waste, do not resolve the problem of derelict

or overcrowded buildings, and implement housing policies that contribute to the destruction of the city's image and life (Coward, 2009).

1.4 Theoretical framework

The conceptual framework for this study is provided by the theory of urbicide, whose central assumptions are the following. The first is that the city has become a theatre of oppression, where inner-city dwellers feel that the city is no longer a safe and comfortable place to stay in because of a lack of administration and maintenance, poor infrastructure, and poor control of overpopulation, which creates internal conflict between existing city residents and new migrants (Oliver, 2020). The second assumption is that buildings are politicised, hence becoming targets for people to make political statements (Sguazzin, 2021). This manifests in the burning of schools, university buildings and municipal buildings and in the destruction of statues. The destruction is a means to draw government's attention to matters of maladministration or other matters of systemic failure (Zuzile, 2020). Shaw (2008) argues that the destruction of informal settlements for the purpose of modernisation and improving the city's image also constitutes urbicide. The third assumption is that, since built structures are part of one's cultural heritage, urbicide may refer to wilful abandonment or destruction of heritage sites, displacement of residents, and securitisation of urban spaces (Elsheshtawy, 2014; Shaw 2008).

Linked to urbicide in this study is of the concept of democratic opening, which was intended to bring about that which Ake (1996) calls the kind of democracy Africa needs – a regime characterised by democratisation from within, with a strong legislature and decentralisation of power, emphasis on socio-economic rights, cultural expression and emancipation for communities, and inclusion of marginalised groups. O'Donnell (2010:14) understands democratic opening as similarly, stating that democracy is a "political method for legislative and administrative decision making." But the ineffective ethical and legal values (basic freedoms) of community living cause the democratic method to fail (O'Donnell, 2010). These values include good governance, freedom of speech, movement and association, right to life, the right to vote, and dignity for residents.

For the sake of this study, the aspects of good governance and of freedom of expression, association and movement are most important in illuminating the politics of urbicide in

South Africa's democratic era. The inefficient implementation of the democratic project has exposed governance failures in South Africa. Maladministration has led to collapsing infrastructure and public services, leading to protests (Ake, 1996; Gumede, 2008). In the name of practising their freedom to protest, people have normalised the destruction of cities as a strategy to make a political point (Chiwarawara, 2021). As a result, the democratic opening has presented forms of violence in the context of urban politics as an ever-changing political environment where freedom of movement and association for foreign nationals is not guaranteed (Stoker, 1998; Dunleavy, 1980). The theory of urbicide has enabled the researcher to provide empirical evidence of a causal relationship between democracy and the destruction of urban spaces (Judge et al., 1998).

1.4.1 Central theoretical statement

The democratic dispensation in South Africa presented an opening, firstly for political expression and participation, and secondly for human movement, where locals moved from rural to urban areas while foreign nationals were able to move into the country which lead to overpopulation and lack of resources. And because of inefficient implementation of the democratic method these changes have revealed governance failures that amount to the neglect of the city. In other words, urbicide is an unintended consequence of the democratic opening. It is through this thesis that such an argument can be confirmed or refuted.

1.5 Research questions

The primary research question underpinning the study was: *To what extent has South Africa's democratic transition caused an opening for the development of urbicide*? The secondary research questions were:

- How does one understand democratic opening as the context for urbicide in South Africa?
- What is the causal link between the concepts of democracy and urbicide?
- To what extent has South Africa's democratic transition caused an opening for the development of urbicide considering:
    - The politicisation and destruction of buildings and infrastructure; and

    - Overpopulation and governmental negligence? and
- How can people shape public spaces to signify democratic governance and diversity?

1.6 Research objectives

The research sought to:

- Analyse democratic failure and opening as the context of urbicide in South Africa
- Categorise the causal link between democracy and urbicide
- Rationalise South Africa's democratic transition and the development of urbicide considering:
    - The politicisation and destruction of buildings and infrastructure; and
    - Overpopulation and governmental negligence; and
- Interpreted how people can shape public spaces to signify democratic governance and diversity in South Africa.

1.7 Research design

Within an intrepretivist paradigm, this exploratory research follows a qualitative case study approach to focus on present specific meanings, causations, characteristics, and definitions of democracy and urbicide in South Africa (Berg & Lune, 2012; Lapan et al. 2012). Case studies provide information about the meaning of urbicide and create a link with democratic outcomes in South Africa.

1.7.1 Data collection procedure

In this research study an interpretive type of research design was utilised, meaning that that this research study was of an exploratory nature because of the paucity of literature on the topic. Political science scholars do not use the concept of urbicide in relation to democracy or any variable. The popular research that refers to cities comes from urban planning, where the user of inner-city decay is a common marker. Even in urban planning urban decay is not deemed urbicide. The lack of by-law enforcement, building high-jacking, and abandoned buildings are common foundations of dying cities. This phenomenon of inner-city decay, urban planners consider, is a result of declining

governance, which the current study interprets as a modality of urbicide. Therefore, the study relied on secondary data already in the public domain via platforms of credible institutions like the Department of Human Settlements (DHS), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the South African Cities Network (SACN), and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). Academic journals, books and reports are also fundamental for theoretical clarity and argumentation, while *E-International Relations*, Google Scholar, OAPEN library, the NWU library and ResearchGate are other key platforms for accessing relevant literature. The characteristics, meanings, causes and definitions of democracy and urbicide in South Africa were therefore collected and organised via these platforms.

1.7.2 Data analysis techniques

The researcher used content analysis and thematic coding to understand the politicisation and destruction of buildings and infrastructure, including the impact of rural and foreign migration on overpopulation and service delivery. In this thematic process passages, texts and images linked to the theme of urbicide were identified, which allowed the researcher to index the information into distinct categories and thereby establish a theme of ideas (Gibbs 2007).

For the collection of empirical evidence, the researcher explored the themes of democracy and city destruction; democracy and negligence of cities; democracy and overpopulation; overpopulation and city destruction; overpopulation and service delivery; protest and service delivery; and protest and city destruction.

1.8 Literature review

The literature indicates the relevance of urban politics in providing insights about urban communities and the activities performed by its citizens (Stoker, 1998:119). Urban politics involves conflict and cooperation through collective decision-making (Stoker, 1998), accommodating research topics like urbicide. Therefore, the current study falls readily within the domain of political science. Coined with the aid of writers on urban improvement in the United States of America (US), urbicide captures the notion that planned destruction of buildings is a distinct form of violence (Coward, 2009). The history of urban

destruction (urbicide) is not new. One of the biggest contributions to urban destruction is war, where groups or the state regard the ability to have control over urban spaces as being important to their survival (Shaw, 2016; Appadurai, 1996; Graham, 2008). Cities have been captured or destroyed completely as localised struggles over strategic city sites turn out to be the norm in the process of war (Kaldor, 2006; Graham, 2008). Those involved in conflict might target the metropolis as the destruction of the "civil will" (Graham, 2008:4-5; see also Misselwitz & Weizam, 2003).

There has been renewed interest in the subject of urbicide over the last fifteen years, in large part because of the new formations of violence witnessed at the borders of post-cold war Europe (Graham, 2008). The recent war between Russia and Ukraine has witnessed the deliberate destruction of buildings like airports and the biggest nuclear power station in Europe, located in Ukraine. Such destruction in the course of a war could make strategic sense in terms of disabling the enemy; but the consequence of the destruction is brutal in terms of urban life when the war has ended. Coward (2009) understands urbicide from an environmental perspective, which he coins "violence against built environments". The destruction of the built environment draws attention to social injustices and inequality because the poor and vulnerable experience the most suffering because of the destruction (Elsheshtawy, 2014:311).

Democracy today is not just an idea of how to live life, but it is a living lifestyle: it is both a political system and a political perspective. Citizens participate in the election processes of the state to choose who will fully represent them. Democracy connotes freedom of movement – a principle that has allowed public policies enabling people to move from one place to another for economic and recreational reasons (Pécoud, 2013). In South Africa, the ability of people to move about freely has improved a great deal compared to the apartheid era, when people of colour were prevented from moving as they pleased. The apartheid policy restricting movement of people of colour significantly reduced the number of black people on beaches and in city centres, economic hubs and other recreational areas (Smith, 1992; Goitom, 2015). Most black people were bundled into separate development homelands and townships with little infrastructure and few amenities (Butler et al., 1977). The democratic transition allowed more people into urban areas where electricity, roads, water, and sanitation infrastructure were limited population

numbers overburdened this infrastructure. Because of unemployment, more black people started selling goods on sidewalks in the city, something that was not possible during apartheid. This moment of reform was heightened to the extent that the new democratic government ignored existing by-laws or did not create ones to regulate informal trade. More black people moved into towns alongside white people, including those who could work. Illegal building extensions and electricity connections increased (Kirsch, 2005, Pijoos, 2020). This occurred as the rental market was booming. With this, existing white residents sold properties to escape the growing decay of their neighbourhoods. Municipalities still did not regulate population flow and the building developments that came with it. Non-payment of service charges became a reality – a challenge many municipalities are still not able to solve (SACITIESNET, 2015: Ledger & Rampedi, 2020). There is more demand for services, while municipalities are financially burdened, unable to sustain water and electricity provision nor maintain roads and undertake basic service provision like waste collection. The image of the city is distorted in many South African towns because poor or non-existent service delivery. This has caused some to long for the ‘golden days of apartheid’, when local government was efficient and the living urban environment was neat and pleasant. A common complaint among city-dwellers is that democracy has ruined the country, and especially cities.

The literature linking democratic opening and urbicide in the context of South Africa is reflected in foreign immigration, which came to the fore with the transition to a non-racial democracy in South Africa – a transition which has been applauded across the world (Mlambo, 2018). According to Mlambo (2018 68), “The unintended consequence of foreign migration is believed to be the ‘alien invasion’” (. Migrants flow into South Africa because of perceptions of it being a land of outstanding opportunities offering a better lifestyle. Illegal foreign migration reached alarming proportions in the 1990s (Mlambo, 2018). Hough (1995) identified a number of the underlying reasons for illegal migration to South Africa. Minnaar & Wentzel (1995) and Carim (1995) supplied an outline of the issues of unlawful immigrants. Dolan (1995) investigated the issue of Mozambicans living unlawfully in South Africa (Dolan, 1995; Maharaj & Rajkumar, 1997: 255). Most foreign nationals come into the state covertly; for this reason, “it is no longer viable to offer a reasonable estimate of how many illegal migrants are inside the country” (Maharaj & Rajkumar, 1997). It is worth noting that “illegal immigrant” refers to a black (African)

person in South Africa. The number of white people (from Europe, the US and Australia), Indians, Chinese, and foreign nationals who do not share spaces with black people in the townships remains unknown. The South African government is therefore failing to monitor, pursue and follow up on illegal foreign nationals.

The movement of people into urban spaces and increased population in cities makes it possible to establish a link between overpopulation and urbicide. There is an assumption that working in a city region will increase the probability of earning more than someone living in a rural area (Mlambo, 2018). Partly for this reason, more people were living in urban areas at the start of the 2000s compared to the 1990s (United Nations Habitat, 2020; Campbell et al., 2007:2).

More than one billion people now inhabit the slums and different sorts of pirate urbanism that body the neoliberal metropolis (Davis, 2006; Campbell et al., 2007). The organisation for financial co-operation and improvement (2011) cited unexpected growth in provinces like Gauteng and Western Cape due to an influx of people looking for employment possibilities. As people migrate, not all of them discover employment and are able to make a living (Kok & Collinson: 2006; Singh, 2016; Mlambo, 2018). Some those of the people looking for employment result to lives of crime. Thus, Increases in crime and unemployment are common realities in urban areas. This increase in the urban population results in a scenario wherein the concept ‘right to the city’ has by no means been a more contested political, social, and geopolitical issue (Davis, 2006: 23). Thus, overpopulation in urban areas leads to more familiar debates concerning migration, multiculturalism, and inequality. This in turn focuses attention on cities as dominant areas of destruction, violence, insurgency and terrorism in the modern globe (Campbell et al., 2007).

The politicisation of buildings and infrastructure in urban areas is another manifestation of urbicide. Urban destruction locates cities as sites of struggle, contestation, and violence. Recent political events involving violent confrontation have taken place in urban squares and plazas; hence contemporary urban planning is a tool to contain, minimise, and combat such disorderly activities (Elsheshtawy, 2014: 311). Trouble spots are occupied by police forces asserting their presence; the availability of cameras around such areas functions as a reminder that there is an existing central author. This type of security measure is common in such urban spaces, creating an unwelcoming

environment for people living in these areas and making them feel alienated (Elsheshtawy, 2014: 311).

South Africa as a home to fragile cities has recently been confirmed through reports about terrorist sleeper cells that fund ISIS operations (Fabricius, 2020; Reuters, 2016). It is suspected that foreign-owned tuck-shops operating in both rural and urban areas of South Africa are among the sites of fundraising to sponsor terrorism (Makhaye, 2015). Also, the suspicion that government does not know which foreign national owns a shop and where renders South Africa extremely vulnerable to terrorist attacks. A report about foreign-owned shops selling expired food and cloning popular food brands has led to social commentators raising the alarm that South African citizens could be susceptible to attacks involving poisoning (Makam, 2018; Nkanjeni, 2022; eNCA, 2022a). This ordinary social commentary about the efficacy of public policy shows the intersection of overpopulation (linked with illegal migration), declining governance, and urbicide.

1.9 Ethical considerations

Since the researcher relied on information that is available in the media, books and institutional reports – that is, information in the public domain – and did not conduct interviews, this study presented no risk because there was no involvement of minors or vulnerable populations. The study received ethical clearance through the North-West University (NWU) channels and the study was endorsed as being no-risk. The researcher has acknowledged her sources by way of full citation.

1.10 The significance of the study

This study intends to contribute to the literature on and theoretical expansion of the concepts of urbicide and urban geopolitics. It has sought to raise awareness among public administrators and local government political leaders of the need to reconsider the urban planning, law enforcement, and the creation of healthy cities. Cities have slowly become shadows of their former glory, characterised by the thriving of prostitution, criminality and drug dens. This study raises critical questions about the prospects for fragile cities and about instability in South Africa. The significance of the study lies in its identification of the gradual collapse of urban spaces; at the sdame time, the study highlights the need

for social cohesion and raises awareness about the plight of foreign nationals in South African cities.

This dissertation provides a tool for public administrators, politicians, activists, and policy-makers to engage with the threat of urbicide and consider what interventions could stop it. The study has established that the phenomenon of deliberate destruction is not only in relation to the city and its image but that the trend of intentional destruction that touches human lives, the economy, society and religion can be theoretically applicable in various contexts and settings. As a seminal investigation into urbicide in South African and an important contribution to the political science literature, the study provides a foundation for theoretical expansion into other areas.

1.11 Limitations and delimitations of the study

Because the study is of an exploratory nature, there is little academic work from within political science about urbicide or the impact of democracy on the condition of cities. Because there are few academic studies analysing primary data on urbicide, the researcher has relied on the analysis of case studies.

1.12 Chapter layout

Chapter 1 has considered the democratic opening as a context for urbicide in South Africa. The chapter introduced the subject, explained the research design, stated the problem and presented the theoretical arguments along with an outline of the limitations of study.

Chapter 2 investigates the theoretical linkages between democracy and the democratic opening. The chapter builds a case for the democratic opening as a cause of urbicide in South Africa. The theoretical exposition is an attempt to expand the concept and verify it through empirical evidence.

Chapter 3 explores the relationship between the democratic opening and urbicide in South Africa. The chapter describes the condition of urbicide and argues that the phenomenon is to a large extent the result of the democratic opening.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and conclusions of the study, focusing on shaping public spaces for democratic governance and diversity. The chapter proposes strategies to make South African cities stranger-friendly spaces for foreign nationals to live in. It also foregrounds law enforcement as a critical component of democracy and good governance that can reduce the negative impact which illegal foreigners and population flows have on cities.

Chapter 2: Causal linkages between urbicide and democratic opening

2.1 Introduction

In this section of the research study there is an attempt to conceptualise the idea of democratic opening, a concept that is vital to understanding the drivers of urbicide in modern South Africa. The chapter also shows how urbicide is taking root in South Africa, which is central to informing the analysis of data and building the case for effective management and preservation of the city.

2.2 The idea of democracy

“Out of the dark and from very long ago has come a word” (Dunn, 2005:10), a disruptive word to describe a form of government that gave the *demos* (the people or masses) sovereign power in its originating city-state, Athens. “Citizens could and were expected to represent themselves regardless of their wealth or class” (Held, 2006:14). This was a radical departure from earlier forms of government in the ancient Greek world. It is said that the Greeks were the first political people in history because they were the first to have an idea of a “state” which consisted of “citizens”, whose responsibilities were to administer and make policies (Jacobsen & Frank-fort, 1943; Ehrenberg, 1950). This was the true nature of the constitutional state of the Greeks; but it was their main goal to have a state in which the majority had the overall power of the state. These were indeed the times when the “ruled” quickly became the “rulers”. At that point, the thought of overall sovereign power by the people was just an idea rather than an actual attainable goal; but in the event that the goal was never reached, it would still have been accepted as a principle. And if the goal had not been achieved at that time the state would just have consisted of non-citizens because of the non-existence of a representative type of government. The goal of each citizen having an equal opportunity to share governance of the state is what is referred to as democracy (Jacobsen & Frankfort, 1943; Ehrenberg, 1950). Any investigation into the origins of democracy has chiefly to concentrate on Athens, since only there was a consistent and original example of democratic government set up (Jacobsen & Frank-fort, 1943; Ehrenberg, 1950:514).

The form of democracy practised in Greece is direct democracy, where individuals within the state are directly involved in the decision-making process. Elements of such a system are found wherever referenda, plebiscites, propositions or initiatives exist (Noam, 1992). The most practised form of democracy is the representative type. In this system the people do not directly partake in the decision-making process, but they collectively appoint a representative or representatives who make these decisions on behalf of the group. Another form of representative democracy involves a representative government "giv[ing] no institutional role to the assembled people" (Manin 1997:8). But Bungsraz (2020) argues that in terms of empowering people, the system of representative democracy, although presenting itself as based on political equality, appears to accept and reproduce various forms of inequality because citizens do not have a meaningful say in decision-making except for voting who gets to rule. This minimalist form of participation in the democratic process is one of the chief flaws in modern democracies (Parvin, 2017).

Democracy is complex. As two conservative critics of democracy, Plato and Aristotle, highlighted, it has many problems. They resisted the idea of a political system where the people (majority) ruled (Dunn, 2005; Held, 2006). Plato thought that democracy issued in thoughts and influences of corruption. This occurred through the public opinion process, creating government authorities who lacked the proper knowledge of how to rule but possessed the power to influence the "beast" (Gallie, 1955; Hyland, 1995), that is, the people. Aristotle went on to say that corruption might also occur where people chose to share the wealth of the elite amongst themselves (Gallie, 1955; Hyland, 1995). This would lead to anarchy and destroy the state because the people (*demos*) had no profound knowledge of how to govern the state. While Plato wanted to abolish democracy, Aristotle wanted it restricted as much as possible.

Several thousand years later, despite the widespread popularity of democracy, it remains a contested concept (Gallie, 1955; Hyland, 1995; Cunningham, 2002). This, however, did not apply to African countries at the time of Plato's writings. Most African countries only began to gain independence and join the spectrum of democratic countries around the late 1940s; one of the first African countries to have gained independence was the Republic of Liberia, in 1949 (Boddy-Evans, 2020).

Theoretically, a democratic regime should not be nationalist, and should decentralise power and decision-making in public bodies that represent the population fairly – that is, the regime should be inclusive (Hyland, 1995). On this understanding, it is possible to accept that nationalist persuasions corrupt the democratic ideal and breed divisions based on race and ethnicity, which is not good for a functional society. Democracy ought to enable individuals to maximise their potential and pursue and achieve their life aspirations based on available opportunities in society. But when people do not see the possibility of maximising their potential, they become tired and lose trust in the democratic vision. That implies a democracy in recession, where the destruction of anything valuable is possible. Hyland (1995) noted that democracy contends with anarchist sentiments in society, people believing that any form of authority undermines personal moral autonomy and prevents individuals from doing what they think is right at any time. It is for this reason that democratic principles include the rule of law to restrict personal choices that conflict with what the popular will defines as being suitable for a good society. Hence the legitimate (legal) use of violence by the state is another key principle of democratic regimes, to ensure law and order (O'Donnell, 2010). In other words, democracy does not mean unlimited liberty where people can justify disorderly conduct through freedom of choice or expression. Democracy implies some personal obligations by an individual to obey reasonable government laws.

The idea of democracy is not pure, or perfect. Cunningham (2002:17) noted that "a government is ineffective when it does not or cannot take appropriate measures to achieve the goals of the society it governs." Such inefficiency is increasingly blamed on democratic regimes in the light of many socio-economic challenges that undermine the value of democracy from the people's perspective. The concern is that democracy becomes more about the struggle for influence by competing interest groups and less about producing suitable outcomes to meet social needs. There is also a sense that democracy has destroyed the sense of community and respect for authority. As The Tricameral Commission (1975) expresses this:

> Democratic egalitarianism has delegitimized authority, most prominently in such institutions as 'the family, the church, the school, and the army,' thus simultaneously depriving people of the forums

> within which a sense of community purpose is bred and undermining respect for leadership in general (The Trilateral Commission, 1975; in Cunningham, 2002).

This excerpt indicates that loss of community and struggles for influence by interest groups create deep divisions and social conflicts. Moreover, less respect for authority breeds deviant behaviours, and no respect for the law enforcement agent, including widespread lawlessness (Mason, 1991). Such socially incoherent societies make nation-building difficult. One also sees the problems of democracy linked to the tyranny of the majority, where ignorant masses likely have more influence over rational views or silence minority voices and interests. This irrational aspect of democracy is seen in nationalist calls for the rejection of foreign nationals, racist practices that are institutionalised, and insufficient resource allocation to minority communities.

There are also important socio-economic conditions that make democracy successful. These include active participation of citizens in public affairs (cultural organisations, charity organisations, sports clubs, cooperatives, and volunteering); social interactions on the principle of human equality; and mutual respect among citizens (Cunningham, 2002). One interesting observation that Cunningham (2002:24) takes from Putnam (1993) is that democracy will not thrive where the dominant form of citizen participation is through hierarchical institutions like the Mafia, the church, or major political parties. The point Cunningham makes is that democracy thrives on increased social capital and mutual trust, not power relations that stifle individual opinions and ideas. Increasing participation in cultural organisations would translate to increased participation in community and town hall gatherings.

There was an increase in active participation in the liberation struggle against apartheid; in the post-1994 era, influence had shifted to religious organisations, political party dominance, and organised criminal syndicates. This is likely and unpopular opinion in public meetings for fear of victimisation. Such a culture of fear renders democracy ineffective.

2.2.1 Democracy as a principle of government

Democratic governance is built on the principle of people's participation in policy and decision-making because the rules ought to reflect and protect their interests, or at least affect them as members of society (Bungsraz, 2020). According to Gallie et al. (1995), though there are conflicting meanings of democracy, the most important thing is how countries practise democracy. Cunningham (2002) noted that most democratic regimes in the world were liberal democracies. About 167 countries claim to be democracies, making democracy the dominant political system in recent times (World Population Index, 2020). The assumption behind the acceptance of democracy is that democratic regimes are more stable, peaceful and not prone to war (Pateman, 1970). Such regimes respect and protect human rights and are best positioned to satisfy basic human needs. O'Donnell (2010) interpreted a democratic regime as one that included citizenship, which enables individuals and groups to lay claims against the state and other members of society. The idea of citizenship is an old tradition of political community that implies that citizens are not excluded from democratic administrative processes. A result of thisthis is that non-citizens are vulnerable because the state bears no obligation to protect them. It is only international compacts that protect non-citizens in the global community. Such international compacts gain force in domestic affairs because states volunteer to adopt them. The state is therefore a key actor in democratic rule and is responsible for ensuring the common good of all.

Political idealists believe democracy embodies all the principles to counteract phenomena like the two world wars, colonialism, apartheid, the holocaust, and so forth. The most popular principles embodied by democracy are human rights protection, the rule of law under a constitution, and equality before the law. Democracy opens up opportunities for the personal development of the marginalised in society. It provides a form of government that prevents abuse of power and corruption, and promotes accountability by representatives and government officials. This system of transparency and clean governance is one that makes democracy appealing. Another appeal of democratic regimes is the protection of political minorities, in the sense that the public sector promotes the general interests of society and does not promote one group of people over another. Partisan regimes quickly assume the illegitimate tag from civil rights activists and

scorn in the international community of states. Good societies provide individuals an opportunity to optimise their potential and lead a desired life.

2.2.1.1 Democracy protects individual liberty

Individualism is a fundamental democratic principle, where the role of the state is to protect individual aspirations and create a conducive environment for people to achieve their goals and lead a happy life (Kateb, 2003; Cunningham, 2002). The idea that each person's rights and values are of equal importance can be impossible to achieve in some social settings, which is why some have critiqued its practices. For example, the majority rule principle in representative democracy could be argued against on the grounds that it supresses the voices of minorities. This implies that there is no true equality if the losing votes do not count in elections. Hence the debates about having to institutionalise more representative electoral systems that accommodate minority voices – the argument being that proportional representative electoral systems work better than "first past the post" ones (Mill, 1991-1861:3023-03). Individual liberty promotes the idea that individuals should make their own life choices without others or the state interfering with their choices.

Such individual liberty is known as the state of being free (Heydenrych, 2008), free from social and authoritative restrictions that would otherwise abuse one's freedom. In an ordinary state, individualism and liberty co-exist and are not independent of one another; the one would not make sense without the other. For one to be considered an individual one needs to be free (liberated) from a group setting. The individual is as important as the collective, and whatever they decide to do is equally important. This means the individual has freedom of decision or in other words the liberty to decide. In a democracy this individualism and liberty is given expression through the political process of voting, freedom of speech, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom to organize oneself, and so forth, protected by its constitution. Some people may engage in these practices because they subscribe to a set of rules instilled in a societal setting. Because of this setting, individualism can be applauded as a desired doctrine and sophisticated belief system that may encourage or as Kateb (2003) says "deepen existing social tendencies". Not with much evidence, advocates of this doctrine tend to defend it but from the perspective of the few evidence they have, but indirectly they would love to

see more from the doctrine itself. “Their espousal of individualism may be tinged by disappointment; or they may harbour a hope that by refining the individualism that they observe, they may induce people to approach more closely the ideal that is practiced imperfectly” (Kateb, 2003: 275).

2.2.1.2 Democracy promotes human equality

The philosopher John Stuart Mill was famous for promoting the franchise being extended to women in the 1800s and wealth redistribution, which earned him the reputation of a socialist. This emphasises the extent to which a liberal democrat is allowed to favour the social and economic equality of people (Mill, 1869; Cunningham, 2002). This is what happened to Ronald Dworkin and John Rawls, who were called egalitarians when they insisted on liberal democratic beliefs (Dworkin, 1983). Robert Nozick, who insisted he was not a liberal democrat, believed that the principles of liberals control anti-egalitarianism (Nozick, 1974). Even though Isaiah Berlin never formally identified himself as anti-egalitarian, he was very sceptical of the sanction of political equality as an act of liberal democracy (Thomas, 2020). Dicey, on the other hand, highlighted the importance of equality before the law (Dicey, 2007). He stated that everyone was to be equal before the law (receive the same treatment) irrespective of status, religion, race, and so forth. For this to happen there needed to be an independent supreme court or courts to ensure equality (Ranjan, 2010). The role of the courts is more significant in guarantees of political rights where the executive and legislature are prone to overlook or deliberately supress these for political reasons.

The topic of equality is contested where the debate is about equality between whom and equality of what (Verba, 2001). The question of equality also extends to issues about citizens and non-citizens in terms of what rights each should have and what exclusions there are. It is accepted when it comes to voting that foreign nationals do not have the franchise. That exclusion also comes into play when countries expect foreign nationals to have health insurance (expat insurance) before entering their territories, while citizens have access to the public health service. Owing to these discrepancies in political systems, there are international protocols that guarantee human rights at a universal level to protect the dignity of non-citizens in foreign countries. The idea of human equality is

vital for orderly societies where people tolerate one another, with the freedom to practise their cultural and religious beliefs.

2.2.1.3 Constitutional democracy

Bellamy and Castiglione (1997) argued that "the term 'constitutional democracy' can be interpreted as either an oxymoron or a tautology." By contrast, the two concepts can also appear to contradict each other. Whereas the first term refers to restrained and divided power, the second implies its ultimately unified and unconstrained exercise of it (Wolin, 1989; Ruffilli, 1991; Bellamy & Castiglione, 1997). But some scholars argue that while constitutionalism refers to a set of rules and regulations that guide democratic processes with regard to the rules governing voting systems and socio-economic rights, a democracy is more than just a set of rules that need to be adhered to and has no formal procedures such as that of "the majority rules"; it is no mistake that many constitutionalists have argued that "no true democrat could consistently allow a democracy to abolish itself" (Bellamy & Castiglione, 1997). So, in that respect the two terms do not contradict each other but are complementary. For example, a constitution entrenches the rights that all democratic citizens automatically inherit in a democratic setting, and this prevents the infringement of these rights by democratically elected politicians (Jones, 1994). Because of its history with apartheid when developing its Constitution and democratic theory and practices, the government of South Africa wanted to make sure that it left no space for repetition (Apartheid regime). So, a constitutional democracy would be ideal. In a constitutional setting democratic practices would be governed by a constitution which dictates the use of power and upholds accountability in terms of government authorities' duties and responsibilities and those of the public (Cunningham, 200). Constitutionalism is an important democratic principle that protects social order and reduces abuses of power. Regimes whose public officials disregard constitutional provisions often fall into turmoil and experience violent transfers of power. The bedrock of constitutionalism is respect for individual rights, human equality and political participation – a belief in people participating to influence and express their opinions about public decision making.

2.2.1.4 Democracy requires public consultation

Consultation as a legal term in constitutional law entails decisions electoral bodies make, acting as legislators through public deliberation, which is considered political participation (Quesnel, 2000). Direct democracy is practised when people have direct participation in what is submitted for public consultation; in this way, the state and its citizens both practise direct democracy. This type of public consultation can only take place in representative democracies and in states where the constitution is the supreme law. In representative democracy citizens' participation is redefined in terms of their role in the participation process, because in this type of democracy citizens are unable to participate directly in the decision-making process. Debates concerning the issues of representation and participation are of concern to citizens, specifically in terms of the roles and responsibilities delegated to members of the public and their elected authorities (Quesnel, 2000: 3-4). Elected authorities are called upon for the sole purpose of acting on behalf of the greater good of the public. In a democratic system and with the knowledge that their legitimacy comes from the support of their voters, which gives them the authority to make decisions on behalf of the constituency. This means that representatives chosen by the citizens must hold themselves accountable for their actions and are mandated to provide information and act following the needs and wants of their voters. This type of definition is ideological rather than practical, but it is, according to Quesnel (2000:3-4), an idea that we must strive to achieve despite the unrealistic expectations it sets up.. Pure democratic public consultation practice involves citizens taking part directly in policy- and decision-making. Public participation in democracies ensures that representatives do not make uninformed decisions on projects that do not help the electorate. Participation varies from residents' committees and neighbourhood councils to public hearings, canvassing public opinion, online petitions, and referenda. The consultation process might have some flaws, just as does any other form of government; but it also plays a key role in making sure that the state does not misuse power and that its public officials are accountable.

Accountability and public consultation are a matter of institutional arrangements, where powers, functions and the personnel of state departments are not the same. This is democracy as a set of institutional arrangements. The theorists of the doctrine of separation of powers, like Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Montesquieu, and Bodin, wanted to

promote true accountability and liberty by discouraging combining legislative and executive powers. They also wanted judicial power to stay outside executive and legislative decision-making, knowing that rulers can create and implement tyrannical laws. As Tyagi (2008:619) puts it, “Where it joined with the executive power, the judge might behave with violence and oppression.” (). Montesquieu was the first to formulate the doctrine systematically, scientifically, and clearly in his book *Espirit des Lois* (“the Spirit of the Laws”) (Montesquieu, 1748; Tyagi, 2008: 619).

The doctrine of separation of powers is one of the most important principles in the South African Constitution. In the pre-democratic era, the legislature and judiciary were profoundly influenced by the executive. This enabled a lack of accountability for implementing the policies of racial segregation: “parliamentary supremacy had given constitutional form to a South African state characterised by inequality, racial discrimination and division” (Langa, 2006: 4). This was how the apartheid regime thrived. The new Constitution of South Africa for the first time placed new values centre stage. Core values in the Constitution were the achievement of equality, human dignity, the protection of human rights and freedoms, non-racism, and non-sexism, a democratic system of governance and the rule of law (Langa, 2006:4). The political transition to constitutionalism is a democratic opening that enabled the growth of civil society and the possibility of social rights. Hence the proliferation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) within a sphere (civil society) where individuals voluntarily entered social relationships with other individuals. “This social relationship,”, according to Putnam (1993:89-90) was based on equality, trust, respect, solidarity, networks and obeying the norms.”

2.2.1.5 Civil society organisations strengthen democracy

NGOs in South Africa play a crucial role in promoting and protecting democratic principles and supplying services that the state is not able to provide. The development of NGOs is a big part of doing away with authoritarian regimes and an important answer to promoting good governance. The World Bank is one of the international actors which emphasises the need for good governance and the role of civil society organisations in it. The rule of law, accountability, protecting human rights, and transparency are the core ideas underpinning good governance (OECD, 1994; Moore, 1993). Good governance is,

therefore, the foundation for preventing urbicide in modern democratic states driven by people-centred service delivery. In an environment where many people are unemployed and few know of the concept urbicide, NGOs are a crucial instrument in raising awareness and implementing community initiatives for the renewal of the city. As public benefit institutions, NGOs can hold government accountable for urban renewal programmes and monitor the impact these programmes have. In this, too, donor organisations and the World Bank can make a big difference by funding NGOs fighting urbicide in South Africa. Speaking about the significance of NGOs, Mohanty (2002) said “they therefore were to be strengthened and made vibrant so that they could contribute effectively towards democratisation” (Mohanty, 2002).

Political parties are important tools of democracy. A political party is an organisation of people with the sole purpose of securing proper political representation by deploying voters, assembling government, and influencing public policy (Webb, 2005:633). The Republic of South Africa held its first democratic elections in April 1994, the first of their kind in the country. These elections allowed black people to take part in the electoral process for the first time. It was through the 1994 election that the country experienced for the first time the collapse of the apartheid regime, the dismantling of the past institutionalised racist system, and the development of a new Government of National Unity (GNU) (González, 1996). A new era of national reconciliation under the guidance of the GNU was set, with the new president of the Republic of South Africa being Nelson Mandela and the former president under the apartheid regime, F.W. De Klerk, being the new deputy president of the country (González, 1996). In its long history of division constituted by race, hate, uncertainty and segregation, the transitional government of South Africa, the GNU, aimed to ensure and promote the equal sharing of power and equality. The GNU was also mandated to manage the writing of the new Constitution to be reflective of the new South Africa.

The development of a number of strong, upstanding political parties was crucial for the new South Africa, for many reasons. Firstly, in terms of the political structure of the country, the ruling party proportional representation system at that time had raised the party to an even higher and more powerful position than in any other country (González, 1996). Secondly, the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), with its

disproportional amount of power had a distinct advantage in the political system, the financial support for it from within the country and other countries compromising the ability of the other new political parties to organise themselves. All these factors had to be taken into consideration; had this not happened, the new democracy would have turned into yet another one-party state, such as the historical apartheid regime (González, 1996). With the absence of new and active political opposition there to keep the ruling party in check, there would not have been any difference between a one-party state and an authoritarian regime. Thirdly, during the transition to democratic rule political parties were still grappling with whether to become opposition parties or to remain as liberal movements. This struggle did not occur amongst new organisations; but other political organisations, which had been in existence for decades that lacked orgnaisational skills, etc. before the transition, lacked organisational skills, fiscal management, and the accountability of a political party (González, 1996: 148). But with time, these organisations began to organise themselves as political parties, which helped in creating some sort of accountability structure for the then ruling party.

Political parties do not govern well or become effective opposition parties without a politically conscious citizenry. It is critically important for the common good that a state allows people to organise and coordinate their activities. The state can supply goods and services at the demand of its citizens. For justice, social order, effectiveness and efficiency to exist, there needs to be an existing state in society (Sartori 1987; Hadenius, 2001). But if not properly administered, the state can be a tool for the powerful to abuse their administrative capacity and act as a monopolistic force to acquire and exploit resources. In such a case, the state can become a state of oppression in relation to those it was intended to serve. To prevent this from happening and for citizens to protect themselves from abuse(s) of power, they need to establish different public institutions to keep the power of the state in check, which is through democracy. “Society tries by this means to govern the state by which it is governed” (Hadenius, 2001:1).

It was in the 1990s that the New Public Management paradigm was introduced. The transformed democratic state of South Africa was driven by the deliberations of this new paradigm, which resulted in a critical but constructive review of the new democracy (Lues, 2014).

2.2.2 Democracy as a type of behaviour

The French philosopher Montesquieu (1748) spoke about the importance of the rule of law, highlighting the separation of powers doctrine. The doctrine explained why it was important for the separation of government bodies, the rule of law being the key to how this separation was governed. The rule of law was designed to protect each citizen's rights from the abuse of power by the state and / or government (Weingast, 1997), "even though claims for its historical impact have been much exaggerated" (Shklar, 1987). The rule of law created a system where everyone had access to the rules and regulations of the state, ensuring that everyone was equal before the law irrespective of their political, social or financial status (Carothers, 1998). Through this rule of law, an administration of accountability was created. Because government bodies and authorities were most often responsible for the administration of the law, the rule of law created regulations that governed how the government should fulfil its mandate. It told them what they do and what could would happen to them if they overstepped their boundaries (O'Donnell, 2010; Kettl, 2009). The separation of powers would be a buffer that protected the people from arbitrary government action.

The "I am an African" speech was used by the then deputy president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, on 8 May 1996 to commemorate the new South African Constitution. In the speech president Mbeki paid respect to his ancestors, not only the South African native population, but also people from Europe, Asia, and the rest of the African continent. In the speech the deputy president thanked his ancestors for "teaching [him] that we could both be at home and be foreign and that freedom was a necessary condition for human existence" (Thabo Mbeki Foundation, 1996). His emphasis on being at home and foreign at the same time underscores the significance of embracing foreign nationals at the time when South Africa's democracy was newly inaugurated. It was a statement to "ensure that no one in the country would again be excluded based on race, religion, class or background because the constitution's preamble proudly states that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it' with no explicit qualification or reference to place of birth or immigration status" (Landau, 2005:1117). The deputy president's speech celebrated and documented the fact that South Africa had proudly secured its legitimacy through its ability to get beyond the past practices of autocratic violence and division by choosing tolerance,

human rights, and the rule of law (Landau, 2005:1117). This was the kind of behaviour South Africa's democracy implied, to foster an inclusive society.

When it came to the rule of law, however, most researchers in South Africa had focused on institutions (their policies and actions) before their writings (Gibson & Gouws, 2010). This led to negative public sentiments about government's failure to curb criminality and violence. Ineffective administration of law and order is one of the standards by which people measure the quality of democracy. Attitudes to law and order make it possible for citizens, possibly under the influence of political entrepreneurs, to blame someone for lawlessness. Often, the strangers (foreign nationals) in a political community are made out to be the culprits. Hence the need to recognise the "connection between the actions of institutions and the beliefs of ordinary citizens" (Gibson & Gouws, 2010). Mathews (1986:268) saw that

> There is nothing quite so corrupting as official lawlessness. When those who stand officially as the enforcers of the law may dispense with all its traditional constraints, it will not be long before others follow their example even to the extent of losing respect for and understanding of the principle of government under law.

In this sense "the security system has become a potent generator of the disorder it was designed to eliminate" (Gibson & Gouws, 2010). Lawlessness in South Africa has led to the destruction of valuable cultural and moral constructs in society.

Philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas believed in the theory of the natural law, explaining it as an expression of reason in many respects. By that time philosophers had not yet made clear the direct indication of what natural rights are in specific, but it was the philosopher Hobbes in *Leviathan* who made a clear distinction, indicating that everyone had "the right to life" and "the right to its preservation" (Jain, 2006: 143). In this process, people voluntarily gave up their rights in the form of a social contract for the preservation of those rights (Jain, 2006: 143). Hobbes further stated that where sovereign authorities did not protect the rights of everyone as dictated by the social contract, it was mandatory that the contract be terminated and the individual return to its state of nature. The philosopher John Locke (1700) broadened the natural rights doctrine, including reference to two new rights, "the right to property" and "the right to liberty". The emphasis on these

newfound natural rights – such as the “right to life and the right to liberty” – found favour amongst revolutionaries and freedom fighters in the Atlantic and the European states and were therefore deemed fundamental rights in those states. In their movements, revolutionaries found supporting documents such as the American Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789) to play an important historical role. “In fact, they are the prelude to the contemporary movement of human rights in the world” (Jain, 2006: 143). According to Wronka (1995) human rights may be seen as 1) ideals about rights that members of a society view as important for survival and to meet individual or group needs; 2) enactment of these ideals into documents, usually legal instruments, such as constitutions or statutes being a way to transform them into reality; and 3) the implementation and exercise of the enacted rights (Wronka, 1995:1406-1407; Noyoo, 2006:361).

Sullivan *et al.* (1979:) claim that “Many theorists have argued that although a democratic regime may be divided by fierce conflicts, it can remain stable if citizens remain attached to democratic or constitutional procedures and maintain a willingness to apply such procedures-the right to speak, to publish, to run for office on an equal basis to all, even to those who challenge its way of life.” Tolerance in its instrumental sense helps maintain stability in a democratic regime because a good regime has tolerance as a foundation of society. There are divided views in South Africa at the time of the writing of this dissertation about the extent to which society should tolerate the presence of foreign nationals, especially undocumented foreigners. The debates occur because of concerns that foreign nationals exploit government’s leniency toward them, and because of the poor implementation of law. South Africa is a vulnerable society because of its overly tolerant approach to public order, which has led to increasing criminal activity in the country – to the extent that the Minister of Police once called on the police to shoot to kill, urging that they should not die with their guns in their hands without using them. Sullivan *et al.* (1979) point to six important studies spanning two decades: Stouffer’s (1955) study of attitudes toward communism; the Prothro-Grigg (1960) study of political tolerance; McClosky’s (1964) study of levels of support for democratic norms; Lawrence’s (1976) study connecting tolerance with positions on specific issues; Davis’ (1975) study testing Stouffer’s predictions about the effects of generation, age, and education on tolerance

toward communists and atheists; and the Nunn, Crockett, & Williams (1978) more extensive update of Stouffer's work (Sullivan et al., 1979).

Voting is another democratic behaviour that contributes to good governance because the electorate would (in theory) choose the most eligible representatives to guide public policy and promote the general good (Douglas, 2013: 81). The right of a citizen to vote automatically ties the individual to an existing social order even in the case where the individual does not wish to practise that right. The voting process is the first step in a democracy; every other process in a democracy follows this voting right. When people take part, it becomes more than just a value, it becomes a foundational virtue of a democracy (Douglas, 2013: 81). Flanders (2012) narrows the broad concept of voting by diluting its inherent virtue as an individual right and broadening it as an ideal of equality to resolve many election arguments. While voting is also a way of self-governing and democratic expression, it is inevitable that today's disputes over elections and public participation are about the issue of equality (Flanders, 2012; Douglas, 2013:81).

In theorising democracy, Crick (2002:60) and Cunningham (2002:15) speak about the dangers of democracy, referring to dominant tendencies and unpredictable human actions arising from a democratic dispensation. In other words, the introduction of democracy in society may lead to other undesired behaviour by citizens. The example of this in South Africa is how the justice system releases convicts on parole only for them to commit even worse crimes and have to return to prison. In response to this, people complain that it was not so during apartheid when the laws were more stringent. Public sentiment that the relaxation of laws in the name of human rights under constitutionalism has ruined society to the point of lawlessness enables the current study to contextualise the concept of democratic opening. A democratic opening is in one way an emerging human behaviour and set of social practices that capitalise on democratic opportunities, deviating from historical tendencies in a manner that disrupts or threatens to undermine the gains that present political reforms have brought. How is a democratic opening defined or identified? Where there exist democratic principles and practices, there exists the possibility for a democratic opening – the abuse of democratic activities that were designed for good purpose. A democratic opening is the downside of democratic benefits. An example is that democracy has allowed for the right to freedom of movement within

and outside the country; this good principle has also created a negative effect (the downside of benefits). This is proven by many rural dwellers having moved to urban spaces, creating overpopulation. Where the state takes a heavy hand trying to close the democratic opening, the likelihood is that interest groups would cry out that the state is threatening or undermining democratic principles. For example, freedom of movement in a country that formerly severely restricted human movement supports an opening of mass and unregulated migration, to the extent that illegal migration becomes a new problem threatening the political system (Tessier, 1995; Klotz, 2000; Zanker, 2020). Democratic opening has led to intolerance of law enforcement, the worship of mediocrity, and distrust of normalcy (Crick, 2002). It is in this regard that this study posits that urbicide in the South African context is attributable the 1994 democratic opening.

2.3 The opening of the democratic era

The metaphor of birthing (a nation, or freedom) is not some strange imagination in political discourse and thought (Ambrosius, 2007) but is consistent with political communities emerging from strife. This process of a regime making way for a democratic one is what "open[ing] the way to democracy" is about (Ambrosius, 2007:708). The emergence of a personality on the political scene likewise points to the birth of a dispensation (Maboloc, 2020). A review of the literature shows that the concept of democratic opening was popular in the analysis of political transitions in Turkey (Cavanaugh & Hughes, 2015; Akgül & Akgül, 2022). Analysing democratic development, Kotze (2010:28) talks about "the birth of the new democracy" within the logic of transition. This birth of democracy is synonymous with democratic opening, the focus of this study. This is a process that entails the introduction of fundamental democratic reforms (democratisation) and deepening liberal democratic values (consolidation) in society (Kotze, 2010; Ulusoy, 2010). The democratic era is defined by a vibrant civil society, formal institutions for the promotion and protection of freedom, equality for all members of the political community, and no discrimination against minorities (Ulusoy, 2010). The democratic opening emboldens cultural organisations to present themselves as political bodies and not disguise themselves as intellectual clubs (Mason, 1991).

The introduction of democratic reforms in South Africa was a deliberate political process to break with an undesired regime, and an attempt to improve socio-economic conditions

to minimise the inequalities that would make governance difficult. Hence the need to embed new political values and economic restructuring whose acceptance by society would be impossible without institutional reforms in the political system (Kotze, 2010:34). It is democratic opening that presents the best chance for nation-building and the expansion of citizenship (Kotze, 2010). Schlemmer (1994) opined that the establishment of democracy bodes well for the international relations of a country and its inclusion in the community of states. Ulusoy & Durac (2012) make a similar claim. A close look at Ulusoy (2010) indicates a staggered method conceptually where “democratising forces complete the process of democratic opening (Ulusoy, 2010). In other word democratic opening implies 1) democratic transition,2) democratisation, and 3) consolidation. This study therefore considers the democratic era as the totality of these three stages. The democratic opening is synonymous with its establishment, birth, and emergence. The emergence of democracy is a significant aspect to consider in trying to understand the phenomenon of urbicide in South Africa, which presents a challenge to the viability of democracy in practice.

In the context of South Africa, the introduction of a democracy has not been plain sailing. South Africa gained its independence from the British Empire in 1910 (Boddy-Evans, 2020) but along with its independence, it embraced racial segregation, called apartheid. An attempt by black people to achieve liberation was made in 1948, when a black political party contested for election; but it had no chance of winning because black people were not allowed to vote. The conservative Afrikaner National Party (NP) benefited from the 80% collective votes by the non-voting redirected to it (Ross & McAfee, 2019).

The shift from European colonialism to Afrikaner nationalism meant a continuation of systemic racial segregation in which white people ill-treated black people (Mhlauli et al., 2015). Special laws were applied only to people of colour, directing where they should live, move, shop, school, pray, work, and so forth (Worden, 1994; Mhlauli et al., 2015).

It was in the 1960s that black political parties showing political interest in the immediate wake of the Sharpeville massacre. The black liberation movement revived efforts to oppose the apartheid government in the 1970s. These efforts reached a peak when the apartheid regime conceded to a negotiated settlement. This led to the unbanning of political parties, release of political activists, and a transition to an inclusive Socratic

regime in 1994 (Ross & Davis, 2019). The ANC won the majority of votes in the election and became the governing party with Nelson Mandela as the first black South African president. A new political regime was ushered in, one which did away with the laws and practices of the apartheid regime. An Interim Constitution was drafted but was later replaced by the version of 1996, which is the Constitution still in force today. The Constitution was enacted to enshrine the founding principles of the new democracy, seeking to ensure that those principles were not infringed upon by anyone irrespective of their social, financial or political status (Ross & Davis, 2019). In this transition the South African government saw fit to elect a representative form of democracy despite the flaws inherent in the ideological and practical aspects of democracy (Bungsraz, 2020). Overall, democracy implies good government theoretically. Hence, democracy requires intelligent institutional alignment to good governance a reality (Fye, 2015). This change in political ideologies and systems meant that the new democratic reality opened up new opportunities for people of colour and for members of surrounding African countries. This newfound reality created what this research study conceives of as a *democratic opening*.

2.4 Defining urbicide

Urbicide refers to the “killing, slaughter” or “slaying” of anything that is of an urban nature (Coward, 2009). “Urban” means “characteristic of, occurring or taking place in a city or a town” (Coward, 2009). A city is a human settlement ranging from a population of more than 200 to 50 000 residents, manifesting secondary economic activity, occupying a space of no less than 1.5 square kilometres, and marked by defined administrative boundaries (UN Habitat, 2020). There are diverse definitions of “city”; a recent simplified definition considers the city as the extent of a built-up area that encompasses open spaces like parks and forests and clear land all within 1 square kilometre of space (UN Habitat, 2020). An urban space consists of 50 percent or more of the built-up area, a peri-urban space 25 percent to 50 percent of the built-up area, while rural areas constitute less than 25 percent of built-up areas (UN Habitat, 2020). According to Standford (2020) a city can be associated with having a cathedral or a university, a particular form of local government, or a large population.

Even though the term urbicide only entered the academic space over the past half century, the term is not new (Lawrence, 2018). Historically urbicide could refer to the

destruction of Carthage by the Romans and the elimination of the Dresden by the Mongols – both examples of purposeful destruction of people's surroundings as a symbol of destroying the historical significance of the individual (Lawrence, 2018). Although Coward (2009) refers to urbicide as violence against the city, it is not the only definition of the term. The current study extends this definition to include the destruction of the city's image. This means that the destruction of the Sarajevo library as well as the destruction of the Ferhadija Mosque of Banja Luka were also purposeful acts of urbicide, perpetrated to destroy built environments of great symbolic value to those they belonged to (Lawrence, 2018). Lawrence (2018) also includes the aspect of the physical death of people in defining urbicide – as in the slaughter of people during the fall of Yugoslavia – extending the meaning of urbicide from violence against the city or its image to the killing of people in the city to an attack on the human condition (Lawrence, 2018). Because urban spaces are vital to the lived human experience from birth to death, the deliberate targeting and killing of city residents and the destruction of the city's buildings, open spaces and other infrastructure can help explain urbicide. This makes sense of the lack of waste removal, the prevalence of dilapidated buildings (shops, schools, clinics, transport stations, and so forth), the absence of recreation facilities, vandalised roads and bridges defining urbicide – the destruction of the surroundings necessary to sustain quality of life.

Urbicide in this sense is about the destruction of community and disabling any further collective action by people in promoting the common good. Thus urbicide paves the way for social and economic decay, evidenced by increasing criminal activity greater numbers of unemployed people – who eventually find solace in narcotics or emigrate to greener pastures. Urbicide is about destroying the physical surroundings of value to cities and by extension their people, implying that people deprived of such value will be demoralised and lack any life ambition. Given this explanation of urbicide, it is not difficult to accept Lawrence's (2018) claim that "notions of urbicide were rolled into that of genocide – its bigger, and far uglier, older brother."

There are many causes of urbicide: poor service delivery; overpopulation, and lack of maintenance of buildings and infrastructure – not the direct destruction of infrastructure by war but its destruction through a lack of maintenance, negligence, and public violence.

Urbicide is seen in the illegal occupation of buildings or illegal property development, where old buildings begin to decay, form cracks and break down (Swart, 2020). Another hallmark of urbicide is the litter that is strewn about and uncollected in urban spaces (Dlamini, 2019).

Unlike Coward's perspective, where the city is destroyed by war, the destruction of the city in South Africa is political, due to people's efforts to get government's attention.

Another reason for the destruction of the city in South Africa is the failure to implement policy related to basic service delivery, urban planning, migration and economic planning. Population growth in both the inner-city and amongst outer city dwellers has caused violent conflicts between the two groups, where people illegally occupy land earmarked for purposes other than residential. Kroth et al. (2016) showed that the governing party has deliberately neglected communities that voted for the opposition and did not provide basic services to them. This suggests the possibility of the deliberate destruction of cities that are strongholds of the opposition through the withholding of resources to them. This aspect of neglecting opposition strongholds has also been identified by Ginster et al. (2014), who refer to resources having been moved from the town of Brandfort to the ruling party's "powerhouse" in Theunissen, and to residents in Harrismith who claimed that they were being ignored in favour of the residents of QwaQwa, the strong hold of the governing party. Likewise, Knoosen (2009) speaks about the existence of a punishment regime in South Africa where the governing party reduces subsidy allocations to municipalities that are governed by opposition parties.

2.4.1 Urbicide and the destruction of buildings and other infrastructure

The term "civilised" is closely linked with the notion of the city. According to Aristotle's "zoon politikon" the notion of "urban" can arguably be captured through the whole of human existence, our potentiality being achieved only in the *polis* (Mendieta, 2010). The creation of built spaces is seeks to fulfil a desire for beauty, for shelter, for living a better life, and for utility itself. Most buildings do not just represent a specific time in history but are viewed as symbols of individuality, national culture, pride, and distinction (Strauss, 1961). In accordance with Meier's view (2007), architecture can be seen as the greatest of arts. Built environments are not simply viewed as being decors or backdrops to human

existence, then, but form an integral part of human existence. The killing or deliberate destruction of built environments is a non-transparent form of political violence, which is why it is regarded as a secondary programme for killing and displacement of people or a careless act by soldiers. Consequently, the widespread phenomenon of the killing or destruction of built environments is not treated as a class of political violence (Zaprianov, 2012; Coward, 2009).

2.4.2 Urbicide and political culture of conflict and protests

The ultimate source of revolt, according to classical theorists such as Aristotle, Karl Marx as well as Tocqueville, results from the anger associated with material conditions and the need and desire by the working class for a better life (Nleya et al., 2011).

2.4.2.1 Urbicide as normalised destructive social grievance

There are two explanations for the causes of collective action: the grievance; and the political process (Buechler, 2004; Gurr, 1970; Muller 1985). Grievance is the basic cause of revolt in that “more grievance will breed more protest” (Buechler, 2004; Gurr, 1970; Muller 1985). On the other hand, political process theories contend that grievance protests are “fairly permanent and recurring features of historical landscape” (Obershall 1978:298), which makes it useless for one to attempt to eradicate them from the political process. In other words, it is enough to explain the variations in the occurrences of protests. Political process theories posit that grievances arise from dissatisfaction about political opportunities, organisational resources, and dissidents about administrative outcomes (McAdam et al., 2004; Tarrow, 1994 - 1998; Tilly, 1978 - 2004). Examples of such grievances would be higher income inequality or poor economic conditions (Shadmehr, 2014). It is possible, then, for grievance practices such as protests to have been practised so often that they have become normalised in the political system (Chilton, 1988).

The expression of grievance through destructive protest is often a collective action within the structure of society rather than the choice of an individual (Nleya et al., 2011). This structure of protest has the propensity to be replicated (socialised) among members of society, especially the younger generation, who learn through informal observation of

political behaviour (Almond et al., 2008; Almond & Powell, 1966; Singh, 2022). Such is the case in the South African context, where the destructive expression of grievance was instrumental against the apartheid regime and continues to be a challenge in the democratic era, manifested in the destruction of the (image of the) city and the targeted killings of residents (Chiwarawara, 2021). Destructive protest is embedded in South Africa's democratic era. That people deliberately destroy the city to attract government's attention is a well-documented phenomenon in South Africa.

Taking political culture as shared beliefs about a political system, the enculturation of destructive grievance is embedded in the shared feelings of depravation by citizens, although with some extent of variation where some sections of the population are unaffected by it. A case in point is that the lower class in the polity often feels that the political process is not responsive to its needs nor represents its aspirations sufficiently. As a result, grievances translate into attacks against other groups in society. Illegal migrants are among the key targets; along with them are public infrastructure and built environments in cities, which are destroyed as symbolic and strategic objects to express grievances.

Noting that destruction is a normalised political tool in South Africa, this study presents urbicide as a category of political behaviour in modern democracies. It is therefore necessary to consider whether such destruction of cities ought to be accepted as normative in democracies. It could be argued that the killing of cities is the inevitable outcome of ineffective governance, and that ineffective governance is a well-documented challenge in democratic consolidation. Good governance is therefore the antithesis of urbicide. The destruction of urban spaces is arguably abnormal because such behaviour is not conducive to individual and group pursuit of life aspirations.

Democratisation is about promoting the rule of law within the general community, especially considering that disagreement is part of political processes. It is about promoting a culture of peaceful conflict resolution and non-discrimination against minority groups in society. Imagining peaceful conflict resolution is particularly important in South Africa, a country grown accustomed to a violent state that oppressed political expression but equally in the democratic era, where freedom of expression is a guarantee and where there is no logical need for violence as there are various institutions that support people

in voicing their concerns and holding those in power accountable. On the other hand, it could be argued that violence is justified when the regime is non-responsive to the plight of the people, as has been witnessed in South Africa. In other words, ineffective governance breeds a culture of violent destruction and good governance leads to a better life – the situation across the world (Chilton, 1988).

2.4.3 Urbicide through poor service delivery and neglect of living spaces

Service delivery is about the administration of necessities for the common good in a civil (ised) society. It is government's mandate in modern democracies to provide services, without which human security and industry for the preservation of life and attainment of life aspirations would not be possible. These basic services include supply of electricity, sanitation, water, housing, infrastructure, land, education, health, and security (Campbell, 2014). In defining the concept of service delivery, it is important to distinguish between goods and services and their interrelation with each other, specifically focusing on the act of delivery. According to Rathmell (1996) the simplest way to define goods and services is to view a good as a noun and the service as the verb, meaning that the good is considered as a "thing" and the service as an "act". "The former is an object, an article, a device, or a material, whereas the latter is a deed, a performance, or an effort" (Rathmell, 1996). It can be concluded, then, that if a service is an act, a deed, or a performance, the term "delivery" refers to the proper or improper maintenance or management of this act or performance. Therefore, good governance includes effective management, operation and maintenance of systems that ensure access to water and sanitation, health, waste, security, education, housing, and electricity to enable people to experience quality of life. Such efficiency results in aesthetically pleasant built environments. Poor governance implies the mismanagement and neglect of basic services, whose absence leads to dilapidated and unpleasant cities that engender poor living conditions and human insecurity.

The negligence of cities as environments that support human life is evident in buildings that are abandoned or not well maintained, which causes residents to relocate from such neighbourhoods and leads to a decline in the market values of residential areas. This also means that revenue collection in that area also decreases. With the decline in municipal revenue a broad municipal disinvestment in some areas occurs, which means that

municipal services such as cleaning and garbage collection either become inconsistent or are completely withdrawn. A downward spiral ensues, where private investment in rental properties is lost because no-one finds it desirable to stay in unserved communities (Slater, 2004; Fyfe & Kenny, 2005). This places landlords under pressure with regard to obtaining enough return on investment, leading to them opting to divide the number of tenants per unit to make up for the loss in revenue (Slater, 2004; Fyfe & Kenny, 2005).

The practice of dividing tenant space is not only due to abandoned buildings. Cities can become too expensive for the working and lower classes, who cannot afford to purchase or rent property. Hence, people collaborate in occupying a single unit, where they share the costs of rental. This makes cities unwelcome spaces for the poor as the middle classes use their financial capability to transform the city, creating upmarket residences. This phenomenon is known as gentrification – the displacement of poor residents (Hoogendoorn, 2006; Butler, 2007; Kennedy & Leonard, 2001). Gentrification is an unintended consequence of economic growth. As more landlords split rental spaces for profit and more people club together to share costs for affordability, cities become overpopulated and the infrastructure is unable to support the increased number of people.

When public service infrastructure like sewage spills out and frequent electricity tripping or transformers exploding because of strain on the system becomes normalised, the impression is created that government is failing. This leads to grievances among communities, who argue that the residential areas occupied by the middle and upper classes receive more government attention because service delivery failures in these areas are rare.

Some may argue that government should pay more attention to the effective functioning of cities because more people are moving into them. The effective management and operation of basic services is a fundamental governance function that legitimises a regime, be it democratic or not (Covary, 2021). But government must bear the costs of the provision of services. This causes policy contestations between those who think government should provide services for free and those who think there should be service charges in place. The argument for service charges is based on the idea that cross-subsidisation is unsustainable because municipalities do not generate enough revenue to afford the operation and maintenance of infrastructure and other resources (Covary,

2021). Municipalities levy rate taxes and property taxes as sources of income; but payment of these charges is still unpopular in South Africa –to the extent that the culture of non-payment is endemic.

The decay of cities is due to deferred maintenance and capital investment in public infrastructure, to the extent of government inability to deal with shortfalls and increasing demand on public services (Covary, 2021). Businesses relocate from cities that do not provide effective services because they (businesses) have to spend more on alternative electricity sources, self-repair of roads, alternative sources of clean water, self-service of waste removal, and so forth. Such self-service increases the overhead costs of running a business. Paying service charges (rate taxes) and not receiving a service for them is therefore a cause of grievance in the business community. Businesses close or relocate, leaving the city with a larger unemployed population and abandoned buildings that remain unmaintained when not purchased or rented by other companies. This leads to the emergence of ghost towns, a phenomenon synonymous with urbicide. Likewise, residents who cannot afford service charges because they are unemployed continue to demand services from municipalities that cannot afford to serve them. In response to this, residents violently damage what remains of the public infrastructure, exacerbating the situation.

The problem of neglect is not due to socio-economic challenges alone. Corruption also leads to poor service delivery, because the money earmarked for serving the public goes to enrich those who hold public service and those close to them (Myit, 2000). Corruption creates both public and private sector dysfunction due to failures in infrastructure and dishonesty leading to poor law enforcement. Public officials take bribes to overlook irregular building construction, irregular occupation of property, and maladministration in relation to critical infrastructure – all at the expense of efficiency and innovation.

Corruption and inefficient governance are linked with urbicide. The UNODC (n.d) reported that, in 2018, a bridge collapsed in Genoa, killing at least 39 people, after which investigations revealed that a Mafia-controlled construction company appeared to have used weak cement in the building process. The destruction of the bridge was unintended but led to the destruction of arts of the city; the outcome was equal to a deliberate act like bombing in a war. Intentionally corrupt practices like the use of inferior materials in

construction work constitute negligence, as is overlooking this by regulatory bodies of government (Myit, 2000). The UNODC (n.d) also cited a report by Mexicans against Corruption and Impunity, which blamed corruption for the collapse of over 40 buildings during the September 2017 earthquake in Mexico City. The corruption believed to be linked with this took the form of the undermining of land-use and permit laws through bribery, cronyism and influence trading. This led to the presence of fundamentally unsafe buildings in the capital (UNODC, n.d). Corruption and political negligence in Brazil led to underspending on the preservation of heritage artefacts that got destroyed by fire because there were no financial resources for fire prevention. The fire in the Brazil national museum led to the loss, among other things, of works of art, mummies, one of the oldest examples of human remains in the Americas, dinosaur fossils, paintings and more (De Mattos, 2018).

2.4.4 Democracy enablement of urbicide

This study provides a conceptual explanation that the performance of democracy enables the phenomenon of urbicide. This does not mean that democracy inevitably leads to urbicide, but that democracy does not prevent urbicide absolutely. In other words, one can look at urbicide as one of the challenges of democracy, which if unresolved could disrupt the democratic consolidation effort. This explanation is the researcher's attempt to add another variable in the analysis of urbicide other than the traditional explanation of war. This attempt at theoretical expansion is important in seeking to understand the democratic trajectory in South Africa. Finding solutions to urbicide is important for social transformation and in helping to achieve the ideal of an inclusive society.

Mena (2018) explains urbicide as:

> The result of actions that wipe out systems of common life's meaningful places (squares, monuments, libraries – the agora), ravage the city's material basis (infrastructure, services – the "urbs"), exterminate society and citizenship (the civitas), and annihilate institutional marks of the government (privatisation, deregulation, centralisation – the "polis"). This type of murder arises in diverse situations fitting into three types: natural, anthropic, and symbolic.

The local government at the heart of processes that drive the murder of cities because since the transition to a democratic dispensation in South Africa, cities have headed towards oblivion due to decay. Their death is symptomatic of “drug dealing, common violence, closed neighbourhoods, and contempt for city’s self-government” (Mena, 2018). The soft version of urbicide Mena (2018) identified is the symbolic act of renaming cities and building high walls that kill communitarian life. By renaming cities and buildings one kills the past and signals a new domain. In the case of South Africa, renaming cities is a function of transformation that introduced a symbolic representation of indigenous figures who were excluded during the colonial era. While this replacement of colonial names with the names of new figures in the democratic era is nonviolent and an acceptable formal political process, it has been accompanied by the violent erasure of colonial figures, which is aptly treated as the destruction of the city –some sectors of society tearing down symbols in public spaces that they consider irrelevant. The renaming of cities is in the name of honouring fallen liberation fighters. Yet in practice, cities that bear their names are domains of corruption and squalor due to maladministration, revealing the vital role of poor levels of governance in destroying the city.

The advancement of democracy and public policy implementation in emerging democracies have changed. This resonates with the notion of exterminating society and citizenship. Because of the democratic opening, people who live under oppressive regimes and in countries with less infrastructure development leave their mother countries in search of better living conditions and civil liberties. Their arrival in receiving countries is not always smooth because they are blamed for criminality and other social problems. As external migrants, they find it hard to integrate and become victims of hate crimes. The problem of hate crimes against foreign nationals is not a phenomenon of emerging countries alone; this is also a current challenge in established democracies in Europe (Liebe & Schwitter, 2021). Nationalist sentiment is one of the challenges of the democratic opening that threatens the very national cohesion that the democratic method promotes. The influx of external migrants is also applicable in South Africa. After South Africa’s transition into a democracy in 1994, Landau (2005:1115) states, “South Africa's political liberalisation and strengthening regional ties have engendered new patterns of immigration and urbanisation, resulting in South African migrants and non-nationals converging on the streets of previously forbidden cities.” The South African case

epitomises the situation in which human movement leads to increased populations in cities over a short period.

Ravaging the city's material base occurs through the inability of governments to control illegal building construction along the peripheries of the city as people look for a cheaper place to stay that is closer to amenities in the city. Slums are often underserviced because they were not planned for, and their continued existence contributes to the destruction of public infrastructure, as some in Germany have claimed (Ferrufino, 2016). The dynamics of urban governance demonstrate that overpopulation increases spending on service delivery and infrastructure.

In South Africa, government created policies for improved service delivery and renewal of residential areas. But the implementation of these policies has been ineffective, leading to public protest in which people destroy public infrastructure to make a political statement. Maladministration, aided and abetted by corruption and financial incapacity, has left old government buildings unattended and unmaintained, public parks uncared for, and refuse collection an eyesore. From this perspective negligence and neglect have destroyed the city's image, itself, as argued earlier, a form of urbicide. It can therefore be argued that the occurrence of these events, due to the democratic opening, may have led to urbicide in the South African context.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has explained the idea of democracy and how it promotes inclusive societies that it is about governance that is effective and decisive in terms of law enforcement and that promotes individual liberty and equality. The participation of individuals and civil society in political processes is indispensable for a successful democracy. The notion of democracy as political behaviour enables one to make deductions about the destructive behaviour pervasive in a regime that deviates from democratic principles. Conceptually, the term "democratic opening" as used in this study belongs in the tradition of transitions, democratisation, and democratic consolidation, which makes up the totality of the democratic era. That democratic era is vulnerable to several challenges that make the management of democratic transition a complex endeavour for theorists and practising

politicians. A democratic dispensation needs careful implementation for the realisation of an inclusive society.

This chapter has also argued for a link between democracy and urbicide. It has identified democracy as a principle of government, highlighting the government's role inadvertently in linking democratic dispensation and urbicide. Attention has also been given to considering democracy as a type of behaviour – in an attempt to understand the behaviours of citizens within a democratic system and how their behaviours are linked to urbicide.

Government both national and local has played a major part in the unintended failures of the democratic dispensation. Post-apartheid, the people of South Africa had many expectations following the introduction of democracy as a political system in South Africa. Many promises were made by the newly elected government; but after nearly three decades of democratic rule most of these promises have not yet been met.

This chapter has also shown how the grievances of South African citizens have translated into acts of political protest that are mostly violent and why it is that this form of behaviour has been passed on from one generation to the next. Linking this behaviour to the democratic opening and by extension to urbicide has been the major preoccupation of this chapter.

Chapter 3: South Africa's democratic transition and the development of urbicide

3.1 Introduction

Having explained the logic of the democratic opening in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on instances in South Africa that are plausible explanations for urbicide. The chapter highlights the unintended consequences of the democratic opening that link with the destruction of cities. The central argument is not that democracy automatically leads to urbicide but that the other side of the coin bears the features of destruction if unattended. To this end, the selection of several cases helps clarify the scope and relevance of urbicide in the democratic era. The chapter therefore explores the politicisation and destruction of buildings and public institutions, including the impact that overpopulation has on the system. In this chapter there is an attempt to link the concept of grievance and destruction as one of the causes of political protest and conflict that are violent [to …] as well as identify such acts as part of the political culture practised by certain South African citizens.

3.2 The democratic opening in the South African context

The idea of the democratic opening is essential to understanding how features of urbicide find expression in the South African context. The idea of democratic opening comes from the preamble of the South African Constitution, which reads in part as follows:

> We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to
>
> - Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
> - Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;
> - Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and

- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations (RSA, 1996).

The significance of the above excerpt lies in the reference to healing the divisions of past and establishing (opening) a society based on democratic values, justice and human rights. The divisions of the past in South African society are about a political system that used racial classification as a principle for economic opportunity, urban planning, and the allocation of material resources though public services. This apartheid dispensation was a closed society with significant limitations on human rights. For example, non-white citizens did not have sufficient basic service provision like water and sanitation, while roads and houses in their communities were of a low standard. Black people, the majority of the population, did not have a right to participate in politics as candidates or voters, it was until the adoption of the 1909 act that constituted the Union of South Africa (Skovsholm, 1999: 237). The state security agency deemed political gatherings by black people as part of a plan to cause instability or overthrow the state (Thompson & Bundy, 2021). Education opportunities for black people were limited and the government decided what career options and further education avenues there were for them. South Africa was patently not a democracy during the apartheid regime (Smalley, 2013; Thompson & Bundy, 2021).

Black people stayed far from economic zones and in underdeveloped rural communities (Thompson & Bundy, 2021) as a result of which poverty was rife among the black population. There were limited opportunities for movement for black people, who had to report their intentions and traveling itineraries to the government (Pirie, 1992; Elkon, 2017). If the police found a black person in an unapproved area at an unapproved time, such a person would be arrested (Blakemore, 2021). It was a dehumanising time for black people, which led to appeals and protests for emancipation. During this time, there were virtually no attempts by black South Africans to flee the apartheid regime and become refugees or migrant workers in neighbouring African countries (MPI, 2021). South Africans stayed, and contended with the apartheid regime, trying to make a living despite the legal restrictions imposed on them. There were liberation fighters who took refuge and found material support in neighbouring African states when hunted down by apartheid

security agents (Dallywater et al., 2019); but this amounted to a few hundred South African freedom fighters and their families, who became refugees (SA History, 2022).

The transition to democracy through a negotiated settlement culminated in general elections, in which people previously denied the right to vote based on their race could finally cast a vote and contest public office (Southall, 1994; SA History, 2022). With the dawn of a new inclusive democratic regime, the previously disenfranchised came to experience new freedoms hardly imaginable during the apartheid era. This constitutes the democratic opening.

The first implication of the democratic opening was, following the constitutional declaration that South Africa belonged to all who live in it (Freedom Charter, 1995; Suttner, 2015). This meant that the new South African government relaxed its border control practices, including internal monitoring of undocumented foreign nationals. The number of migrant workers and refugees coming into South Africa increased significantly around 1994. The outcomes of the democratic transition included free housing, free basic education, and social grant services (RSA, 1996). Foreign migrant workers had come to South Africa as cheap labour in the mines during the apartheid era; but the practice of cheap labour did not end in 1994 (Njini, 2020). When the democratic transition took place, migrant workers brought their families to South Africa to settle permanently. This meant an increase in foreign nationals within South African residential communities, leading to exponential growth in the population. The democratic opening also brought about changes in terms of improved working conditions, where labour laws minimised chances of unfair dismissal of workers, set minimum wage standards, and introduced legal protections for paid leave (Harrison et al., 2022). However, the changes in labour law saw employers exploit gaps in legislation, which saw the hiring of foreign nationals for cheap labour exposed to unfair working conditions (Biney, 2016). Some farm workers were evicted from farms and replaced by foreign workers (PMG, 2016). Retrenchments increased, as employers claimed not to be able to afford wages. People seemingly had to be grateful for having bread on the table rather than complain. There were increasing calls for government to follow up on employers who had hired undocumented foreign nationals.

Below are more examples of the democratic opening and its impact on the political system in South Africa.

3.2.1 The democratic opening and basic services in South Africa

Since the apartheid dispensation the Bill of Rights has become the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. It enshrines the rights of all people and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality, and freedom (RSA, 1996). Chapter 2 section 9 of the Constitution specifies the grounds on which a person should not be discriminated against, grounds such as skin colour, gender, religion, and so forth. In addition, South Africa is party to international laws and agreements that commit it to respect and protect the rights of everyone within its borders, regardless of where the person originally comes from the case *Khosa v Minister of Social Development* (2006). The non-discrimination clause in public service provision also extended to a large number of people access to goods and services that the public sector had not served in South Africa before. This required massive financial and infrastructural inputs. Besides the very large population that received public services, irregular (illegal) migrants who crossed the South African borders hoping to access the free services that their governments could not afford exacerbated the problem. The South African state seemingly drafted these non-discriminatory policies without predicting the irregular migration that would play out if it did. This created huge complexity in governance.

Concerns about available resources to accommodate all the present and future needs of nationals and non-nationals alike has seen some sections of the population complaining that foreign nationals are overburdening the public service, arguing that foreign nationals pay bribes, fake identity documents and access free housing (while citizens remain without housing) or that they bribe and use fake identity documents to access social grant relief (AmaShabalala, 2022). These actions further strain the fiscal capacity to provide services. The constitutional protections in place have created an attractive environment for foreign nationals – something the South African government will seemingly have to grapple with for a long time –However, it is important to dispel the myth that foreign nationals are free riders tapping into South African resources like housing, jobs, education, and health (IFC, 2021). Nevertheless, the grievances of certain sectors of the South African population, if left unattended, could exacerbate anti-foreigner sentiment

and lead to further attacks on foreign nationals. In confirmation of the notion that external migration overwhelms government capacity to provide services, President Ramaphosa, commenting about US sanctions against Zimbabwe, claimed that forced migration into South Africa was placing a burden on public services – a burden South Africa and other Soutehrn African Development Community (SADC) countries could not bear without support from western countries (SABCNews, 2022). The then minister of health (Dr Aaron Motsoaledi) has also been on record suggesting that African countries should carry the burden and pay for the health costs of their citizens in South Africa (Mbhele, 2018; Frohlich & Lopez-Granados, 2019):

> "The weight that foreign nationals are bringing to the country has got nothing to do with xenophobia… it's a reality. Our hospitals are full. When a woman is pregnant and about to deliver a baby, you can't turn her away from the hospital and say you are a foreign national… you can't. And when they deliver a premature baby, you have got to keep them in hospital. When more and more come, you can't say the hospital is full now go away… they have to be admitted, we have got no option – and when they get admitted in large numbers, they cause overcrowding, infection control starts failing" (Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, 2018).

Identifying irregular migration as a burden on public services should not, however, create the impression that foreign nationals are to blame for the service delivery collapse that is unfolding in health and other sectors of society. Instead, highlighting government's role in the ineffective and inefficient management of its resources is equally important to underscore the collapse of public services.

This contestation between citizens and foreign nationals over who gets access to public resources is a critical component of managing public affairs. The National Uniform Fee Patient Schedule (2020) noted that foreign nationals do not know the rights they enjoy and the protections they have under the South African Constitution. In this, it bemoans that it is South African nationals who are ignorant. According to Chapter 2, section 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 everyone has the right to access to basic health services, which also applies in the case of emergency medical care. Because

these rights are listed as basic human rights under the Constitution, even undocumented foreign nationals are entitled to these rights and may in the case of other medical treatment be liable to pay fees for services (National Uniform Fee Patient Schedule, 2020). This makes the case that failing public services are the fault of inefficient governance and inability to apply Constitutional values.

Democratic theory locates active civil society as a key component in governance processes. The same applies in South Africa, where human rights lawyers work hard to prevent government efforts to evict irregular migrants who occupy buildings illegally or occupy land illegally without government giving them alternative lodging. Civil society activism protects foreign nationals in the same it protects citizens, advocating for basic rights enjoyed by all without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, or nationality.

The term “human” in “human rights” means that every human is entitled to these rights by default. The National Uniform Fee Patient Schedule (2020) explains what it means to be “non-national”: nationals are the people who were either born in a country or have become by law nationalised to the nation-state, while non-nationals are people born outside of the borders of a nation-state and do not possess any formal documentation of residence. It has been a challenging task to document the number of non-nationals in South Africa. Regardless of their national status, these people are still human and should according to the law be treated with dignity and respect. The right to be treated with dignity and respect is one of the reasons that liberation movements in South Africa fought against the apartheid regime. Hence during the democratic transition in 1994, government’s priority was to extend basic service provision to previously excluded communities. Opening spaces of participation in political decision-making processes and creating an open society that is welcoming of nationals and non-nationals alike is the hallmark of the democratic opening.

Foreign nationals have legal difficulties obtaining documents to access public services like education, health, housing and work in South Africa. Public opinion is therefore that foreign nationals take low-paying jobs, occupy informal settlements near urban centres, and are responsible for the hijacking of buildings in cities (Bongo, 2019). Informal settlements and highjacked buildings put a strain on municipal resources in the form of electricity theft, water theft, and increased crime. The exclusion of foreign nationals from

the public service is tantamount to urbicide in that it degrades society and citizenship, compromising the possibility of the commonality that democracy promises.

3.2.2 Democratic freedom of expression and association

The freedom of expression that the South African Constitution affords to everyone excludes propaganda for war, incitement of violence, or promotion of hatred based on race, ethnicity, gender, or religion (RSA, 1996). During the apartheid era it was not possible for one to express political opinions or criticise government without fear of reprisal. The nature of political commentary and satire in South Africa in the democratic era is such that one cannot believe how it is possible that people express defamatory opinions about political leaders without being punished. On one occasion the former president, Jacob Zuma, commented on the insults targeted at him, adding that if he were in another country those insulting him would have been arrested (Grootes, 2017). He also claimed that people should be grateful that South Africa promoted the human rights to express themselves and to protest. The same freedom of expression is available to non-nationals, who have protested victimisation by the police (HRW, 2020).

Another recent example of freedom of expression entailed non-nationals approaching the court to overturn government policy about exemption permits for Zimbabwean nationals who live in South Africa (DHA, 2021). The freedoms of expression that foreign nationals have practised have irked South African nationals, who have complained that non-nationals are ungrateful for challenging a sovereign state power to make laws in South Africa.

The democratic opening has allowed new forms of protest, to the extent that protest may be deemed to have gone too far. This was manifested in a situation in which Somali businesspeople became embroiled in a conflict with taxi operators in Gqeberha (Spence, 2021). In the altercation, busses and shops were set alight. This is the emerging politicisation of buildings and infrastructure that accompanied the democratic opening and lack of law enforcement in South Africa. Protests now lead to urban destruction, where people burn buildings and destroy roads and other critical infrastructure to express their discontent.

The right to protest relates to freedom of association (which means the right to associate with a cause, idea or organisation). Specific channels and procedures need to be followed to organise a legal protest in South Africa, under a law known as the Regulation of Gatherings Act (Malematja, 2022). This information is not taken into consideration by many South Africans who organise or participate in protests. Areas accordingly, a protest can be staged at any given time or period for any purpose without any form of legal procedure being followed. Protests have become part of South Africa's political culture, with good and bad results. The burning of tyres and buildings and other violent acts exemplify bad outcomes. Freedom of expression as a human right in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) has become a playground for law-breaking citizens and foreigners alike demonstrating the unforeseen consequences of a democratic opening that was initially intended for good.

3.2.3 The democratic opening for freedom of movement and the right to housing

The apartheid regime restricted black people's freedom of movement in a manner that negatively affected their social and economic prosperity. Yet ironically restricted movement was beneficial in controlling population dynamics in urban areas, with virtually no illegal informal settlements being established. City centres were characterised by lower levels of pollution and crime. Rather than practising the wanton incarceration of people for moving about freely, the post-apartheid regime in South Africa allows everyone the freedom of movement – freedom to enter, remain within, or leave the Republic (RSA, 1996). This means that people can exit their countries and come to South Africa and likewise return to their countries without coercion or restriction. Such freedom of movement is enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a basic right for everyone. Irrespective of this Universal Declaration, this right is enjoyed only by a few, by virtue of the need for one to present documents that enable cross-border movement. In 2018 African countries were preparing for freer movement on the strength of the African passport; this was to encourage regional integration (Mashile, 2017; Abebe, 2017).

Migration patterns in the Southern African region show that most migrants cross borders into South Africa, while other SADC countries serve as routes, transitions, and destination

areas within South Africa (Flahaux, 2016). There are many reasons for migration, ranging from fleeing home countries because of war or natural disasters, seeing family and friends, seeking employment, pursuing further studies, or conducting trade. Economic growth and development are the main drivers of freedom of movement (African Union, 2017). The AU (2017) has shown that the SADC region recorded about 7.5 million migrants, excluding irregular migrants, and not accounting for circular migration, with South Africa alone accounting for more than four million migrants, according to the United Nations (UN). Countries in Southern Africa favour bilateral and smaller multilateral arrangements through instruments such as Joint Permanent Commissions (JPCs) and memoranda of understanding (Maunganidze & Formica, 2018). This meant that the idea of freedom of movement was not fully in favour; but pressure was put on managing and reducing movement, which then caused the stagnation. There is evidence that overall free migration has never existed in SADC (Maunganidze & Formica, 2018). In theory, according to SADC member states have freedom of movement within the region without the need for a visa. Eighty percent of SADC citizens are either exempted from travelling with a visa or are granted one by other SADC member states on their arrival for short stays of up to 90 days (Maunganidze & Formica, 2018).

The reason South Africa relaxed conditions of movement in 1995 was based on the idea that decision-making regarding migrants during the apartheid era was too structured or authoritative in the eyes of other states and might have been at the expense of other states. South Africa saw the significance of creating solutions for the management of inward and outward movement of migrants into the country by signing the SADC protocol for movement in 2005. However, signing the protocol was a partial undertaking because there was no significant implementation of it. Migration does, however, benefit South Africa in terms of cheap labour in sectors such as mining, hospitality, and farming. South Africa was unofficially open to both legal and illegal migration, and those who had already made their way into South Africa had more chances of remaining rather than being deported (Tati, 2008). That South Africa has policies that enable the deportation of undocumented foreign nationals explains the restrictive management of the influx of migrants into the country. It is an approach described as “self-risks based”, seeking to keep “risks” outside national borders, thereby making it harder for low-skilled migrants to enter the country (Maunganidze & Formica, 2018). The detainment and deportation

policies, which are driven by anti-immigration rhetoric and domestic policies, stand in contrast to the country's immigration policy, which is more regionally aligned (Maunganidze & Formica, 2018).

With internal migration within South Africa's borders from one province to another, net migration from other provinces to Gauteng amounted to millions of people between 2006 and 2016, and is expected to double by 2021 with current residents beginning to feel the effects (Writer, 2018; StatsSA, 2021). South Africa is urbanising rapidly: 63 percent of South Africans are already living in urban areas and the statistics will rise to 71 percent by 2030; by 2050, eight in ten people will be living in urban areas, which will increase demand on basic infrastructure requirements (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2021). The evidence can be seen in the sprawling informal settlements around and close to high economic activity areas like Johannesburg. In 2011 there were about 3.3 million people living in informal settlements and temporary relocation areas (Maina et al., 2011). The South African government had aimed through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to provide basic housing as a mechanism to reduce the high number of people without proper dwellings, the legacy of apartheid. The RDP was itself the result of constitutional provisions that sought to redress the imbalances of the past. Section 26 of the South African Constitution mandates government to make reasonable efforts to ensure the right of adequate housing for everyone (RSA, 1996). Although government policy requires one to be a citizen to benefit from the housing scheme, there have been considerable complaints about foreign nationals procuring RDP houses – due to corruption by local politicians and public sector officials responsible for housing provision (Nqala, 2018). The South African Constitution prevents arbitrary eviction of people from their homes or occupied land without proper measures in place for resettlement. An unintended consequence of this is public perception that foreign nationals (whether documented or not) are responsible for highjacking buildings in city centres and for spawning crime hotspots and drug dens (Hübschle, 2916; BBC, 2021). The former mayor of the City of Johannesburg, Herman Mashaba, once argued that increased crime rates in the city were due to increased foreigner presence (Frohlich and Lopez-Granados, 2019). Linked with the problem of housing and criminal hotspots in urban areas is the issue of municipal authorities failing to implement government policies to provide housing to the most vulnerable and homeless. Municipal authorities do not do much, moreover, to

prevent illegal occupation of land or punish owners of abandoned buildings – thus creating opportunities for highjacking of buildings (Maina et al., 2011).

The City of Johannesburg, also known as “Jozi”, is the largest city in South Africa, with a population of 4,434,827 in the year 2007 (News24, 2013). Many South Africans and foreign nationals dream of working or living in the City of Johannesburg. Since the beginning of the 1980s many people have migrated to the city in search of employment. Back then, moving to the City of Johannesburg was an attractive proposition because of the mines. Today, because of high population rates in the City of Johannesburg, there is great pressure on the city, particularly in terms of the number of cars, people, and businesses especially in the Johannesburg central business district (CBD). The city is not properly cleaned or maintained. The possibility of future investment has diminished because of overpopulation; sometimes more than ten persons occupying one apartment (News24, 2013). The pavements of the CBD are congested, and it is not easy to walk on them as stalls (manned by street vendors) illegally occupy the pavements (News24, 2013).

The population of Johannesburg has grown by slightly over 2 percent per year since 1950. Where the population was then over 910,000, it is now six million (World Population Review, 2022). The population increase has seemingly aggravated xenophobia, 62 foreign nationals having been killed in violent attacks in 2008 (Frohlich and Lopez-Granados, 2019). Despite the national outcry against xenophobia, xenophobic the attacks flared up again in 2015; in these attacks seven people died in the cities of Johannesburg and Durban (Frohlich and Lopez-Granados, 2019).

During the xenophobic attacks in Johannesburg the following sentiment was expressed:

> *Kuzabakho uxolo mhla ugovernment lo usiphetheyo wathatha amaforeyna wawabeka lapho asuka khona.* [There will only be peace when the government in charge of us deports all the foreigners back to their countries] (Frohlich and Lopez-Granados, 2019).

However, some researchers argue that xenophobia has been a feature of South African society, in thought, word or deed,, since democratic independence in 1994 (Frohlich and

Lopez-Granados, 2019). Focusing on the politics of urbicide, this dissertation argues that what the international community sees as xenophobia is what is referred as “realist domestic politics” typical of policy-making that intersects with the issue of immigration. Policy positions along the international anti-immigration discourses that promote building “the walls” as in Germany, India, USA, Botswana, Hungary, Turkey, etc. (Vernon & Zimmermann, 2021). Indeed, the absence of physical border walls bolsters the idea of South Africa being an open society. During the xenophobic attacks in South Africa, someone argued that “in America, there were talks of building a tall wall to prevent foreigners from entering their country” (Frohlich and Lopez-Granados, 2019). The democratic opening and decision-making about resource allocation for housing and migration rests on the belief that “South Africa belongs to all who live in it” – a sentiment held dear by South African nationals and foreign nationals alike.

The Freedom Charter (1995) claimed that “We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people.” Lawyers for Human Rights published on their website in 2020 ‘“South Africa belongs to all who live in it,’ but stateless and undocumented children are still fighting to belong.” This statement leaves room for interpretation and may have caused confusion amongst the people. On the other hand, there are those who differ with the assertion. One view is that the statement made by the Freedom Charter “cannot be absolutely true” (News24, 2015). It is on ideological terms that others contend that “the white minority [in South Africa] knows that this statement [South Africa belongs to all who live in it] cannot and will never be true” (News24, 2015). Yet, the government under the leadership of the ANC has used the statement in fighting against oppression and the implementation of the new democracy, or what opponents have called “democrazy – the demonstration of craziness” (News24, 2015). Linked to the rejection of South Africa belonging to all who live in it, Lissoni et al., (2012) contended that while the Freedom Charter was published around 1955, the ANC was established in 1912 – making it curious as to what ideological premise informed the ANC land before 1955. The roots of the ANC lie in its representing the interests of the native people: the ANC was called the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) when it was initially established. As Lissoni *et al*. (2012) have said, “The word ‘Natives,’ I assume, refers to the descendants of the

aboriginal inhabitants of this land, and this movement was therefore founded to represent the interests of these natives, the interests of the oppressed" (Lissoni et al., 2012; News24, 2015).

Lisonni et al. (2012) make a connection between urbicide and the notion of South Africa belonging to all who live in it. They argue that South Africa belongs to "those who forcefully took it, because the word 'natives' was expunged" while the ANC still claimed to subscribe to the doctrine of African nationalism (Lissoni et al, 2012; News24, 2015). The removal of the word "natives" from the ANC has led to a South Africa that promotes the acceptance of colonial settlers and their residency in the post-apartheid era –residency in South Africa without the necessary redressing of the ills of the past.

Given the divided views about the integration of migrants in South African society, it is claimed by some that South Africans treat white migrants better than those who come from other African countries (Tati, 2008). However, there are some who feel that racial integration and social cohesion are not possible in South Africa. The notion of a democratic opening for racial integration and the building of a cosmopolitan society in South Africa contrasts with the view of those who believe that pan-African ideals should dominate. Pan-Africanists look to Chris Hani and Josias Madzunya, who "would have chosen death over promoting the idea of Africa belonging to All; instead, they would maintain Africa is for Africans" (News24, 2015). In other words, these proponents would prefer that white people return to Europe and leave Africa for Africans. Preaching the gospel of equality and harmony amongst the "westerners" and the original "natives" is therefore far-fetched and quite unrealistic (News24, 2015).

Suttner (2018) has expressed pessimism that "South Africa is bound by international conventions that commit it to treat refugees on a humane basis and it is clear that this is not being honoured" (Suttner, 2018). He opined that the problem began in that the commitment to refugees was made by South African authorities and not by the majority of South Africans. But that it is representatives who signed a charter to protect migrants is not relevant in the face of modern democratic societal obligation to accept agreements that their representatives endorse.

3.3 Urbicide in South Africa's democratic era

The previous section introduced the idea of democratic opening and its linkage to urbicide. The freedoms of movement, expression and association have enabled human movement that has led to high population density in some urban areas. Along with inefficient governance, this has had a negative impact on the quality of basic services that government provides. The democratic opening has, knowingly or unwittingly, promoted the coexistence of South African citizens and African migrants that has led to the destruction of towns. Deliberate destruction has been manifested through protests and corruption in the public sector, which has in turn issued in a lack of maintenance of critical infrastructure. Unintended destruction has happened through a lack of law enforcement (oversight) in the administration of public affairs. This section of the dissertation considers urbicide through to the lens of specific events in South Africa.

3.3.1 Urbicide induced by a culture of protest and corruption

The diversion of public resources by political office bearers and public officials for personal gain and to benefit friends has led to grievances and claims that polarise the community. The first claim is that those in government and their allies are well-off and detached from the plight of the common people. Since government is said to be non-responsive to the demands and needs of the people, undertaking destructive protest action forces a political response (Chiwarawara, 2021; De Juan & Wegner, 2019). Common grievances are about the level of services like water, electricity, and housing, which does not match the expectations inculcated in the public imagination through legislation and the promise of a better life for all made through the democratic opening (Lancaster, 2018; Bekker, 2022). The democratic promise was of equality, security and freedom of association, among other values. But Lancaster (2018) claims that labour protests are a leading reason for protest – followed by protests about crime prevention, then municipal service delivery, and then by other protests arising from policy and socio-economic issues that point to inefficient governance (protests about land, corruption, elections and foreigners). Violent protests are more common than peaceful protests, the majority of them occurring in more populated and urbanised provinces (Lancaster, 2018; Bekker, 2022). Bekker (2022) claims that South Africa's protests have an urban character, which correlates with the increased human movement to cities which the democratic

opening enabled. If the democratic opening had delivered on the promise of good governance, protests would have decreased. The trajectory of protests has increased, however, since 1997 (Bekker, 2022:232; Chipkin *et al*., 2022), suggesting a difficult phase of democratisation in a decade of a downward trajectory in policy governance outcomes. This has put a question mark over the democratic project.

There is a link between protest action and destructive urbicide, in which protesters signal their clear intention to collapse and destroy certain objects and systems (Mavunga, 2019:90). Gamedze (2020) illustrates the desire for destruction thus:

> I think that I and many others involved with the RhodesMustFall (RMF) movement at the University of Cape Town – and beyond – might have preferred, on the 9th of April 2015, to see: A. cecil's head explode, blast-site of bronze shards glistening in the afternoon sun, on the sprawling, clambering, continually inaccessible grounds of the university's main campus, or to watch him. B. corrode; to see him melt into chemical soup, nauseating smugness fallen to dusty, pungent metallic liquid, or to gather as he was. C. beheaded, the ugly likeness becoming a circulating prize, moving ritualistically for display between comrades' res and digs rooms. But the motherfucker just got *airlifted*.

In the process of protests, vehicles, works of art, buildings, humans and traffic flow are targeted (Alexander et al., 2018). Twenty-two years after the 1994 democratic transition, student protest against colonial symbolism on university campuses saw the vandalism of a 112-year-old statue of Queen Victoria, which, located outside the Port Elizabeth City library, was referred to as the last colonial or apartheid monument (Marschall, 2017). The statue was splashed with green paint. Local officials considered this an illegal act and "absolutely disgraceful" (Smith, 2015). Minority groups in South African society then raised concerns that debates about the country's heritage could get out of control (Breakfast et al, 2018). A popular Afrikaans singer then decided to chain herself to the Queen Victoria statue (Smith, 2015). These attacks began when a student from the University of Cape Town decided to throw a bucket full of what was said to be human excrement onto a statue of Cecil John Rhodes, a British colonist. The statue had been on the campus since 1934 (Smith, 2015). "Rhodes must fall" was the name given to the

campaign following the act by the student. Ensuing student protest led to the removal of the statue, this to the cheers, ululation and celebrations of young people, who further threw red paint onto the statue and adorned it with placards that read “more than just a statue” (Smith, 2015). National newspapers, mainstream political parties and television shows began to talk about the role and place of apartheid colonialist symbols in a post-apartheid dispensation. This had gone beyond a group of student unions. At the University of KwaZulu-Natal, a King George the Sixth statue was vandalised, and then an Anglo-Boer War memorial was torn down by protesters in the City of Port Elizabeth (Smith, 2015). There was a sense that young people had started questioning the benefits of the democratic opening (Booysen, 2014). Some young people also made claims that political leaders like Nelson Mandela had “sold out” and betrayed the liberation ideal by accepting the negotiated settlement (Hasane, 2013; Youngster, 2012). One of the reasons for the harsh criticism by the youth was high youth unemployment rates and their concomitant inability to pay university tuition fees.

The Rhodes Must Fall movement morphed into Fees Must Fall as students at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) embarked on protests demanding free education and the removal of the apartheid legacy from the city (Naik, 2021; Mavunga, 2019). In the name of “decolonis[ing] education”, students then tried to remove a gold-mining statue located outside the City of Johannesburg (Naik, 2021). The vandalised miner’s monument paid tribute to the origins of Johannesburg’s mining industry, having been erected in 1964. It was claimed that the statue was first set alight, as it had ropes wrapped around it, on the necks of the men immortalised in the statue, and that there had been many attempts to bring the statue down. The statue was then finally set ablaze by a student who poured flammable liquid on it. The statue was not, however, destroyed by the blaze as police officers quickly dispersed the crowed (Naik, 2021).

In 2021, schools were vandalised during the looting protests (McCain, 2021; Nair, 2021). Twenty-two schools, a police station and a post office were burnt down in service delivery protests in Limpopo province (Maseko, 2016). Schools were also destroyed in service delivery protests in the Northern Cape Province (Al Jazeera English, 2012). Because of this, students could not attend school (Buccus, 2016). In the same year an administrative building, a computer laboratory and a library were torched by students on the North West

University's Mahikeng campus. This occurred just after the violent protests of the student movement #FeesMustFall (Monama, 2016).

The burning and destruction of infrastructure during social protests is a common trend, raising concerns from the 2012-2014 period (SANews, 2014). In recent developments – in what is likely to be recorded in post-apartheid history books – violent looting followed the imprisonment of South Africa's former president, Jacob Zuma. Violent acts of destruction to critical infrastructure and shopping malls and loss of human life occurred (AfricaNews, 2021). These violent acts occurred in two provinces - KwaZulu-Natal, the homeland of the former president and the majority faction of the ANC; and Gauteng, the economic heartland of the country (Reuters, 2021). According to Burke (2021), "By July 16, more than 800 retail stores and shopping malls had been looted and restaurants and liquor stores were ransacked, ATMs were broken into, and clothing stores were destroyed. Burke (2021) went on to say that stolen and damaged goods had been estimated at $400 million (in stolen goods) and $1 billion in total. Looters burned factories and business infrastructure and blocked main highways with the aid of burned-out trucks and cars (BBC, 2021). The looters also attacked communication buildings and chemical plants and railways (Burke, 2021), as well as medical facilities such as COVID-19 vaccination sites, which reported being destroyed and looted (BBC, 2021). Ambulances and blood banks were also attacked. These attacks were viewed as an attempt to destroy the 1994 established democracy: "But, while it was severe, it was a symptom of a past the country has yet to face, not a future it did not see coming" (Sikhakhane, 2021). The urbicide manifested in these acts was not so much political demonstration as an expression of the anger and frustrations felt by South Africans living in poverty, which was worsened by the global outbreak of COVID-19 (Teresi, 2021). Even though the looting was undertaken mostly by the poor, it was led by democratic elites. The intentional destruction of cities confirms that this was urbicide. After the looting, people did not have access to basic amenities like shopping and ATM facilities (Daniel, 2021). Some shops have yet to reopen. According to the ABC News station the looting continued for about one week.

> The violence has become generalised anger over the inequalities that persist 27 years after the end of apartheid rule in South Africa. The

> uncontrollable situation had highlighted the huge problems of unattended expectations by government shortly after the end of white supremacy in 1994. There has been a huge crash in the economy due to what is considered Africa's worst COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to the authorities creating restrictions to be imposed on local businesses (Reuters, 2021).

The new form of conflict that occurred in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng had no precedents in terms of the typical patterns of conflict in South Africa. As some were busy looting, others began to destroy infrastructure, which then led to the assault on local businesses. Bullets and weapons were stolen from some police stations (Wicks, 2021; Gibson, 2021).

While the poor who were looting for food did so out of desperation (Nhlapo, 2021), signs of urbicide were seen in the burning of trucks, warehouses, factories, and destruction of electricity installations (PMG, 2021). That urbicide destroys quality of life was borne out in the destruction of warehouses and trucks leading to delays in the delivery of goods. Included in the destruction was the burning of electricity installations and factories (Sefako-Musi, 2021). The majority of South Africans did not support the looting, which suggests that the violent acts were the initiative of a select group, an uprising of the elites and not the people (Hartley et al., 2021). Hence the official statement by government that the destruction was an attempt at insurrection (SAnews, 2021). The main reason for the uprising appears to have been poverty, aggravated by the COVID-19 lockdown (Sikhakhane, 2021).

Observers of the violent and destructive acts of protest have appealed that reason, and not savagery, should form the conscience of a democratic society (Mavunga, 2019:91). The concern is that destructive political behaviour erodes the humanity of others, which is inconsistent with the value of human dignity (Jansen, 2015). Mavunga (2019) also noted the possibility of setting up organised group relations in society, which erodes a sense of community and propagates inequality. This is where ethnic and xenophobic sentiments take root. An eroded sense of community has also caused tensions between communities and authorities. Antagonism is not an ideal normative model for thriving

democratic societies. What the discussion in this section shows is that a culture of protest can threaten democracy where quality of governance is poor.

3.3.1.1 Socialisation into the politics of urbicide

This chapter has alluded to how grievances can inspire political protests, the political process being connected to recurring political protests by South African citizens as part of the historical landscape of the political process in South Africa. South Africans have historically used violent protest to demonstrate their grievances; violent protests were directed against the apartheid government. This section of the chapter attempts to analyse modern-day protests and link them to a political culture of destruction.

Gamedze (2020) simplifies this point by showing that destruction is inherently a socialised phenomenon:

> The physical destruction of, or intervention in, coloniality's life is always enacted with significantly varying modes of style, tone, embodiment and performance, all formal and political choices that together can be regarded as an overall "aesthetic". When read in terms of their aesthetics, modes of destruction of colonial images and objects, and symbolic choices relating to the manner in which resistance is expressed by decolonisation movements, may take on a variety of political meanings that are less evident in readings of protest that centralise tangible outcomes. The act of destruction or insurgency should be seen as an act, visibilising through its aesthetic choices the connection between contemporary experiences of oppression (as patriarchy, racism, classism) and inherited historical traumas of the colonial project, in slavery, land theft, genocide, and so on. Our collaborative efforts then, in annihilations of white supremacy, are inevitably as aesthetic practitioners, illustrating expressions of resistance (better guerrilla facing than seated at the table) that further enunciate or diminish the meaning around which our protests are based.

What Gamedze espouses is that the intent to annihilate is a deliberate political tool. Such protests as Fees Must Fall are not new: students in the pre-democratic era protested in the streets of Soweto (the Soweto uprising), many students being shot for protesting against the apartheid education system (SA History, 2021); and people protesting against the pass laws were massacred in the township of Sharpeville, near Vereeniging the Sharpeville massacre (SA History, 2021).

Unrestricted political expression and practices that embrace destruction imply the need to reform political socialisation programmes to focus on engendering more constructive political behaviour – especially given that grievances about inefficient governance are wide-spread and not restricted to small sections of society. In the absence of such reform, fatalist politics are likely to take root, fuelled by judgments that "the introduction of formal democracy in 1994 was a cosmetic intervention which both obfuscated and deepened the material inequalities of South African life through the implementation of deeply damaging neoliberal policies that arrived with the election of the African National Congress" (Gamedze, 2020:57).

Notions that democracy does not work for the poor and that the governance process deepens material inequalities present a risk of even greater destruction, as recently experienced in South Africa (Tracey-Temba, 2018). The protest method of targeting strategic infrastructure played out in national looting never seen before in the democratic South Africa. The political idea of annihilation may deepen if social grievances are not addressed. The looting that brought South African economic processes to a standstill is comparable to campaigns to overthrow governments in fragile states.

Case studies in which South African residents have expressed their grievances through political violent protest with reference to political protest as part of existing political culture in South Africa, are discussed below.

3.3.2 Urbicide as conflict against foreign nationals in South African cities

That urbicide is part of genocidal conflict has beendocumented (see Hariri, 2020; DiNapoli, 2019). Brutal conflict that leads to the killing of people together with the

destruction of buildings and property bears the marks of urbicide in South Africa. One of the fundamental political conflicts in South Africa is between foreign nationals and native citizens (Tracey-Temba, 2018).

In a 2020 public demonstration with the title #PutSouthAfricansFirst, a group of pupils marched to Church Square in Pretoria and from there straight to the Nigerian embassy, protesting against human trafficking and undocumented foreign nationals in South Africa (Bornman, 2020). An internal conflict around immigration is playing out between working-class South African nationals and foreign nationals because of competition for similar jobs, specifically in the lower skilled sectors, in what is considered Africa's most industrialised economy (Chabane, 2021). For many years South Africa has attracted skilled migrants looking for better job opportunities – not only from neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Mozambique but farther afield the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Malawi. Asala (2020) has observed that:

> Those foreign nationals who have managed to gain successful employment or who are business owners are often at the hands of constant harassment, violence and discrimination from the South African nationals as well as the South African authorities. There is a rampant xenophobic sentiment that sees foreigners often fall victim to being scapegoats due to economic insecurity in a highly unequal society where unemployment is over 30%.

Xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals have led to loss of life. Law enforcement officials are often complicit in this, while discrimination and abuse are common in their interactions with foreign nationals (HRW, 2021; Maina et al., 2011; Ukwandu, 2017). Similar conflict occurs amongst meter taxi operators, where both sides (South African nationals and foreign nationals) attack one another and set one anothers' cars alight as they fight for routes (Mthethwa, 2021).

Mkhatshwa and Sehume (2017) maintain that "South Africa is a troubled, wounded society", evident in the low estimation of public property. They refer to "irrational actions" during public protests, where people burn municipal offices and clinics and barricade or destroy roads. Mkhatshwa and Sehume also made the connection between urbicide in

public protest and the democratic opening. They explain that “the democratic dispensation honeymoon period and rainbow nation relatively held sway,” no indents of public protest leading to destruction of buildings and infrastructure having occurred. However, the failure by public leaders to deliver expected services has fuelled the anger of the masses – anger whose outlet is violent destruction. The anger of the masses is fuelled by endemic corruption in the public sector and by political leaders who attribute poor governance to apartheid. People are violated, therefore, by their public leaders – who were freedom fighters the apartheid era and were in (unlegislated) opposition to the apartheid regime. One such leader was Jacob Zuma, whose reign as president lasted from 2009 to 2018. By 2018 President Jacob Zuma had been accused of corruption and was ousted and replaced by President Cyril Ramaphosa. Mr Zuma is being indicted for corruption involving an arms deal estimated at $5 billion dating back to the 1990s (Crawford-Browne, 2004). He refused to cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture on the grounds that the inquiry had targeted him, no matter what evidence he gave (Charles, 2021). When instructed to appear before the commission, Mr Zuma refused to provide evidence to the Constitutional Court as per a Court order; for his refusal to obey the Court order he was sentenced to 15 months’ imprisonment (BBC, 2021; Reuters, 2021). Despite the Court judgment, Jacob Zuma’s supporters continue to believe that the allegations against him are false and constitute a witch hunt by his political opponents (Burke, 2021).

3.3.3 Urbicide in poor service delivery and neglect of living spaces

Marschall (2017) claims that “Political discontent is not necessarily expressed in overt acts of ideologically motivated vandalism, but can manifest itself equally in acts of neglect, disrespect, silence, and disengagement.” (It is possible that public officials may not overtly express their political anger by destroying white communities or buildings that represent apartheid heritage; but they can advance their political discontent about apartheid and white beneficiaries through neglect or disrespect, through providing inferior services, through silence by not responding to calls for broken down public infrastructure to be repaired, or through disengagement by failing to enforce by-laws and by withholding public services. On the other hand, such acts of neglect, disrespect, silence, and disengagement are symptoms of systemic failure given contending priorities and public

sector corruption. Nonetheless, these acts are the foundation and source of urbicide in modern South African cities, poor services slowly defacing buildings and eroding cities.

3.3.3.1 Government's role in neglecting living spaces

A Bureau for Economic Research (Business Tech, 2021; BER, 2022) report on a study on the state of South Africa's municipalities highlights why so many towns and cities fail in the delivery of public services. Some of the biggest challenges identified that municipalities face are discussed below:

3.3.3.1.1 Lack of skills

The main reasons for the poor performance of local government are is incompetency and a shortage of skills, which leads to incapacity. According to the BER, "Across all local municipalities and metros, 16.4 percent of positions were vacant in 2019, 1.5 percentage points more than was the case in 2018" (Business Tech, 2021). The BER (2022) found that 24 percent of the positions in the intermediate city municipalities in short ICMs were vacant in 2019. One out of five positions in many local municipalities was vacant, but specifically at the level of section 56 managers a quarter of positions across metros and intermediate city municipalities were vacant (Business Tech, 2021).

3.3.3.1.2 Migration

According to the BER (2022) the delivery of services can be impacted significantly by migration patterns. It is acknowledged that urbanisation provides households with better access to services and employment, but on the down side it does present some challenges to urban development. Because of urban in-migration cities have to provide services, purchase more land and build more houses, all of which is time-consuming (Business Tech, 2021). On the other hand out-migration presents its own set of problems for rural (local) municipalities. Migrants are usually more entrepreneurial or economically active and are usually in search of education, job opportunities and better wages or food and housing that are affordable. This can lead to rural municipalities losing the essential part of their tax base (BER, 2022).

3.3.3.1.3 Lack of spending

One of the greatest causes of municipal failure in South Africa is low levels of capital spending (Business Tech, 2021; BER, 2022). The total capital expenditure by municipalities in 2019 had not improved since 2010, despite the increase in capital spending between 2005 and 2009. According to the BER (2020) continuous low capital spending has affected municipalities' ability to broaden the availability of housing, water andelectricity, this can be linked to the maintained spending of available funds (Business Tech, 2021; BER, 2022).

3.3.3.1.4 Poor fiscal management

Municipal audit processes do not necessarily improve service delivery in the country (BER, 2022). Municipalities are clearly in need of annual audits as the total expenditure budget for the years 2019 and 2020 was close to R719 million. Because of the ineffective management of audits, however, the outcomes of these audits do not lead to change (Business Tech, 2021). "Like the inefficient SCM process, the focus on audit compliance rather than on municipal performance has unintended consequences" (Business Tech, 2021). As a result, employees can be liable personally for irregularities that are material or non-material and be forced to refund irregular expenditure from their salaries (Business Tech, 2021). This has led to wasted management time allocated to dealing with and responding to irregularities as well as to attempts to recover funds (BER, 2022). "In addition, to avoid the risk of expenditure that might be classified as fruitless and wasteful, managers focus only on clearly defined, narrow mandates as it has become too complex to work with other spheres of government or non-state actors (Business Tech, 2021; BER, 2022).

3.3.3.1.5 Revenue management

With regard to revenue, the BER (2022) states that one of the biggest causes of financial distress for local government, which affects the economic sustainability of municipalities, is poor revenue management. Many municipalities therefore find it difficult to finance their operations fully and to maintain them (Business Tech, 2021). The BER (2022) reports that out of 257 municipalities, only 199 submitted their audits in time to be included in the Auditor-General's (AG's) Consolidation Report 2019-2020. Out of the 199 municipalities that submitted their audits, only 38 were deemed to be in a good financial state. The

conclusion was that the remaining 98 municipalities (excluding the 58 that did not submit on time) had unsatisfactory audit results, which required strong intervention (Business Tech, 2021). Irregular, fruitless and unauthorised expenditure is also a problem; R26 billion was allocated to irregular, fruitless and wasteful, and unauthorised expenditure in the 2019 and 2020 financial years, which raised severe concerns across multiple municipalities (Business Tech, 2021). “Irregular, fruitless and unauthorised expenditure seems to be a particularly large problem in intermediate city municipalities and other local municipalities”, states the BER (2022). The BER (2022) found that metro municipalities were better off in terms of reducing fruitless and unauthorised expenditure, but still struggled to reduce the high levels of irregular expenditure (Business Tech, 2021).

3.3.3.1.6 Lack of repairs and maintenance

According to the BER (2022) a lack of sufficient spending on repairs and maintenance is coupled with underspending of infrastructure grants. “Repairs and maintenance of municipal assets are crucial to prevent supply interruptions and breakdowns”, says the BER (2022) report. Treasury data indicates severe underspending on repairs and maintenance, the worst culprits being the intermediate city municipalities and other local municipalities (Business Tech, 2021). This is said to result in further technical losses in areas such as the delivery of water and electricity. The BER (2022) concludes that “The deterioration of infrastructure further constrains cash flow and the financial viability of municipalities.”

3.3.3.2 The deterioration and decay of buildings

Figure 1 below shows a building stained by fire smoke, with broken windows. This is a typical building hijacked by foreign nationals so as to be closer to work or sell in the streets. Often the occupation of these buildings is illegal; they are notorious for hiding criminals (Magubane, 2021). Yet, these buildings present a constitutional dilemma: government cannot easily evict tenants from such illegal and unsafe structures (Strydom and Viljoen, 2014). Such buildings are an eye-sore in cities; they increase the demand for public services and their occupation levels are far higher than the services provided can cope with. Nor do occupants pay for services.

Source: De Addsure (2018)

Figure 1: Defaced and delapidated buidlings

According to Conradie (2020), some of the reasons for inner-city decay and other problems associated with buildings include the following:

> Issues such as poor political leadership, poor municipal ship such as councilors and managers, and political stability has led to a lack of vision. Serious issues such as the failure of proper external stakeholder and internal municipal collaboration. Lack of proper municipal oversight and uncontrolled corrupt activities. The ineffectiveness as well as the uncoordinated municipal by-law enforcement which also happen to be incoherent. The lack of proper legal and fiscal disciplinary sanctions for both the ill-disciplined and members of the community who decay the city by dumping trash as they please as well as the transgressor of buildings with problems. The lack of effective and efficient municipal service delivery. The lack of border control which has resulted in undocumented immigrants. And due to corruption and nepotism a lack of knowledge and expertise in the municipal departments.

Hart (2019) speaks about the “orchestrated move to allow buildings to deteriorate”, further accusing the Mandela Bay Metro for “allowing the wanton destruction and lack of care of heritage buildings to continue,” failing to implement by-laws or national laws that promote

the maintenance of buildings or confiscate abandoned buildings. The result of neglected and abandoned buildings is that they attract vagrants and drug users and become crime zones. Munro (2018) speaks about the state of a heritage building in Parktown that showed “abuse, neglect, dereliction and decay”, arguing that neglect of building had led to its eventual demolition, a sign of a failed state. The difficulty that government has when evicting illegal occupants of derelict buildings is also a result of the democratic opening. It is possible that this legal dilemma is caused by policy-makers who want to avoid a repeat of the arbitrary evictions that were a common practice under the apartheid regime. The demand that government relocate illegal occupants of derelict buildings to alternative residential places is an added complication because there is shortage of land to allocate. This phenomenon of the hijacking of buildings returns South Africa a state in which while some work and build, others plunder and rob (Pijoos, 2022).

3.3.3.3 Waste management failure

Figure 2 below shows the littering and pollution that is an emerging trend of urbicide. The waste destroys the aesthetic value of the city and takes away the human dignity connected with the living environment. The relaxation of laws that came with the democratic opening has engendered the habit of negligence, a core aspect of urbicide. To this end, local politicians, political parties and civil society groups have embraced a campaign of clean-ups in an effort to restore the image of the city (Singh, 2022; Lee-Jacobs, 2022; SAGoodnews, 2022). However, clean-up campaigns at could be an inappropriate response to something that is systematic. Instead, municipalities could implement by-laws that reduce the pollution generated by street vendors and businesses in the city, including ensuring regular domestic waste collection. Public clean-up campaigns are arguably a public relations exercises with limited penetration, whereas culture change and law enforcement would be more sustainable.

Source: Dlamini (2021)

Figure 2: Illegal dumping in city centres

According to section 152 subsection 1 (b) the Constitution of the Republic South Africa (1996), municipalities are required to undertake refuse removal and manage waste dumps. Over the years waste has increased and with it pressure on municipalities to provide proper service delivery. Waste management infrastructure has also deteriorated, due to population growth, income growth and urbanisation (Dlamini et al., 2018). Issues such as a lack of resources, proper enforcement of rules and regulations, and lack of financial resources have exacerbated the challenges currently faced many municipalities. Many municipalities struggle with the management of basic waste services (DEA, 2018). Statistics South Africa found that in 2018 only 12 million households received proper refuse removal services while 313,478 households in South Africa did not have their refuse removed by their municipalities (StatsSA, 2018) Rodseth et al. (2020) claim that large amounts of waste are dumped illegally: while the average household in South Africa generates a total of 12.7 million tonnes of waste per annum, in the year 2020 only about 3.6 million tonnes of waste was collected.

The main cause of inefficient waste management by municipalities is reliance on landfilling (Operation Phakisa, 2019). In 2018 landfills were filled with about 70 percent of South Africa's waste. This occurred because of the lack of proper implementation of the National Waste Management Strategy (DEA, 2011). It is recommended that waste be recycled, which would protect the environment while enhancing the social and economic

development of the country (Operation Phakisa, 2019). Multiple municipalities, moreover, are claimed to have been running out of landfill space to dispose of the country's waste, for which there seems to be no alternative solution (DEA, 2018). A case in point is the Municipality of Newcastle, where the municipality has effectively run out of landfill space, since its only landfill was closed in 2009 (DEA, 2018). Local government inability to provide waste removal services, prevent hijacking of buildings, and prevent overpopulation of houses and apartments. Is evidence of a failed state?

3.4 Summary

The chapter has explored the notion of urbicide in the South African context, including the connection between urbicide and the democratic opening. The democratic opening created high public expectations of service delivery that would redress the injustices of the apartheid regime. The movement of people internally in South Africa and into South Africa from outside has increased the burden on public infrastructure and the demand for services. As a result, there is a struggle for resources between foreign nationals and South African citizens, leading to costly injury to human life and property. Bekker (2022:227) summarises this as follows:

> South Africa is a land of protest. Daily, millions of South Africans awake to a country they experience as fundamentally unjust, evidenced by their own hardship, landlessness and unemployment or, for those employed, by the exploitative nature of jobs that labour in the humiliating face of proximate wealth in a highly unequal society. It is in this context that thousands take to the streets, arguably moved by a sense of injustice.

The right of freedom of speech has also allowed unprecedented assaults on public infrastructure in the name of expressing anger and demanding services. The fallist movement has also revealed the need for new terms of engagement with a generation that has grown disillusioned with the democratic project. The democratic opening created many benefits for many people; but it has had a range of negative effects. While the democratic opening may have issued in a new wave of urbicide, further analysis of this proposition is needed.

Chapter 4: Shaping public spaces for democratic governance and diversity

4.1 Introduction

When conducting research on an important topic, it is one thing to provide a theoretical framework for the research, but it is another thing to provide practical evidence. A theoretical framework is concerned primarily with theories or hypotheses – an idea of what could or might happen rather than what does or will happen. This research study hypothesised the idea that the democratic opening – the transition to democracy in South Africa in 1994 – has led to a new wave of urbicide in the country.

Unlike previous studies, the current study analyses the linkages between urbicide and democratisation in South Africa. Urbicide offers an interesting lens through which to view socio-economic issues such as the neglect of buildings and policy implementation failures. This is an exploratory study in which the researcher has identified certain features of urbicide which further research will need to probe more deeply. Because there has not yet been any historical study of this kind, it became clear in the later stages of the research that the evidence available was insufficient to support the stated hypothesis. In the previous chapter certain recent events were discussed which could support asthe hypothesis underpinning this study. The current chapter attempts to marry these events with the aid of theory in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations for further research and practical action to arrest the march of urbicide in South Africa. .

4.2 Research method considerations

Predetermined themes for data analysis like democracy and city destruction, democracy and neglect of cities, democracy and overpopulation, overpopulation and city destruction, overpopulation and service delivery, protest and service delivery, and protest and city destruction have been used in this study to interpret the politics of urbicide in South Africa's democratic era. These themes are helpful in identifying and understanding narratives about the meaning(s) of democracy, evaluations of democratic performance, and the sentiments behind violent protest. The rationale for analysing urbicide is motivated by the scant use of the concept in the scholarship of South African politics and

in the administration of public affairs. Understanding the political dimension of urbicide helps one to imagine the democratic project anew, to understand the severity of the threat of annihilation on the consolidation of democratic values.

Figure 3 summarises the themes identified for data analysis. It is on the basis of these themes that the researcher selected and omitted sources when drafting the dissertation. The themes are significant in that they are short representations of the problem statement, embodying the politics of urbicide in South Africa's democratic era. They are presented within a succinct theoretical framework, showing the linkages that support the conceptual statement presented at the outset of the dissertation.

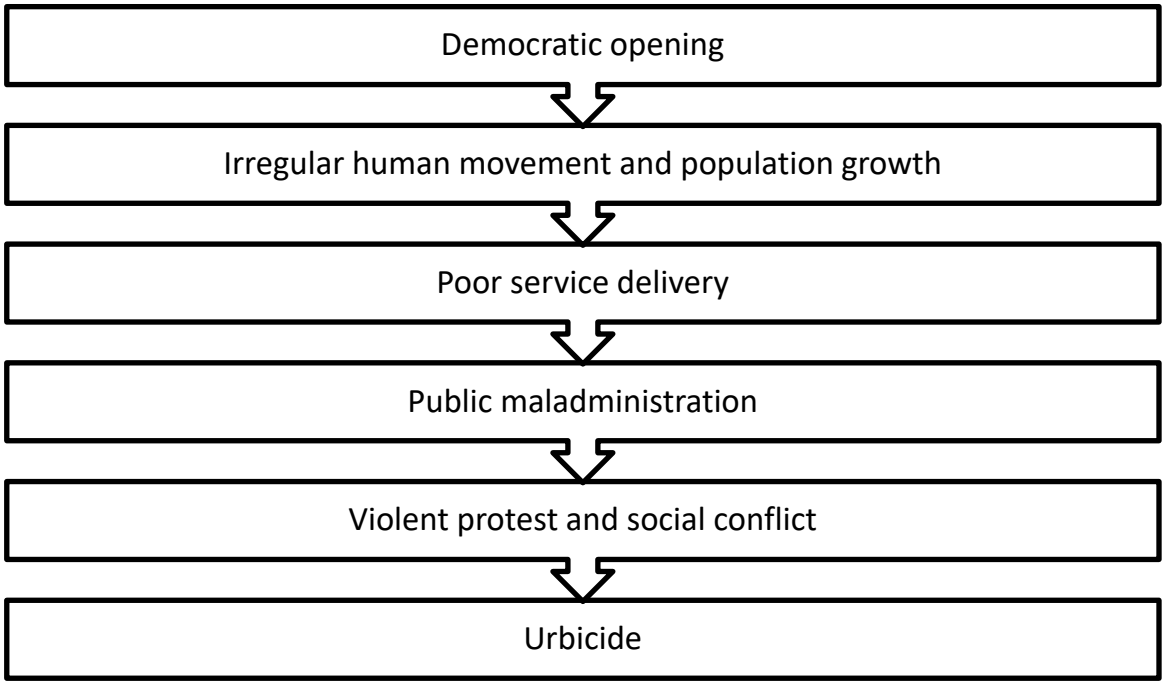

Figure 3: The politics of urbicide in South Africa' democratic era (author's construction)

The methodology deployed in this study took the form of document review – resources like AJOL, ScienceDirect, the ISS website, Google Scholar, Twitter, YouTube, Academia.edu, ResearchGate, the NWU library, and news publications being used to access journal articles, books, and institutional reports about the destruction of cities, service delivery, and the democratic opening. The data sources are important for confirming arguments and observations across documents (triangulation). This process of confirmation improves the reliability of the study by showing different perspectives that present similar conclusions about phenomena. A key finding of the study is that

unintended urbicide occurs through ineffective municipal service delivery and administration of public affairs.

The qualitative study design has relied on several incidents that point to the presence of urbicide. The spread of destructive politics across South Africa shows that urbicide is no longer an emerging phenomenon but that it has taken root in society, to the extent that, without adequate measures to stop it in its tracks, it is ripe for exploitation by political practitioners to undo what democratic consolidation there has been. The interpretive approach used has been important in demonstrating the complexity of urban politics and the conceptual scope of urbicide in South Africa. Destructive protest, xenophobia and service delivery are topics for studies on their own. Blending them in the service of exploring the conceptual foundations of urbicide has presented a unique challenge – that of adapting an analytical tool common in European and Middle Eastern political science scholarship for use in the South African context, where there is very little literature on its application.

4.3 Findings and discussion

This section seeks to connect the stated research questions about the democratic opening and urbicide to real-life observations of the causes and effects of urbicide in South Africa.

4.3.1 Urbicide and grievance (political culture, conflict and protest)

In relation to the linkages between democracy, grievance and urbicide the study has concluded, in the first instance, that grievance is indeed the basis of many of the protests discussed in the previous chapter. The study relied on the definition of grievance by Nleya et al. (2011) to provide an understanding of the concept. Nleya et al (2011) point out that grievance results from a build-up of anger associated with material conditions (services, promises) not being met. Almost three decades since the transition to a democratic dispensation South African’s are still complaining about lack of service delivery, lack of law enforcement and government maladministration, coupled with the issues associated with overpopulation in cities. Built-up grievances have led to revolt, manifested in violent political protest throughout the country.

Second, the study focused on different types of grievance to try to pinpoint exactly which grievances lie behind urbicide. Two types of grievances were identified: grievance-based theory; and political process theory. The first theorises that “more grievance results in protests” and the second that protests arise from the country’s history. Both explanations, the study found, show that long-standing public concerns about service delivery remain unresolved because of ineffective governance, which leads to violent protest. Grievance leads to further protest; and over time protests become more violent. Based in political process theory, political protest is not new: it is present in the Constitution; and it was practised before the Constitution was promulgated. The issue in question is the socialisation of violent protest within the historical landscape.

Reflection on political culture as a focal point has revealed that historical landscape can be used to explain violent protest in South Africa. The research considered whether acts like protests can be passed on or socialised from one generation to the next. The identification of grievance, corruption and protest as part of South African political culture allowed the researcher to link the political culture to urbicide. Events such as the Soweto uprising and the Sharpeville massacre provide the historical backdrop, or landscape, for the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall protests. The violent actions of the first protests became the socialising pretext for the protests that followed.

4.3.2 Freedom of expression: The politicisation and destruction of buildings and infrastructure

Human beings have a natural desire and inclination to make their thoughts and feelings known. One such strategy is expression in the form of public protest against poor standards of service delivery and public policy options (Human Rights Commission, 2018). People all over the world are not afraid to express how they feel, especially regarding government authority. Freedom of expression is an essential element of an existing democracy (van Vollenhoven, 2015). Protest as a type of expression has been practised for many years, was vital in efforts to overthrow the apartheid, and has become part of the political culture in contemporary South Africa (Woolman, 2018). This study has sought to demonstrate that protest is a tool of urbicide, as shown by violent acts like the burning of tyres, destruction of buildings, burning of cars, and blocking and destruction of roads. The South African government has unwittingly played a role in endorsing acts of

violent protest, often turning a blind eye when people verbally express their dissatisfaction, and are quick to respond when people begin to burn and destroy (Buthelezi, 2019). Violent protest creates the impression that it is better to destroy for one to achieve policy outcomes or get government's attention.

At the heart of urbicide is the intention to do away with infrastructure and symbols that have to do with the regime in power. In the South African context, the intention is to remove any representation of the earlier oppressive regime. Some question the legitimacy of the current democratic dispensation because of the presence of colonial symbols in society.

The Oxford Dictionary (2021) defines "symbolism" as "the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities", and a symbol as "a thing that represents or stands for something else, especially a material object representing something abstract". For centuries humans have used statues as symbols that will later stand as a reminder of what once was and what is currently. On the other hand, statues have become part of city life and landscapes. In 2015 and 2021 there were protests by citizens and students questioning the presence of apartheid symbols in South Africa (Smith, 2015; Naik, 2021). The politicisation of artefacts had begun in South African cities, especially on university campuses (Smith, 2015; Naik, 2021), where students vandalised and destroyed statues to express their dissatisfaction about political reforms. The violent protests at universities have changed the complexion of university student life: the presence of security guards has increased; and students' political activity is deemed suspect.

The researcher has observed that the damage caused by looting has destroyed city life. ATM machines are no longer available in several townships, and some retail stores, surgeries and pharmacies have closed. The looting and the destruction of statues as political expression might be seen as a victory on the part of the protestors; but it has registered a loss for government. Protestors may claim freedom of expression as stated in the Constitution, but their behaviour shows ignorance of what freedom of expression means. Here the democratic opening and urbicide coincide. Violent protests have killed the city. Government has had to re-align budget line items to bolster security to counter the violence of looting and make more money available to compensate companies that have suffered losses – monies that were intended for development and service delivery

(Wasserman, 2021; Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2021). The destruction of buildings creates a setback in the economy because eventually these buildings need to be replaced. In most cases the government does not have the finances to start rebuilding what was destroyed. Cities are then left in a desperate state. The incitement to urbicide occasioned the democratic opening may have been unintended; but nonetheless it exists.

4.3.3 Freedom of movement: Political conflict and protest

“Freedom of movement” was declared a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. A human right is inherent and cannot be taken away. A more radical interpretation of freedom of movement locates border controls within a world of freedom. No person is absolutely free to move wherever and however they please. Freedom of movement occurs within a legal framework; this this necessary for law and order in public affairs. The democratic opening of freedom of movement does not imply that anyone can move anywhere without the enabling documentation. Allowing haphazard human movement would impact negatively on urban planning and the provision of services. Absolute freedom of movement would nullify the concept of “illegal migrant”. National borders exist, however, for the purpose of maintaining law and order.

The Freedom Charter reads “We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people” (Freedom Charter, 1995). The original intent of the Freedom Charter was to protect the greater good of the people; but the breadth of its intent is what has allowed various interpretations (some false) about migration into South Africa. The question arises as to the extent to which a country truly belongs to all who live in it, to all who live in it. Does the word “all” include non- South African citizens, or is it specific to a certain group? What was the original intent of the Freedom Charter? In the previous chapter we saw that one writer quoted in a News24 article argued that South Africa cannot truly belong to all who live in it. The writer suggested that when the original text was being drafted and implemented in 1955, the ideology underpinning it could have not been the same as the ideology driving people today (Lissoni et al, 2012; News24, 2015). The present-day ideology is that of an open South Africa, welcoming of foreign nationals, including a relaxation of the rule of law to accommodate undocumented foreign nationals. This

therefore excludes white colonial settlers and any other ethnic group who are not the original residents of the country (before colonialism). The word “all” would seem therefore to have referred initially to all the natives of the country.

The significance of who belongs within South Africa is epitomised in citizen and foreign national arguments about issues like crime, unemployment, standard of living, overpopulation, and the quality of public services (Mbhele, 2018; Frohlich & Lopez-Granados, 2019; Makhura, 2019). While some South Africans advocate that “South Africa belongs to all”, others strongly disagree with the statement. So-called xenophobic violence is therefore connected to claims of belonging. Other South Africans argue, however, that it is not their hatred of foreign nationals but the illegality of their residence in South Africa that disrupts public order and contributes to the destruction of cities. Buildings, infrastructure and cities are destroyed during contestations between South Africans and foreign nationals. It is in this sense that the unintended consequences of the democratic opening are manifested. The freedom of movement of foreign nationals in urban centres that provide economic opportunities has contributed to the collapse of infrastructure, where uncontrolled cheap rental of properties prevails. According to the South African Human Rights Commission, where the state evicts people from non-compliant properties there is opposition by human rights organisations, the courts going so far as to stop evictions on condition that government provides alternative housing.

According to section 26 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) everyone has the right to adequate housing. But who constitutes “everyone” in this statement? The term does not necessarily refer to everyone living within the borders of the country; it refers to every citizen born and bred in the country and to *legal* immigrants. The Constitution further specifies that the state must take reasonable and other measures, within its available resources to provide access to adequate housing (RSA, 1996).

Since 1994 a vast number of people have migrated from rural areas to urban areas in South Africa. Likewise, foreign nationals have moved from their own countries into South African urban spaces, coexisting with South African citizens. This leads to conflict over resources like housing. The government has in some instances provided additional

housing in urban spaces as well as in the townships through the RDP – a programme initiated under the Mandela regime –,but there is still a huge backlog in housing allocation.

Government lacks the resources to build houses; but at the same time it has to contend with a growing population, where a proliferation in the number of youth increases demand for houses. Cities like Johannesburg are over-populated (World Population Review, 2021; StatsSA, 2021) and cannot accommodate the large population increases the state has overlooked one of its mandatory responsibilities according to the Constitution, which is to provide housing *within its resources*. When a city is over-populated resources automatically become limited – leading to fights over scarce resources. Many residents automatically blame foreign nationals for this lack of resources. To these locals this issue would not exist if the "foreigners" had stayed in their home countries. As a result of the demand for housing, towns that previously were sought after by the the middle classes have been inundated with foreign nationals, and at times by students in need of accommodation close to learning institutions. This has led to the flight of established residents, and ultimately to the collapse of infrastructure. Urbicide has encroached on municipal areas that accommodate foreign nationals and unregulated student accommodation.

4.3.4 The democratic opening: Basic services in South Africa (service delivery failure and inner-city decay)

According to Attwood (2013) the type of people who would normally occupy inner-city spaces full of decay are from low socioeconomic status groups in South Africa. Such people are found in places like the South Beach of Durban in Kwazulu-Natal. They must endure living in such places because they cannot afford cleaner and healthier residencies around Durban. One of the causes of inner-city decay suggested by (Ndlebe, 2017) is the number of people who migrate from rural residential areas to the city, which causes a backlog, as I the city pre-democracy was not designed to accommodate the number of people who are currently reside in it.

This post-apartheid movement by people in search of new lives and employment opportunities in the city has placed an unexpected demand on the government to provide services in the form of water, electricity, sanitation and waste management. Because of

a lack of residential space the owners of office blocks, in their quest to maximise profits, turn these offices into residential spaces. Those people who do not get access to these spaces start squatting in other buildings (Ndlebe, 2017).

All these activities have contributed to the decay visible in today's urban spaces: the inability of the inner-city to accommodate the large influx of people explains the "current dilapidation of buildings" (Ndlebe, 2017) in cities like Johannesburg. The City of Johannesburg was established as a small village in 1886 on the back of the discovery of gold reefs on a farm in Langlaagte. As Johannesburg grew it became a municipality, a decade later in 1897. Further development and population growth led to its being declared a city in 1928.

Despite being a city, Johannesburg was not designed to accommodate a huge population. What was once a tourist attraction is slowly becoming an infestation of criminals and health hazards? Elisseva (2021) states that the government should provide a city in which "Women should be safe in the streets, which should be made so convivial that the malls decline" (Elisseva, 2022). It would be desirable if the air were clean, which might attract foreign tourists to the city to enjoy its night and day life "and to have beer in the sun on a vibrant street" (Eliseeva, 2021).

The South African government may have bitten more than it can chew. Basic service delivery such as refuse collection is free and is a constitutional right for all households in South Africa. Because of population growth and issues such as lack of proper management, planning and financial aid, the South African government has failed in its mandate, which is to provide garbage refuse services to all households in South Africa. As discussed earlier, poor or no waste management has resulted in the decay of many cities as well as urbicide because of the destruction of the image of the city. Government ineffectiveness in fulfilling its constitutional mandate has contributed to the development of a new culture in South African cities, inhabited by inner-city dwellers as well as visitors from neighbouring areas. This culture involves a total disregard for cleanliness and hygiene. To add to the garbage that is not collected by government, people tend to throw out waste anywhere and everywhere without regard for the consequences. People need to lead by example; and because they can see government neglect, they see no need to treat their environment with respect.

4.3.5 The democratic opening as a cause of urbicide in South Africa

The researcher has tried to make a theoretical justification for the democratic opening as a new wave of human behaviour influenced by social practices that capitalise on any, if not all, democratic opportunities. In a way, it is behaviours that undermine the beneficial effects gained through the democratic transition. The study has found that the South African constitution afforded certain freedoms to both citizens and non- South African citizens constitutional reform which represents a democratic opening. It is a democratic opening because people start to access freedoms and opportunities they did not have before the democratic transition in 1994. The promises of the democratic transition do not, however, match economic development in South Africa over the years. Scarce resources make it impossible to meet everyone's needs. There are also disagreements about government's soft stance towards law enforcement on issues like migration, where undocumented people easily make their way into South Africa. The presence of undocumented people presents conflict arising from the competition for resources, especially where undocumented people claim and easily access freedoms that legal citizens cannot. These are the unintended consequences of possible democratic openings incidents presenting themselves in a way that cannot easily be legislated against.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa includes many national and international doctrines. One of the most important doctrines is human rights, found in chapter 2 of the Constitution. In this research a few rights have been highlighted for the purposes of analysis: section 16, on freedom of expression; section 21, on freedom of movement; section 26, on the right to housing; and, derived from the original Freedom Charter text, the notion that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it" as a democratic principle. The extent to which people enjoy these same rights continues to divide public opinion in South Africa today and relative depravation is a cause for public anger (Sisulu, 2022; Masilele, 2022). Perceptions that the democratic transition did not deliver as expected has engendered public opinion that South Africa belongs more to illegal foreign nationals and white settlers than to poor, predominantly black, South Africans. Hence South Africa's place among the most unequal societies, and its status as a breeding ground for xenophobic attacks.

4.4 Recommendations

4.4.1 The maladministration of the democratic opening as the cause of urbicide

Government is responsible for public affairs. In governing, the democratic opening was provided a novel policy opportunity that caught the interest and received the approval of many in the world. But people begin to express their unhappiness as they become familiar with policy and begin to realise its negative and unintended consequences. Although policy lapse is not the responsibility of government alone, the people remain unhappy about the 'free ride' that foreign nationals are getting in the country. It is apparent that government in the democratic opening did not emphasise civic education or insist on the implementation of laws so as to have the people take responsibility for the upkeep of society. In a way, government authorities damaged the process of democratisation in that it was overly cautious not to appear heavy handed in the implementation of laws on migration control, so as not to repeat the mistakes of the apartheid regime. Urbicide in South Africa is therefore the result of mismanagement of the democratic opening, characterised by a lack of responsible citizenry and authoritative governance. What might have been considered minor incidents of law breaking and delayed maintenance of infrastructure have led to overall failure? Issues like poor border control and corruption at the borders have led to a huge increase in the number of illegal immigrants in the country. The lack of management of population control in urban areas has led to uncontrolled overpopulation. All these problems are the intended and unintended causes of urbicide.

In the context of maladministration, collapsing public infrastructure, poor service delivery and. It is important to note that South Africa is a notable global player which is party to international agreements on human rights. It is unreasonable to expect that South African could alienate foreigners and tolerate the collapse of urban spaces without negative effects for all and sundry. One example, a threat, entails the possibility of foreign nationals banding together to retaliate against their harassment. Such confrontation might lead to civil war. On the other hand, continued avoidance of the burden which the issue of undocumented foreign nationals has on public services and infrastructure might lead to a failed state, where government is unable to provide the requisite services. This might also issue in civil war. The retaliation of foreign nationals and collapsed public services would

accelerate urbicide. Hence the need to ensure that South Africa is a migrant-friendly society that implements the rule of law.

4.4.2 Management of inner-city decay

One of the recommendations regarding inner-city decay is that a durable and focused plan for the geographical boundaries of places such as Gqeberha previously known as Port Elizabeth be implemented. The inner city of Gqeberha continues to deteriorate. This central area happens to have some of the best sea views in the country. A plan could be devised for a 12-city improvement precincts strategy, an initiative in which public and other stakeholders would take part by aligning their resources according to each precinct for a durable inner-city decay and buildings solution (Conradie, 2020).

Conradie (2020) suggests a “boots on the ground” strategy, which involves the deployment of security warders in the form of connected CCTC systems that function as digital police officers. To make great turnarounds in the tourist economy it is important that inland projects be encouraged to harvest tourist opportunities. This should be done through the development and implementation of short- and medium-term programmes in which the spectacular coastal cities of South Africa should be prioritised. In eThekwini, places like South Beach, North Beach, the Esplanade as well as the Harbour Point are not linked to safe tourism corridors. Government needs to develop plans to ensure that the laudable property development initiatives in the Point area properly get off the ground and become a tourist attraction again (Conradie, 2020).

In Gqeberha amazing architectural buildings with great historical value have been neglected and left vacant. These buildings could easily be developed as tourism zones, located in the central parts of Gqeberha and its city hall. There is a need for alignment of public services in which municipal sectors, the community and the private sector join forces and develop a long-term and sustainable framework to manage ongoing central city programmes. As Conradie (2020) says, “Effective application of public sector programme and project management practices is crucial to be effective in turning around inner-city decay.”

4.4.3 South Africa's democratic transition and shaping public spaces for democratic governance and diversity

South Africans want a government that is determined to implement laws and control the flow of people in a manner that enables order in society. Good governance will reverse the slow onset of urbicide in many South African towns. The combination of well-functioning urban spaces and foreign nationals who respect the rule of law is essential for making South Africa what it aspires to be: an open society united in diversity. Hence the need to provide civic education and create spaces for citizens and non-citizens to interact and learn from one another. Such places of meeting are vital to ensure that foreign nationals also learn and appreciate the impact they have on the welfare of their receiving countries.

4.4.4 Mainstreaming civic education for xenophilia

Civic education in public schools is essential, especially through subjects like Life Orientation. Also important are discussions on local radio stations, and face-to-face community interventions that promote South Africa as a stranger-friendly (xenophilia) society, not a society that is afraid of strangers (xenophobia). Regular public dialogues would enhance understanding of tolerance and one's duty to the state. In time, individuals would put away misconceptions and become critical thinkers and well-informed citizens. Sharing of stories about the kinds of countries people left behind when coming to South Africa would help to develop political sympathy. The citizens of South Africa have not yet been appropriately taught about the foreign community. Clearly distinguishing among refugees, legal immigrants and illegal immigrants is critically important – as is learning how to treat people with respect.

4.4.5 The mainstreaming of urbicide in public policy and management discourse

For many decades urbicide has been a European concept and no reference has been made to it academically in the African context. It is important to acknowledge that further studies about urbicide are necessary –expanding the analysis beyond migrant decision-making and poor service delivery. The recent looting and other forms of protest provide

a rationale for further research into urbicide. In addition to this, there is a need to think about awareness of urbicide becoming a norm in government and political activist circles. The decay of buildings and the destruction of infrastructure under any circumstances ought not be the concern of urban planners and academics alone. It is essential for political leaders to guide communities into new ways of thinking and acting – of awaken people to the reality that the present situation of crumbling infrastructure is not sustainable and will lead to a crisis where water, sanitation, electricity, and pothole-free roads become a luxury and not basic services. The spread of informal settlements has caused property prices to deteriorate in key cities, while those who are well off retreat to better serviced newly developed towns and estate properties. Urbicide expands because of local government neglect of and reluctance to implement by-laws.

South Africa's political culture of violent protest to solve political problems contributes to urbicide. The situation is so dire that it is as if certain South Africans and foreign nationals are programmed to destroy. Hence the need for high-level thinking to promote public participation and accountable governance and making use of existing processes in the political system to compel policy implementation. Active citizenry is important to ensuring a responsive government. Maladministration, corruption and unresponsive governance frustrates people. It is important that local government authorities take the complaints of citizens seriously and ensure that there is minimal delay in responding to complaints. This would eventually build trust between the people and their government. The induction of urbicide consciousness in public policy, especially in a context of high levels of illiteracy, should be an initiative that emerges from the bottom, in a ward-based development process. If one ward at a time considers what is valuable for a good society and people work hand-in-hand with local government, a positive way forward is likely to be found.

According to UNESCO (2019) "Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development." According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2022), in 2019 the South African adult illiteracy rate was 12 percent, reflecting a significant

improvement of 7.1 percentage points over the past decade. Despite this improvement, it is striking that 4.4 million adults in South Africa are still illiterate. South Africa's illiteracy rate is not far ahead of the global average of 14 percent (Khuluvhe, 2021). The importance of literacy is seen at local government level, where processes require people to compile petitions, analyse budget statements and formulate an argument that informs by-laws. With low levels of literacy, it follows that people have less confidence involving themselves in government decision-making processes. The matter is more serious where low levels of education among representatives threatens to be a barrier to conceptualising urbicide in the context of contemporary local governance in South Africa. This means that there is a possibility that because of the 88 percent illiteracy rate among South African adults, the majority of the population may have no knowledge of the multiple streams through which they can participate in exercising oversight over government. It may be that political strikes provide the only means they know to hold government accountable. Government needs therefore to develop programmes to accommodate a less-literate community. Just as South Africans point out how foreign nationals contribute to the collapse of public services, South Africans need to be made aware of how they too destroy public life.

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4.5 Conclusion

The main research question underpinning this study concerned the extent to which South Africa's democratic transition caused an opening for the development of urbicide. The central theoretical argument has been that democracy has led to unforeseen neglect of the city. In other words, urbicide is an unintended consequence of the democratic opening. When conducting this research and on the information that has been collected the

It is through the democratic transition that unintended consequences in the form of the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of constitutional rights have been enacted. In this dissertation three democratic rights have been highlighted to exemplify how the democratic transition led to the intended and unintended outcomes of urbicide in South Africa. Freedom of movement under the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa has

led to the abuse of movement by both the people of South Africa as well as foreigners visiting the country. Issues such as overpopulation, lack of service delivery and inner-city decay arise from the misuse of constitutional rights.

Freedom of expression as a weapon of destruction has not only led to the destruction of infrastructure through political protest but has also created a space for the development of a political culture driven by corruption and violence. The destruction of the city and its image caused by the occupation of non-residential spaces by squatter camps inhabited by low socioeconomic status South African citizens, together with government's inability to keep up with the population growth of major cities, has issued in inner-city decay. All the evidence provided in this dissertation points to the unseen nature of a developing culture of *cide* ("killing") tendencies among sectors of the South African population, which has led to the rising pandemic of urbicide in South Africa.

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