



Radicalism in contemporary South African political thought, as exemplified in selected political party rhetoric (1994-2021)

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FOREWORD

“De val van Robespierre is de val van het Schrikbewind geweest” – Groen van Prinsterer, Ongeloof en Revolutie, 1847

I am convinced that very few students have the opportunity to submit a master’s thesis that frightens them as much as this study frightens me. It would seem as if every now and again, whether it be in Athens against Socrates, in Rome against the supporters of Sulla, in Jerusalem against Jesus of Nazareth, or any of the countless other places, masses sometimes come together to make a revolution. For the opportunity to honestly research this topic, as well as some that relate to it, I thank Dr Jan Venter, who defended the idea of academic freedom – a scarce jewel in our time. I thank the NWU for granting me the opportunity to put on paper some of the thoughts that had formed in my head not far from where this dissertation is submitted. I thank my wife, parents and family members who have supported me in every possible way.

Soli Deo Gloria

Paulus J. Maritz

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION A: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1	TITLE AND KEYWORDS.....	1
2	CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND TO STUDY.....	1
3	PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	4
4	RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	4
5	RESEARCH APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES.....	5
6	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	10
7	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	10
8	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	11
9	PROVISIONAL CHAPTER LAYOUT.....	11
10	SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES.....	12

SECTION B: AN ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA POST 1994

1	INTRODUCTION.....	13
2	ACTORS.....	14
3	THE FRAMEWORK OF RADICAL IDEOLOGIES THAT DICTATE OPERATIONS OF THE ACTORS.....	20

4	SOUTH AFRICAN REVOLUTION: FINDING THE SOURCES.....	21
5	ALTERNATIVES TO REVOLUTION AS METHOD OF TRANSFORMATION.....	25
6	CONCLUSION	29
SECTION C: ARTICLE TWO		
1	INTRODUCTION	31
2	MYTHOLOGISING THE ANC AND NELSON MANDELA.....	32
3	THE M-PLAN AND ANC MYTHOLOGY	35
4	JULIUS MALEMA AND AN ALTERNATIVE MYTHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION	43
5	CONCLUSION	49
SECTION D: CONCLUSION TO THE DISSERTATION		
1	REVISITING THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION.....	51
2	SUMMARISING AND REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH	52
3	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	52
4	NEW KNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTED BY THIS STUDY	53
5	FINALLY	54
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	55

SECTION A: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. Title and key words

1.1 *Proposed title*

Radicalism in contemporary South African political thought, as exemplified in selected political party rhetoric (1994-2021)

1.2 *Key words*

ANC, EFF, Fanon, radicalism, revolution

2. Context and background to study

South Africa has been a democracy for nearly three decades. During the past 28 years, the Republic of South Africa has been the subject of a constant process of political, economic and social change, as it is increasingly shaped by the governing ideas flowing from the wellspring of thought that informs the governing party and its allies in government. While many discussions took place at the highest possible level before the first democratic election took place, it was with the election of Nelson Mandela as the president of South Africa that a new political order was born. When Mandela became president in 1994, his message was one of peace, dignity, and respect for all those who called South Africa their home (Evans, 2017)

The newly elected president did not only revert to political theory and history in his very first speech as head of government, but to religious texts as well, stating that South Africa had exited a “valley of darkness”, a reference to Psalm 23:4, the Christian and Judaic religious text that refers to a time of strife and struggle.

The popularity of the ANC has, since coming to power in 1994, fluctuated, reaching a new low in 2021 during the municipal elections by for the first time in eleven elections not garnering an outright majority of votes. It follows naturally, then, that more than half of those who did vote were not as attracted by the manifesto of the ANC as it was by that of other parties. This decline in popularity can partially be attributed to high levels of corruption and service delivery deficits on the part of the ANC-led government, but this is not the full story. It would seem as if there is a growing presence of political radicalism in South Africa, informed by leftist ideas, proven by the rise of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), a party that secured 10,6% of all votes cast in 2021. The EFF calls itself a radical organisation, informed by the thoughts of Marxism, Leninism and Fanonism.

The EFF has been clear in its message from the beginning: it is convinced that change in South Africa is not occurring in line with the values and ideals of the “original struggle”, as set out in the Freedom Charter (Malema, 2016). The EFF, in the words of its charismatic leader, Julius Malema, asserts that President Mandela and all subsequent ANC leaders were and have been too cooperative and accommodating with the white economic elite¹, meaning that change has not happened fast enough.

The EFF has in some cases, as the study hopes to point out, raised issues and made policy proposals that were later adopted by the ANC. For this reason, a proper understanding of the EFF and their main ideas is necessary if the ANC and their recent policy decisions are to be understood. While the EFF has certain ideological similarities to the ANC, particularly in reference to Socialism and Marxism, there are notable differences. The work of Franz Fanon, for instance, which the EFF frequently quote, and which forms part of the syllabus that its youth league reads, openly defends the use of violence during radical processes of decolonialism. What is most notable about the EFF’s interpretation of where South Africa ought to be heading, is that the party reverts to violent and revolutionary ideas, which often stem from radical ideologies and a process of radicalization². If these ideas remain unanswered, they surely pose the risk of creating a political situation in South Africa which might well be similar or worse to the wars and revolutions that developed their shape and content.

As Radicalism forms an integral part of this study, a definition is needed for both Radicalism and radicalization. Böttcher (2017) defines radicalism as “a form of hostility against the status quo and its establishment” and also: “Radicalism stands in rebellious opposition against the establishment”.

Scruton (2007:576) shows that radicalism comes from the Latin radix, which means “root”. It denotes a person who takes political ideas to their roots. Such a person will be “hostile to the status quo, and anxious for sweeping changes”. Elsewhere a radical is defined as “a social movement activists who embrace direct action and high-risk options, often including violence against others, to achieve a stated goal” (Snow & Cross, 2011)

¹ In a press release of 13 August 2019 the EFF states: “The people of South Africa must know that Ramaphosa is a white monopoly capitalism stooge, who cannot disrupt their power for the gains of the working class. The ANC government under his watch will never act against the interests of white monopoly capital. Instead, they will advance them further and deepen white privilege, and power, in the economy.”

² The American spelling of radicalization with a z is used here simply to conform with the UNDP spelling in the following chapter. The journals to which the articles will be submitted both follow British English spelling, thus radicalisation with an s.

The use of Radicalism to describe revolutionary groups can be traced back to 1848, when Dutch politician and author Groen van Prinsterer (1972:38) wrote:

A radical, following the meaning of the word (from the Latin *radix*, root), is someone who is not content with trimming and cutting and reforming, but longs for an uprooting³.

In terms of the links between violence and radicalization, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stated in 2016:

“Radicalization” is not necessarily the problem; the term is becoming associated solely with an anti-liberal, anti-democratic and religiously fundamentalist agenda and its links to the use of violence... Danger arises when radical movements start to use fear, violence and terrorist activities to achieve their ideological, political, economic or social aims; it is then that radicalization turns to violent extremism. (UNDP 2016)

The UNDP identifies radicalism as the final step before extremism, an approach to change which deems violence as necessary. For this reason, the international community pays great attention to radical groups, and groups that indicate radicalisation. On 17 February 2022, Advocate Mark Oppenheimer, legal counsel for the human rights organisation AfriForum asked, in open court, to EFF leader Julius Malema: “So you are saying that you are not ruling out that in the future you may very well call for the slaughter of white people?”; Malema responded: “It may not be me”. Oppenheimer: “Could it be you?”, Malema: “It could be me, yes, but it may not be me”. (AfriForum, 2022) It would seem then, as if Malema himself, and his party, are both radical, and threatening with violence, a dangerous combination for the stability and future of the Republic of South Africa.

At the nexus of a waning ANC, a growing EFF, and this indicated insecurity about South Africa’s political future, this study will analyse the rise and development of the struggle ideology in South Africa, the internal differences of opinion within the struggle movements that have driven change in South Africa and consider the impact of these ideas if driven to their deepest points. If radicalism in South Africa can be properly identified and scientifically isolated, it would be easier for political scientists to aptly respond to it, and hopefully defeat the dangerous ideas present within it.

³ „Een radical, naar de eigen beteekenis van het woord (van het Latijnsche *radix*, wortel), is iemand die met geen snoeijen en kappen en omhousen vergenoegde is, maar die ontworteling verlangt“. – My translation.

3. Problem statement

From 9 to 18 July 2021 South Africa experienced a week of riots, which has been described by some as a period of anarchy (Harding, 2021). While these riots often evolved into looting sprees, their primary origin was the arrest of former president Jacob Zuma for contempt of court (Harding, 2021). While these riots received much international media attention, there has been a steady increase in violent protests in South Africa since 2004 (Alexander, 2012), raising questions about the true state of affairs in what Archbishop Desmond Tutu referred to as “The Rainbow Nation”.

The violence arising from instability within the governing ANC is compounded by the increased threat of violence by the EFF, as discussed in point 2, as well as the actions of the EFF, that prove their threatening rhetoric to be more than conjecture. While Julius Malema is himself currently accused of firing an assault rifle in an open crowd, a case that will continue in September of 2022, the deputy president of the EFF Floyd Shivambu is on trial for assaulting a journalist in 2018. Broadly then the history of struggle combined with what seems to be a newfound acceptance of violent rhetoric and behaviour create an explosive situation for the Republic of South Africa.

The problem statement for this particular study follows logically from this presented background and from these stated facts. An increase in discontent among South Africans is growing, as viewed in the increase in protest, destructive protest, and threatening rhetoric. While some of this discontent might be the cause of poor service delivery on the part of the government of South Africa, this study posits an additional cause, that of radical ideology informed by particular philosophies and mythologies. This study aims at finding the sources of radical ideology by analysing the philosophies and mythologies at its basis. The first part of the study analyses revolutionary thought in South Africa and its origins, while the second traces the mythology of struggle that was created in the 20th century and still exists among the self-proclaimed inheritors of the struggle in South Africa, often defined by the Freedom Charter and the ANC’s understanding of the National Democratic Revolution. By finding both these roots, it is proposed that this study might then synthesise some of the origins of the current discontent in the South African political and social arena.

4. Research questions and research objectives

4.1. *General research questions*

Background

As this study will consist of two academic articles, the approach here is to offer two general questions that will be relevant in both articles, followed by two questions that will be specifically addressed during article one, and two questions that will be specifically addressed during article

two. The conclusionary section of this study in Chapter four will comment on how these six questions were dealt with.

General research question:

Has the transformation process in South Africa, which was inaugurated in 1994, been influenced by a broader radical ideology consisting of revolutionary philosophy and struggle mythology?

4.2. Specific research questions

Questions to be addressed in article one:

What role did revolutionary philosophy play in the shaping of South African politics from 1994 to 2021, particularly in the ideological approaches of the ANC, SACP and EFF?

Which approaches to social change exist that offer an alternative to the revolutionary approach taken by the ANC-led government?

Questions to be addressed in article two:

What role did a mythology of struggle play in the approach to social transformation that was taken by the ANC and EFF?

How are differences in interpretation of the broader struggle ideology, particularly between the ANC and the EFF contributing to the growth of Radicalism in South Africa?

5. Research approach and objectives

5.1. Research objectives

General research objective:

This study proposes that radical ideology pose a clear and present danger to a society, and that a thorough understanding of the origins of this ideology, thus of the philosophy and mythology that informs it, serves the purpose of identifying this danger. As it is focussed on South Africa between 1994 and 2021, this study proposes an analysis of the radical ideology that informs the process of social and political transformation in South Africa within this timeframe.

Specific research objectives

Objectives to be reached in article one:

To indicate a causally logical link between radicalism and revolutionary ideology, and furthermore to indicate that revolutionary ideology, itself linked to radicalism, played a central role in the ideas and frame of reference of the ANC and SACP, and later of the EFF.

To indicate that other theoretical frameworks exist that could have been implemented as an alternative to the revolutionary approach adopted by the ANC-led government. If it is accepted that South Africa had to change after 1994. This objective simply offers criticism of the method taken by the governing party of South Africa within the timeframe of this study.

Objectives to be reached in article two:

To indicate firstly that mythology can, and often does, play an important role in politics, followed by an analysis of the mythology developed by the ANC around Nelson Mandela, the party's most prominent mythical hero.

To indicate a shift in South African politics from non-racialism to black nationalism, and to indicate above reasonable doubt that this shift was caused by more than mere propaganda, but by a deep-seeded, very comprehensive, and highly explosive mythology. Based upon these sentiments, the popularity of the EFF must be understood.

5.2. Research approach and design

It has been stated that this study will be a literature review, which takes existing sources and reinterprets them based on the original research questions, in the hope of reaching original conclusions. Here it would suffice, then, to expand on the finer working details of this study.

The primary source in political science is often created by political actors themselves. Speeches declaring manifestos, celebrating historic events, or commenting on political events could all serve in and of themselves as sources of original political knowledge. As not all events are necessarily recorded there and then, the biographies and autobiographies of politicians and government officials will also be considered as sources of original knowledge.

The research approach to the general and specific research questions then is to analyse those documents, including pamphlets, speeches, autobiographies and biographies, which were created by politicians during moments of note. This approach has the added benefit of minimising the interpretation of politicians, as their words can be taken from the documents they created directly into this study.

5.3. Literature review and discussion of existing theory

The relevant fields of research for this study are many, as this study will take place at the nexus of various trains of thought that are in existence and that are constantly being developed further. Within political philosophy it will be necessary to take note of the development of revolutionary thought in Europe during the Enlightenment, as well as reactions to Enlightenment ideas during their creation.

Mansfield (2001:29) proposes a break in political theory as seen in the works of Renaissance thinker Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1527). Machiavelli broke from the ideological and religious approach that had dominated Western thought since the rise of Constantinople in the 4th century AD and proposed that politics be measured based on what he called “effectual truths”. This meant in effect reducing human actions to their true intentions. Machiavelli opens the door to modernity and the Enlightenment by rejecting religious imperatives as the governing truth over political reality.

The break that Machiavelli causes ushers in the time of “theory” (Mansfield 2001:36), where political thought no longer attempts to understand the entire phenomenon, as had been the approach since Aristotle’s categorisation in the 4th century BCE. Now, after Machiavelli, and perhaps exemplified in the works of Thomas Hobbes, political theorists created a system, and reduced all phenomena into this system. Hobbes famously proposes the “State of Nature” in his 1651 work *Leviathan*, a thought experiment that views man as a wild creature, completely unbound, thus completely free and equal. Hobbes’s thought was in turn the foundation for much of the thought produced by Swiss political philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). In his 1755 essay *Le Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes* (The discourse on the origins of the foundations of inequality among men), Rousseau asks why all men are “in chains”, criticising the massive inequality that existed in the 18th century Western European society. In 1789, when revolution rose in France, the revolutionaries cited Rousseau’s thought as seminal to their actions, even moving his remains to the French Pantheon in 1794, 16 years after his death.

In the wake of the French Revolution the German philosopher Friedrich Hegel proposed a synthetic approach to history, where revolution is seen as an antithesis to the no longer bearable status quo (Scarnicci: 2012). Hegel’s thoughts were interpreted in terms of class by Karl Marx (brief remarks on Marxism follow below) and in terms of race by Franz Fanon (brief remarks on Fanon follow below), both of whom are directly sighted by the ANC and EFF who are the main subjects of this study.

As South Africa did not have a traditional European revolution per se, but rather a “revolution from the top” after political power had already been gained, it will be necessary to take note of revolutionary warfare as well as the National Democratic Revolution, the name which the ANC and its political allies have given to their continued struggle for various types of freedom.

The idea of revolution has, of late, come to mean more than what it did for Burke, Tocqueville and Van Prinsterer, whose definitions feature above, and whose ideas will be relevant in the latter parts of the first article. For this reason, a more modern definition, which should also be considered, is that of Manfred Schmidt (1995) in the broadly used German Political dictionary *Wörterbuch zur Politik*. From Schmidt’s definition the following is relevant:

In modern parlance, the process or result of a profound transformation of the political, social or economic conditions in a state or state system that takes place in a relatively short period of time⁴.

Schmidt (1995:841) differentiates between three types of revolution. Firstly, he sees violent and radical revolutions in the strictest understanding of the term, such as the French Revolution of 1789, the Russian Revolution of 1917, and the Chinese Revolution of 1949. A second type is broadly violent, but attempts to restore order instead of eradicating it, such as the American Revolution of 1775-1781 and the French Revolution of 1848. A third type of revolution is not violent, but merely employs the word to mean a deeply consequential change in the essence of a particular science or area of human activity, such as the scientific revolutions and architectural revolutions that take place from time to time. This study will be focussed on the first kind of revolution, and the idea of revolutionary warfare, which will be introduced.

It will be necessary to be well aware of the genealogy of struggle within the ANC, starting with its departure from passive resistance into active resistance. At this point it might well be necessary to research the intellectual approach that the ANC and its allies took during the years of its exile, in order to garner global support and keep local organisation. Broadly then, this study must take note of traditional (European) revolution, African revolution, and the development of the broader struggle ideology by the ANC and those associated with or influenced by the ANC.

In order to properly place this study, the ideologies which are at this moment considered to be the breeding ground for leftist radicalism in South Africa need to be both identified and defined. In

⁴ Im modernen Sprachgebrauch der Vorgang oder das Ergebnis einer sich in relativ kurzer Zeit vollziehenden tiefgreifenden Umgestaltung der politischen, gesellschaftlichen oder wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse in einem Staat oder Staatensystem. (Translation partially my own, assisted by AI translation app DeepL)

the constitution of the EFF, it calls itself “Marxist, Leninist, Fanonist” – these three terms, each denoting a separate ideology, are understood as:

Marxism: Marxism has two distinct parts: theoretical, and practical. Theoretically it involves adherence to the ideas of Karl Marx, together with a political commitment to proletarian *revolution of the kind described and foretold by Marx. Practically, it involves Marxist *praxis, within the context of a ‘bourgeois’ state, which in turn involves, not necessarily revolutionary activity, but a preparation of the ground for revolution in social and institutional life. (Scruton, 2007:425)

Leninism: Adherence to the doctrines and in particular to the revolutionary methods of *Lenin. The main features are: furtherance of communist revolution as part of a world-wide struggle against capitalist imperialism; attachment to the organizational principles of ‘the party of the new type’ (i.e. the party which incorporates all functions of the state, and which systematically eliminates opposition); *democratic centralism; emphasis on the role of the revolutionary *vanguard, whose constitution naturally tends to be differently described depending upon who is in charge of it. (Scruton, 2007:392)

Fanonism: A term for the anti-colonial liberationist critique formulated by the Martiniquan psychiatrist Frantz Fanon (1925–1961). Fanon’s work in Algeria led him to become actively involved in the Algerian liberation movement and to publish a number of foundational works on racism and colonialism. (Mambrol, 2017)

The term Christian ethics will be of high importance for the first article. In order to properly define the term notice will be given both to the original religious texts, in this case the Christian Bible, as well as to contemporary Christian ethicists.

In terms of its broader theoretical framework, this study finds its starting position in opposition to revolution. A prominent body of work which can be typified as anti-revolutionary are in existence, and will necessarily be taken note of in this study. While not exhaustive, this body of work includes:

Reflections on the Revolution in France, Edmund Burke, 1790. Seen as the archetype anti-revolutionary document, Burke’s work has given rise to centuries of study. Burke is viewed by many as the founding father of conservatism, but as Kinneging (2019a) among others has pointed out, “Conservatism” is used to refer to anti-revolutionary thought, philosophical conservatism, as well as conservative liberalism. Especially the reactions to the French Revolution, which is briefly discussed earlier in this section, which were poignantly anti-revolutionary, have their origins in the work of Burke.

Democracy in America, Alexis de Tocqueville, 1835. The French Revolution would, as Burke had predicted, only come to an end when a charismatic general brought peace by usurping power. Burke, in stating this, predicted the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte in France. The French back-and-forth between monarchy and democracy lasted until 1848, but in 1835 a young nobleman Alexis de Tocqueville receives a commission to go and study the penitentiary system in America, and writes his famous analysis, *Democracy in America*. While this work will not necessarily feature as primary source, it is necessary reading for understanding the legitimate fear that some have for the empowered masses.

Ongeloof en Revolutie, Groen van Prinsterer, 1847. Van Prinsterer was a Dutch politician, who hosted a series of lectures on the links between unbelief and revolution. These were later published as his now timeless work *Ongeloof en Revolutie*. Seeing as this study wishes to warn against the musings of radicals who use violent rhetoric, the timely warnings against previous revolutions must be taken note of.

These three authors are first among many who believed, and still believe, that radical ideology is dangerous, and that it poses a threat to the safety and prosperity of a nation. When the death toll and destruction caused by European revolutions, particularly under the reigns of the Jacobins in France and the Bolsheviks in Russia are considered, it explains the use of the term “danger” in the title of this study.

The theoretical framework of anti-revolutionary thought necessarily has its original sources in the traditions founded in Athens and Jerusalem. From Athens the warnings of Plato and Aristotle against an empowered mob, and against an absolute democracy must be heeded, but these warnings have, in the modern west, been shaped and moulded by the Christian tradition, particularly by the thoughts of Plotinus, St. Augustine of Hippo, Thomas of Aquino. As this study is a contemporary study, much will not necessarily be made of the works of these early philosophers and theologians, but anti-revolutionary thought that uses western sources will use trails and thoughts that were carved out by these initial thinkers (Kinneking, 2019b).

5.4. Research method

This study will utilise only one research method, namely a literature review, and more specifically, an integrative literature review (Dudovskiy, 2020). An integrative literature review means that I do not propose the collection of new data, but rather an analysis of the existing sources from a new starting point. The idea is to contribute to the field by reaching an original conclusion, which justifies a master’s degree. While the attempt is to reach a new conclusion, this study does not

aim to shift the existing paradigm, but merely to broaden the available knowledge within the existing field of research on the enactors of transformation in South Africa.

This study will be an amalgamation of descriptive and correlational research, where literature regarding transformation in South Africa will be researched, analysed, and categorised in search of radicalism and to understand the role that revolutionary politics is playing in contemporary South African politics. The primary literature with regards to political change will always be the speeches and manifestos of political leaders, as well as the constitutions of political parties; therefore, these pieces of literature will play a major role in understanding the development of political thought in South Africa.

Finally, mention should be made of the envisioned criticism that this study wishes to direct at certain approaches from post 1994 political actors. This criticism will be based upon ethical systems that do not agree with and conform to radical or revolutionary thought, with the relevant literature being anti-revolutionary writings of the 18th century and later, as well as texts upon which Christian-Judeo ethical systems are based, such as the Christian Bible.

6. Ethical considerations

This study utilises a literature review; thus, no contact will be made with respondents via questionnaires or interviews. All the rules and regulations of the NWU will be adhered to and as such the study has no ethical implications. This study used a desktop-analysis approach, and did not require any interviews, conversations, or collection of field data which might have put the name or reputation of the faculty or university at risk.

7. Limitations of the study

The primary limitation of this study will be its length. As the article format has been chosen, the core reasoning within the study will take place within two articles that have to adhere to journal requirements. It naturally follows that only very specific ideas could be driven to their deepest core, while one might have lingered longer on other topics if a word limitation had not applied.

Secondly, this study must in and of its nature be limited as it will focus on one sovereign republic during one specific era. Obviously, examples will be provided and reference will be made to relevant situations from which wisdom might be gained, but essentially this study will be sharply demarcated, possibly leaving a broad shadow for alternative research on related topics.

8. Significance of the study

The peaceful transition from the Apartheid regime to democracy, which took place from roughly 1991 to 1996, but which is mostly symbolically dated along with the first democratic election of 1994 was not the end of political change in South Africa, but in a certain sense only the beginning (Barnard, 2016). Very few parties will deny that change was necessary in post-1994 South Africa, yet change based on incorrect principles can often be dangerous. This study aims to contribute to the broader field of national governance by analysing and critiquing the approach to political change, often referred to as transformation, which has been taken by political actors in charge or in positions of influence since the dawn of democracy in South Africa. Furthermore, the significance of the study might well be enhanced by the proposal of alternatives to the approach that has been chosen.

Secondly, this study will make the point that change in South Africa has not always been driven by a unified monolithic force, but that schisms within the governing caucus took place, which greatly impacted the approach to transformation that was taken. This study hopes to offer depth to the origin story of the EFF, indicating that this more radical party uses the existing struggle mythology to their advantage.

As indicated by the United Nations Development Programme, violent rhetoric and threats by radical groups to use violence should be taken in earnest, mainly due to the dangers that lurk within radicalisation into extremism and even terrorism. (UNDP, 2016) If peace in South Africa is to last between groups from different racial backgrounds, it is imperative that threats of violence be placed under meticulous scrutiny, scrutiny of which this study will form a part.

Finally, while one of the great opponents of colonialism, Franz Fanon, plays an integral part in the political philosophy of key South African political actors, not much has been written about his perspectives on violence and radicalism. This study hopes to enter that space.

9. Provisional chapter layout

This study will consist of four chapters:

Chapter 1: Research proposal

In this chapter the envisioned title and keywords will be provided. Furthermore, it will indicate the overall problem statement, and point out the research questions and objectives on which the study will focus. This chapter will also outline the envisioned research methodology, ethical

considerations, limitations, and significance of the study. As it will be proposed in and of itself, this chapter will contain a bibliography.

Chapter 2: First article - Analysing the approach to change in South Africa from 1994 to 2021

This article will analyse and critique the approach to political transformation that has been taken in South Africa from 1994 to 2021. This chapter will attempt to indicate that the ongoing revolutionary transformation that has been driven by various political actors has a determined radical element. This article will end with a critical view of revolution and radicalism from a Christian-Western worldview.

Chapter 3: Second article - Identifying a new schism in the political landscape

This article will aim to identify a shift in South African politics from non-racialism and non-racialism to black nationalism. It will also propose that the cause of this shift is more than mere propaganda, but a deep-seeded, very comprehensive, and highly explosive mythology. Furthermore, this article offers a simple model for understanding the continued popularity of the ANC, and an explanation for the obvious success that the more radical EFF is currently experiencing.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

This chapter will look at the research proposal retrospectively, indicating that the questions which were initially aimed to be answered had indeed been answered, and identifying space for future research. No more than four pages should be devoted to this chapter, in order for it to truly be a conclusion and not deviate into argumentation again.

10. Submission of articles

Both articles of this degree, which represent chapters 2 and 3, have been accepted by recognised peer reviewed academic journals.

The first article of this M.A. was published by the *Journal of Christian Science*. The article can be viewed here: <https://pubs.ufs.ac.za/index.php/tcw/article/view/547>

The second article of this M.A. was accepted for publication by *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics Journal*. The article can be viewed here: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14662043.2022.2138030#metrics-content> .

SECTION B: ARTICLE ONE

An analysis of transformation in South Africa post 1994

Abstract

The transition from South Africa under the policies of Apartheid to its future state has been led by the African National Congress and its allies. This transition has been driven by a process of radical transformation, often informed by revolutionary philosophies and policies, which in turn were translated into radicalism. Historically revolutionary transformation has often had national disorder as consequence. As this approach entails great risk, this study indicates the risks entrenched in revolutionary transformation, and proposes alternative approaches. A literary study of relevant pieces of policy, and the philosophy that led to their construction was done, with indication of how these pieces of policy incarnated themselves in the actions of relevant political actors. Here the clear and present danger of these policies came to the fore. Opposing philosophies were then researched, and realistic alternatives proposed. The study concluded in finding revolutionary transformation not only sub-optimal, but purposefully dangerous for the safety and stability of a country, and urgently proposed that the tried and tested alternatives be adopted and normalised. This study contributes to the ongoing issue of approaching change in South Africa. Few would deny that change was necessary in post-1994 South Africa, and this article does not challenge the need for change in any way. The article contributes to the broader field of national governance by analysing and critiquing the current approach to change, which is radicalism in the name of revolutionary transformation, and offering tried and tested alternatives, which would lead to change that is more stable, more consistent, and does not entail the same risk of death, destruction, and civil war that revolutionary transformation has brought about in states where it has previously been driven to its limits.

Key Words

Radicalism, Revolution, Fanon, EFF, Burke, Violence

1. Introduction

In the past 27 years the Republic of South Africa has been the subject of a process of continuous political, economic and social change, as the country comes under the influence of governing ideas in increasing increments. As this continuous change and governing ideas are in the majority of cases implemented by the governing African National Congress (ANC) and its intellectual affiliate in the South African Communist Party, it is relevant for those living in South Africa to understand the ideas behind these changes, and the particular approach that is being taken, as well as the underlying principles thereof. In recent years the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), a party positioned to the left of the ANC, has also had a visible impact on ANC legislation.

Understanding the underlying principles of the governing ideology opens the door for a more nuanced criticism, and a more reliable prediction of the future plans of the governing elite.

This aforementioned change is often referred to as “transformation” (ANC, 2018), which is why this article bears “transformation” in its title, and yet the focal point is much rather revolution than transformation. This seemingly contrasting fact will be defended and explained, with reference to the ANC, and change in South Africa springing from radical ideologies. As such the changes are almost always intolerant towards dissenting opinions and impatient towards implementation (Baradat & Phillips, 2017: 18,19). This means that the method of change is revolutionary. It is important in reading this article that the relationships among these concepts be understood.

The method of change applied in South Africa is, in the words of the governing party, revolutionary, as stated frequently in its own revised 2017 version of its *Strategy and Tactics* document, specifically reference is made of articles 149-151 (ANC, 2018). While revolution is historically traced back to the French Revolution in 1789 or the waves of communist revolutions of the 20th century, the slow revolution of the ANC contains a very definite and an increasingly visible racial element (Mashilo, 2018:1). Revolution does not refer only to the European idea of revolution, but also the idea of revolutionary warfare. As such, a focus on the work of thinkers based in revolutionary warfare is also relevant, here a specific focus will be laid on Franz Fanon, as he is also pertinent in the modern thought of the EFF (pt. 4.2.1.).

This study follows the line of governing ideas to its roots, focussing on radicalism as approach to change, revolution as opposition to the status quo, and violence as instrument in revolutionary the aforementioned revolutionary change.

In the broader field of political philosophy, the ideas and policies of the government, as well as the way in which they are implemented, are bound to have a broad impact on society. By pointing out, analysing, and critiquing these ideas, the aim of the study is to indicate the dangers of the current governing ideas, and the dangerous foundations upon which they rest. Finally, an alternative method of change, as observed in historical events, will be proposed. This article then identifies these dangerous ideas as flawed, indicates their inherent flaws, and proposes more suitable ideas upon which a consistently stable society may be built.

2. Actors

2.1. The ANC

As government and as monopolistic political party, the African National Congress (ANC) has arguably the most important role in defining the contents and frame of reference of transformation. Born out of a mostly peaceful transition between the white Apartheid-government, which was led by the National Party (NP) from 1948 until 1994, and the mostly black ANC led government, under

the initial leadership of President Nelson Mandela, few transitions have been celebrated so vigorously as a symbol of racial unity and cooperation by the international community, the seeds of discontent, and of division, and of racial exclusion are once again being sown in a country that some still call “The Rainbow Nation”, despite this term becoming a term of mockery amongst citizens (Msimang, 2015). In order to understand the current resistance to the “Rainbow Nation” metaphor, it will be necessary to first understand the political source and aim of the governing party, by understanding its approach to transformation.

Duvenage clearly asserts (2007:378) that “Seen from an ANC-perspective, transformation is nothing other than the continuation of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), which aims to radically alter the state, society, and the economy”. While the ANC is no longer oppressed, it cannot technically be “revolutionary”, as revolution refers to a subversion of the state (Pt. 3.1.3.), therefore it prefers the term “transformation”, yet for the ANC the transformation is simply, in the Stalinist metaphor, ‘Revolution from above’ (Duvenage, 2005:9-19, 17).

In order to further drive home the idea that transformation is simply the practice of revolution, it is necessary to quote at length from the ANC’s own *Strategy and Tactics* document (2018).

Paragraph 63:

The NDR seeks to eradicate the specific relations of production that underpinned the national and gender oppression and super-exploitation of the majority of South Africans. It does not eradicate capitalist relations of production in general. It should therefore be expected that in a national democratic society class contradictions and class struggle, particularly between the working class and the bourgeoisie, will play themselves out. As such, a national democratic state will be called upon to regulate the environment in which such contradictions manifest themselves, in the interest of national development including fundamental socio-economic transformation.

Here it is seen that the aim of the NDR is achieved by means of “fundamental socio-economic transformation”. Recent news articulates the practice of transformation based on revolutionary ideas, and are offered as clarification:

Nathi Mthethwa, South African minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, is of the view that municipalities should have the option of voting to remove the statues of former South African leaders. Mbali Hlope, a member of minister Mthethwa’s party, the ruling ANC, recently motivated this stance: “The presence of these colonial statues and monuments in the public domain do[es] not resonate with the founding principles of the democratic constitution of the land” (Ndaba, 2020).

The focus on the iconic statue of President Paul Kruger (1825–1904), the last President of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, which is under current scrutiny, is just the next in a wave of similar events, which started with the removal of the statue of colonial Cape Governor Cecil John Rhodes

in 2015, and has seen many statues removed, and colonial or Afrikaner-heritage monuments banned and vilified.

The over-arching theme is that history before 1994, and before the ANC, is to be removed from the public domain. This theme is strengthened by the decision by the South African Equality Court in August of 2019 to ban the public display of the former South African flag, which was the official flag from 1928 until 1994 (Mettler, 2019).

Attempts at radical social transformation are, however, not exclusive to the realms of history and symbolism, as they force their way into most spheres of social life. The South African Netball Federation recently disqualified a team from the provincial league for not fielding the correct racial composition of players (Bierman, 2020). The law of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (Act 53 of 2003) also regulates the business sector in South Africa, with only companies with a pre-determined racial composition being considered appropriate to do business with the government.

These examples illustrate the approach that the current South African government is taking in terms of the transition from one regime to the next. The practice of blaming minority groups and previous governments for a plethora of social and economic ills has become endemic, while purposefully forgetting current endemic problems such as corruption, maladministration and factionalism which is costing the country billions (Myburg, 2019:151). Along with this view of history, a choice has been made in favour of radical transformation in the South African political, economic and social spheres (Poplak, 2020). This model of transformation views political and social history before 1994 as a monolith, one that is to be vilified, uprooted, and subverted, wherever traces of it are still to be found. It is this very approach to change that must be analysed, understood, if the current trajectory of South Africa is to be changed or at least intellectually opposed.

2.2. The SACP

As the ideological wellspring for underpinning the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP) affect both the policy and posture of the country.

While Marxism-Leninism was exhaling its dying breath in the East of Europe, socialist ideas were gaining momentum in South Africa. Joe Slovo, the secretary-general of the SACP from 1984 until 1991, wrote in 1988: "We do not claim that we have a monopoly of wisdom. But, equipped with the theoretical tool of Marxism-Leninism and the inheritance of an unmatched wealth of revolutionary experience, it is not immodest for us to assert that our Party is uniquely qualified to help illuminate the correct analytical path" (Slovo, 1988). Slovo was to become an important

figure in South African transitional politics, becoming a minister in the first cabinet of President Mandela in 1994, and feeding revolutionary thought into the newly formed democratic South Africa from its very beginning.

The SACP has enjoyed a commanding position up to 2021, with key ministerial positions such as those of Higher Education and Training, Communications, and Trade and Industry frequently being held by members of this party (Letsoalo, 2018). The SACP does not participate in national elections, but forms part of the “Tripartite Alliance”, which governs South Africa. The other two members are the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). In this way the ideas of Marx and Lenin have remained ingrained and revered in South Africa, long after being formally abandoned by those countries which formed the Soviet Union. The examples that the introduction of this article offered prove the point that radical transformation and the subversion of the existing social order are crucial to a relevant interpretation of post-1994 South Africa.

While Marxism-Leninism differs from the Enlightenment philosophy of the 18th century, the two schools of thought share a joint supportive view of revolution (Marx & Engels, 2016). Thus, while the final aims of the Enlightenment thinkers were different to those of Bolshevik revolutionaries in Russia, the proposed mode of transition was one and the same: Revolution. As the question in issue in this article is that of transition, the nature of revolution and South Africa, and the universal roots this phenomenon are to be uncovered.

2.3. The EFF representing the newer generation of radicalism.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is a South African Political Party, that started in 2013 (Mailola, 2021). During the 2019 National Elections, the EFF drew 1 882 480 of the total 17 437 379 valid votes that were cast. This translates to 10.8% of the total vote, and resulted in the EFF having 44 seats in the national legislature, the third most of any party, behind the governing ANC (230 seats) and the official opposition, the DA (84 seats). Even before an analysis of their vision for South Africa is undertaken, it is clear that this party has a strong footing in South Africa, especially considering that it is the official opposition in three provinces, namely the Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and North West Provinces (Results Dashboard, 2019)

2.3.1. The political positioning of the EFF in their own words

On their official website, the EFF present themselves in these words:

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is a radical and militant economic emancipation movement, formed in the year 2013 with the aim of bringing together revolutionary, militant activists,

community-based organizations as well as lobby groups under the umbrella of the political party pursuing the struggle of economic emancipation (Mailola, 2021).

On the same webpage, the party states its vision and mission as follows:

Vision: The EFF will, with determination and consistency associate with the protest movement in South Africa and will also join in struggles that defy the unjust laws”

Mission: The EFF is a South African movement with a progressive internationalist outlook, which seeks to engage global progressive movements. We believe that the best contribution we can make in the national and international struggle against global imperialism is to rid our country of imperialist domination (Mailola, 2021).

Among the seven pillars upon which the EFF stands, are the following (Mailola, 2021):

- 1 Expropriation of South Africa’s land without compensation for equal redistribution in use.
- 2 Nationalisation of mines, banks, and other strategic sectors of the economy, without compensation.

The first two of the EFF’s eight aims are (EFF, 2019):

- (1) To capture political and state power through whatever revolutionary means possible to transform the economy to benefit all, Africans in particular.
- (2) To establish and sustain a society that cherishes revolutionary cultural values and to create conditions for the total political and economic emancipation, prosperity and equitable distribution of wealth of the nation.

It is clear from the excerpts quoted above that the EFF see themselves as a radical group, a militant group, and a revolutionary group. By these radical means, this party wishes to change the economic and political status quo in South Africa. It is also clear that this party wishes for radically increased centralisation, with the focus on nationalisation coming to the fore frequently in their introductory and statutory documents.

2.3.2. Focus of the EFF on racial nationalism.

The question might be posed, at this stage, where the EFF ideologically departs from the ANC. This point of departure is amongst other issues, one of race. The ANC states, in its *Strategy and Tactics* document (ANC, 2018) that:

The National Democratic Revolution is defined as such precisely because it seeks to abolish this combination of sources of social conflict. It has national and democratic tasks, and it should strive to realise shared prosperity, social justice and human solidarity, premised on:

- a united state based on the will of all the people, without regard to race, sex, belief, language, ethnicity or geographic location;

- a dignified and improving quality of life among all the people by providing equal rights and opportunities to all citizens; and
- the restoration of the birth-right of all South Africans regarding access to land and other resources.

While the EFF has a radical and revolutionary approach to change, it holds a racial nationalist view of South Africa and Africa, pertinently breaking from the ANC and NDR ideology of non-racialism. A perusal of aims three through eight as captured in the EFF Constitution of 2019 shows (EFF, 2019):

- (3) To attain and defend the national integrity and liberation of the oppressed black majority of South Africa.
- (4) To participate in the global struggle for the complete eradication of imperialism, colonialism, racism and all other forms of oppression and discrimination.
- (5) To participate in, support and promote all struggles for the attainment of the complete independence and unity of an African state and by extension, the African continent.
- (6) To resolutely oppose tribalism, regionalism, religious and cultural intolerance.

Julius Malema, the leader of the EFF, has been quoted in the media as referring only to black people as African, saying in 2018 (Mde, 2018): “Why is treasury always represented by an Indian when there is 80% African staff? Because there is a tendency [for] our Indian brothers to look down at Africans”. In 2020 Malema spoke to a crowd in KwaZulu Natal, saying that (Anon, 2019): “This is Shaka Zulu’s land, not Van Wyk and Van Tonder’s land”. Van Tonder is a typical surname of the white minority in South Africa, and Shaka Zulu the first king of the Zulu Nation, who ruled in the 19th century C.E.

It can be surmised that the EFF and its leader differentiate between people of different racial groups in South Africa, and that they believe that Africa belongs to Africans, which they believe to be exclusively black people. The EFF also has a utopian view of one African state.

2.3.3. Impact of the EFF on legislature

Various instances can be noted where aims and statements by the EFF were adopted or pursued by the ANC some years later. While the reasons for this might only be speculative, the fact remains that key debates on nationalisation and expropriation were introduced or reintroduced into the national debate by the EFF, and then adopted as ANC policy. Two notable examples are expropriation without compensation (EWC) and the nationalisation of the central/reserve bank.

In 2018 Professor Ruth Hall from the University of the Western Cape stated in an interview on Talkradio 702, a South African radio station, that she believes the ANC will push for a “watered down version of what the EFF are demanding” (The Midday Report, 2018).

The EFF states in its first constitution, which was adopted on the 16th of December 2014, that two of its non-negotiable positions are expropriation of land without compensation, and expropriation of banks without compensation (EFF, 2014). The ANC spoke about the nationalisation for the first time during their 2017 electoral conference, held in December of 2017 (Mahlati, 2018).

3. The framework of radical ideologies that dictate operations of the actors

All three of the actors analysed under point two subscribe to a form of radical change. In 2019 the ANC’s Secretary General, Ace Magashule, stated that Radical Economic Transformation is the ANC’s party policy, and that it will happen (Modise, 2019). The SACP states in its 1991 manifesto that “Ownership, occupation and use of land requires radical readjustment” (SACP, 1991). The preamble to the constitution of the EFF starts with the words “The Economic Freedom Fighters is a radical and militant Economic Emancipation Movement” (EFF, 2019). This section seeks a modern definition of Radicalism as an approach to social change.

3.1. Radicalism

3.1.1. Definition

Bötticher (2017) defines radicalism as “a form of hostility against the status quo and its establishment” and also: “Radicalism stands in rebellious opposition against the establishment”.

Scruton (2007:576) shows that radicalism comes from the Latin *radix*, which means “root”. It denotes a person who takes political ideas to their roots. Such a person will be “hostile to the status quo, and anxious for sweeping changes”. Elsewhere a radical is defined as “a social movement activists who embrace direct action and high-risk options, often including violence against others, to achieve a stated goal” (Snow & Cross, 2011).

3.1.2. Modern usage of the term radicalism:

Scruton (2007:576) believes that it would be wrong to assert that all radical thinkers are on the political left, but that radicalism is popular amongst leftist thinkers, as thinkers on the left are more radical about the status quo. Radicalism first came to prominence as a term to describe a political attitude at the end of the 18th century in France. Even though radicalism in modern times is mostly used to refer to an ideology that pursues restructuring, in some cases radicalism can pursue the overthrowing of political structures (Bötticher, 2017:75). While radical movements use violence pragmatically and selectively, as opposed to extremist movements that deem any violence legitimate, violence and the threat of violence never the less will be deemed legitimate in determined circumstances by such movements (Bötticher, 2017:75).

Radicals can be divided into four groups: Opportunistic, Coordinated, Loners, and Militants (Snow & Cross, 2011:123). Militant radicals, a term that the EFF uses to refer to themselves in their preamble (EFF, 2019), will be more prone to go for extremist approaches, particularly the idea that force and violence are the only remaining options (Snow & Cross, 2011:124).

3.1.3. Conclusion and synthesis

A group that refers to itself as radical, such as the ANC, the SACP, and the EFF, will not legitimise or condone violence in all circumstances; however, more militant radicals, such as the EFF, are more prone to violence than other groups of radicals. Violence is, however, not off the table for more moderate radical groups, who deem violence an important tool in reform and subversion of the status quo.

Based on the analysis of radicalism, it would seem as if a radical ideology would be prone to revolution. In his 1791 magnum opus, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, the politician and author Edmund Burke states: “To make a revolution is to subvert the previous state of our country, and extraordinary reasons are called for to justify such a violent proceeding” (Burke, 2012).

While Burke refers to violence, the essence of revolution for Burke is that the previous state is subverted, for violence in itself does not wholly define a revolution. A modern definition of revolution is given by Roger Scruton (2007:614):

It seems to mean any major transformation that occurs simultaneously on the social and the political level, upsetting expectations and conformities that were sufficiently well established to define all important forms of association under the preceding order.

Revolution has, as a concept, developed since the time of Burke, and it might be argued that Scruton alone is not sufficient conceptualisation. For this reason, a more modern definition, which should also be considered, is that of Manfred Schmidt (1995) in the broadly used German Political dictionary *Wörterbuch zur Politik*. From Schmidt’s definition the following is relevant:

In modern parlance, the process or result of a profound transformation of the political, social or economic conditions in a state or state system that takes place in a relatively short period of time⁵.

Schmidt (1995:841) differentiates between three types of revolution. Firstly, he sees violent and radical revolutions in the strictest understanding of the term, such as the French Revolution of 1789, the Russian Revolution of 1917, and the Chinese Revolution of 1949. A second type is broadly violent, but attempts to restore order instead of eradicating it, such as the American

⁵ Im modernen Sprachgebrauch der Vorgang oder das Ergebnis einer sich in relativ kurzer Zeit vollziehenden tiefgreifenden Umgestaltung der politischen, gesellschaftlichen oder wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse in einem Staat oder Staatensystem. (Translation partially my own, assisted by AI translation app DeepL)

Revolution of 1775-1781 and the French Revolution of 1848. A third type of revolution is not violent, but merely employs the word to mean a deeply consequential change in the essence of a particular science or area of human activity, such as the scientific revolutions and architectural revolutions that take place from time to time. This study will be focussed on the first kind of revolution, and the idea of revolutionary warfare, which will be introduced.

Revolution is to be understood henceforth to particularly mean subversion of the existing state, and the attempted replacement thereof with a completely new (radical) order. Thus, if a radical group wishes to overthrow the status quo on a social and political level, and legitimises the circumstantial use of violence, it would be fair to state that they are undertaking a revolution.

4. South African Revolution: Finding the sources

As revolution has been identified as the method which radical thinkers often employ in challenging and opposing the status quo, the roots of revolution will be considered in this section.

4.1. European Roots of Revolution

To criticize revolution, as this article sets out to do, both the definition and development of revolution are of critical importance. As revolution has been properly defined, the focus now falls on the origin of revolutionary thought.

Where did this idea, that an existing order must be subverted and radically transformed, come from? Historians by and large agree that the Revolution in France had its roots in the European Enlightenment, a movement with roots in the 17th century in the works of Bacon and Descartes (Kinneking, 2000), which the German Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant defined in 1784 in this way: "Enlightenment is the exit of people from their self-imposed immaturity". In this same essay, Kant promulgates the motto of the Enlightenment to be "sapere aude!" which can be roughly translated as "dare to know!" Kant's view, and the view of many Enlightenment philosophers before him, was that traditional authority keeps human beings in a state of permanent immaturity by preventing them from applying their reason to its fullest. The human mind was, for Enlightenment thinkers the source of the most profound truth. By questioning all else and remaining only with his one maxim of *cogito ergo sum*, Descartes places human reason at the centre of the universe, a piece of philosophy with far reaching consequences for the coming Enlightenment, ultimately leading to revolution.

While the works of Enlightenment philosophers are many and thorough, the line from Descartes to the French Revolution must at the very least run through the work of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788). In chapter XIII of his 1651 book *Leviathan*, the English philosopher Hobbes imagines man in his "*natural condition*", a thought experiment which is now scientifically known as *The State of Nature*. This philosophical construct disregards human

experience and collective history as the primary sources of knowledge, but imagines man as an individual in nature, completely alone, and totally unbound. Hobbes uses this construct as a base from which conclusions about mankind and society are to be drawn, and upon which a new order is to be built (Hobbes, 2016).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau refers directly to Hobbes on various occasions in his work *On the Social Contract*, which was published in 1762, and while he differs greatly with Hobbesian absolutism, he does continue the idea of a social contract, or social pact (Rousseau, 2010). Rousseau assumes the starting point of man in a state of nature, and builds an argument up to a point where people will, in the name of self-preservation, “place his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will” (Rousseau, 2010). This term “general will”, or *Volonté Générale* is placed directly into the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen which formed the core statement of the French Revolution. By noting the works of Descartes, Hobbes, and Rousseau, it can briefly be surmised that the philosophical roots of revolution do indeed lie in Enlightenment philosophy.

If revolution is to be the violent uprooting and transformation of the existing order, and the existing order in the time of Rousseau was monarchical, it would make sense to accept that the revolution was aimed at the monarchy. Revolutionary thought as the idea that the existing authority must be violently subverted was moved from the context of monarchies to the context of a class struggle by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Marx & Engels, 2016). While Marx and Engels are the founding fathers of certain revolutionary thought, it seems as if revolution in South Africa frequently states decoloniality as driving force, and justifies violence and revolution at the hand of a coloniser and indigenous relationship. The EFF’s Julius Malema frequently sings “Kill the Boer” at rallies (Anon, 2020), a song calling for the murder of white farmers in South Africa, who are known as “Boer” (or “Boere” in the plural form). In order to understand the root of revolution in South Africa, it is therefore necessary to find the root of these thoughts.

4.2. Franz Fanon and revolutionary warfare

Franz Fanon (1925-1961) was born in Martinique under French rule, and died in 1961 of leukaemia. He is primarily known for writing anti-colonial liberation literature, famously *The Wretched of the Earth* (*Les damnés de la terre*) and *Black Skin, White Masks* (Gibson, 2011). Breaking from the European idea of a revolutionary wave, Fanon proposes a longer struggle that goes through various phases, a revolutionary war. Fanon states (2014:110):

The leaders of the rebellion come to see that even very large-scale peasant risings need to be controlled and directed into certain channels. These leaders are led to renounce the movement in so far as it can be termed a peasant revolt, and to transform it into a revolutionary war.

While Kwame Nkrumah famously wrote *Revolutionary Warfare* in 1968, Fanon's writing predates him, and is taken as seminal point for the idea of a longer-term revolutionary struggle.

While Fanon is praised and qualified in various modern publications, this section will indicate only that Fanon is a relevant source to radical actors in South Africa, followed by his views on violence against the descendants of European settlers. Extensively quoting Fanon, especially his thoughts on violence, brings his thoughts to the fore directly.

4.2.1. *Fanon in South African political history*

Franz Fanon's work has been relevant in South African politics for nearly fifty years. The first known reference to Fanon by a South African was by Steve Biko, leader of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa. Biko grounded this movement in the work of Fanon in the early 1970s (Gibson, 2011:xi). Most recently, in 2020 the EFF held readings of Fanon's works on two occasions, praising him as a "very important revolutionary" on their YouTube channel (EFF, 2020).

4.2.2. *Fanon: On Violence*

"On Violence", the first chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth*, is Fanon's primary work on violence. Fanon makes it unequivocally clear that the colonised must liberate themselves, and that this process of decolonization is "always a violent event" (Fanon, 2014:1). It will be indicated here that Fanon believes violence to be the only method of true decolonization, and that the use of violence within the realms of decolonization is fair and just.

4.2.2.1. Violence as the only possible mode of decolonization

Despite stating that decolonization is always a violent event, Fanon believes true decolonization to be absolute, thus the absolute and total "substitution of one species of mankind by another" (Fanon, 2014:1). He continues: "Decolonization... can be summed up in the well-known words: 'The last shall be first'... the last can be the first only after a murderous and decisive confrontation between the two protagonists"(Fanon, 2014:3). He does not see violence as an option among many, but qualifies this confrontation in absolute terms. The reality of the colonized can "only by challenged by out and out violence" (Fanon, 2014:3). No union is possible between the "native" sector and the "European" sector for Fanon. He states: "there is no conciliation possible, one of them is superfluous" (Fanon, 2014:4). This is supported by the idea that the "colonist always remains a foreigner" (Fanon, 2014:5) – thus no amount of appropriation can make a colonist a native. The colonial world must be either buried "deep within the earth or banish(ed) from the territory".

Fanon makes the assumption that "colonized masses intuitively believe that their liberation must be achieved and can only be achieved by force" (Fanon, 2014:33). He asserts this assumption

by stating: “They (the colonized peoples) know that such madness alone can deliver them from colonial oppression”.

4.2.2.2. Violence as justifiable

For Fanon, violence in a decolonial setting can often times be justifiable and fair. “You are rich because you are white, and you are white because you are rich” (Fanon, 2014:5) – this quote of Fanon’s is frequently quoted, and it expresses the idea that skin colour and privilege are directly linked to each other for Fanon. The source of this wealth for the colonist is the colonial system (Fanon, 2014:2). Violence becomes, for Fanon, an instrument by which the native can free himself intellectually and regain his society. “The arrival of the colonist signified syncretically the death of indigenous society ... For the colonized, life can only materialize from the rotting cadaver of the colonist.” (Fanon, 2014:50). While absolutism rears its ugly head here, it is also made clear that the native can only prosper after violence has been committed. Violence is justified, because of the ends that it produces. A further justification for violence is that justice, for the native inhabitant, is not attainable through due process. Fanon makes this even clearer when he says: “the colonized subject wastes no time lamenting and almost never searches for justice in the colonial context” (Fanon, 2014:43).

4.2.2.3. Fanon and the continuing struggle in South Africa

More (2011:173) wrote a chapter titled “*Fanon and the Land Question in (Post)Apartheid South Africa*”, where it is argued that South Africa has a flag-independence, which Fanon warned about. Such a flag-independence is a pseudo-independence, and it stands opposed to authentic independence which emerged from “reappropriation of power and the land through violent struggle”. Fanon, in this sense, becomes a critiquing tool of the far left, to criticize the negotiators of peace. These sentiments were repeated in 2015, when Julius Malema, the leader of the EFF, speaking to the Oxford Union, said Nelson Mandela, the first president of South Africa post-Apartheid, was a “staged, managed Mandela, who compromised the principles of the revolution, which are captured in the Freedom Charter” (Malema, 2015). The idea that a negotiated peace is a pseudo-peace, and that the struggle is not over, which originated with Fanon, is currently a relevant theme in South African politics.

4.2.3. Conclusion to Fanon

In order to avoid misconstruing the works of Franz Fanon, this section relied heavily on direct quotes, from an approved translation of Fanon’s literature. It can be concluded, based upon the words of Franz Fanon himself, that he believed violence to be the only way in which true decolonisation can be achieved, and that he believed violence to be justified in certain settings, especially with regard to native peoples using violence against people of European origin. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the works of Fanon are both relevant and popular amongst

radical actors in contemporary South African politics, therefore conclusions about the work of Franz Fanon are conclusions that are of note in South African politics.

5. Alternatives to revolution as method of transformation

This article set out to identify the actors of radical transformation in South Africa, to define radicalism and find the source of international and South African revolution, and finally to propose an alternative mode of social progress. The reason why such a proposal is necessary, is due to the destructive nature of subversive revolution. One of the most famous reactions to any revolution is that by Edmund Burke, to whom reference has been made.

5.1. Burke

The Irish-English politician Edmund Burke defies the French Revolution by criticising both the principle and the practice (Burke, 2012).

Burke realised that the French Revolution was the summit of two centuries worth of Enlightenment thinking, and that simply criticising the fruits of this Enlightenment philosophy would be temporary if the roots were not laid bare. Burke did, however, also offer his sincere fears regarding the practice and eventual outcome of the Revolution. Criticism on principle and practice is interspersed throughout *Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, but it is in a later work: *An Appeal from the new to the old Whigs* (Burke, 1887) that Burke's criticism of principle, and inevitably of practice, comes to the fore most clearly: "Dark and inscrutable are the ways by which we come into the world. The instincts which give rise to this mysterious process of Nature are not of our making." This phrase criticises an idea that lies at the heart of Enlightenment philosophy – that of the State of Nature (see pt. 4.1). The idea that mankind may with absolute certainty make assumptions regarding the decisions and endeavours of the first human beings seem illogical and impractical to Burke, and this quote underlines that From this basis, Burke defends his worldview, and his defence of and reverence for tradition (Burke, 1887:114).

Burke's criticism of Enlightenment philosophy touches on a great many points, but four are relevant to this article:

- Liberty as an inheritance,
- the idea of empirical governmental science,
- caution in change, and
- the loss of direction.

Each will be briefly unpacked.

It was the stance of Enlightenment philosophers, and consequently of Thomas Paine, that liberties are inherent to all those who are born, thus, all human beings. Burke questions this point of view, by stating that liberties are much rather an inheritance. We have freedom to act and live in a

certain way because those who came before us laboured and realised these freedoms for themselves and their descendants. Burke states: “You will observe that from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties as an entailed inheritance derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity” (Burke, 2012:37). The idea of liberties born into man, which translates into modern human rights, is based on an abstract idea of man and of freedom. Burke means to say that the basic, obvious, and palpable freedoms which we enjoy are inherited, not inborn.

A second idea which must be noted in opposition to Enlightenment philosophy, in opposition to the French Revolution, and currently in opposition to the National Democratic Revolution in South Africa, is the idea that an “Empirical Science of Government” is superior to the chain of human experience. Burke asks (2012:34): “What is the use of discussing a man’s abstract right to food or medicine? The question is upon the method of procuring and administering them. In that deliberation I shall always advise to call in the aid of the farmer and the physician rather than the professor of metaphysics.” Burke, in thus stating, comes to an essential criticism of revolution: It brings about an untested and unrealistic system into a real and fallible world.

The third of Burke’s criticisms is that of cautionary change. Revolution, as it has historically been understood, and as it has been defined in this article, aims to uproot the existing order, and to construct a new order on top of its ruins. Burke warns against this in no uncertain terms, famously stating that we should “approach to the faults of the state as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling solicitude” (Burke, 2012:53). Those who trample on the legacies of leaders who ruled before them are clearly warned by Burke that this is not the best way forward. A profound humility, as well as an awareness of man’s own fallibility when bringing about change comes to the fore as a clear message in Burke’s warning.

The fourth and final warning by Edmund Burke which is derived from the countless warnings that he offers, is that revolution leads to a loss of moral direction. “We fear God; we look up with awe to kings, with affection to parliaments, with duty to magistrates, with reverence to priests, and with respect to nobility. Why? Because when such ideas are brought before our minds, it is natural to be so affected” (Burke, 2012:72). Burke sees in religion and custom a source for social order.

Essential to all of Burke’s criticisms of revolution that are stated above, is the central theme of human fallibility. Human minds cannot conjure up ideas that are without shortcomings, that can clearly envision the future, and that hold themselves to be divine.

5.2. Christian approach to social progress

When Edmund Burke discusses the fallibility of human reason, he echoes the thoughts of Christian thinkers, perhaps Thomas Aquinas above all, who stated that *lex humana* or human

laws can never truly be eternal (Aquinas, 2008). In the Christian tradition it is believed that the principles underlying a good life, including how to act when oppressed, or when you have newly entered government, are to be found in the Bible, which Christians confess to be the infallible word of God (Geisler, 2010:16).

While destructive and subversive revolution undermines the principles of the Bible (Geisler, 2010:258), there are ways for citizens and groups to be disobedient to government, or to bring about social change, without causing the social and physical destruction of a revolt. Refusing to oppose government is referred to as “radical patriotism”, which sanctifies government illegitimately (Geisler, 2010:244). This subsection cites civil disobedience in the Bible, that happened in accordance with the principles of the Bible. Then the core principles of Christian civil disobedience are identified. Finally a possible Christian approach to social progress is outlined.

5.2.1. Examples of civil disobedience in the Bible.

The Bible includes various examples of civil disobedience which did not oppose biblical principles. In Acts 4 it is recounted how the apostles Peter and John were warned by the Sanhedrin, the local Jewish government in Jerusalem, to not evangelise people anymore. They answer with these words: “But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (NIV Bible, Acts 4:19-20). These apostles invoke the right in “God’s eyes” as of higher value than the right in the eyes of the Sanhedrin, creating a hierarchy of power which negates the position of earthly power.

In the Old Testament book of Daniel there is an elaboration on King Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image. After this statue had been erected, a herald loudly proclaimed: “Nations and peoples of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace” (NIV Bible, Daniel 3:4-6). Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, three Jewish men in Babylon, refuse to comply. Upon being summoned before the king, they state: “King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up” (NIV Bible, Daniel 3:16-18). As with Peter and John after them, these men clearly define a hierarchy of leadership, with “the God we serve” being supreme to the will of the government.

While both previous cases state an ideological difference and a choice of faith, the Bible mentions more blatant examples of civil disobedience. 1 Kings 18 states how Jezebel, the wife of king Ahab, was “killing off the LORD’s prophets” (NIV Bible, 1 Kings 18:4). In direct opposition to the royal will, Obadiah, the palace administrator, “had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them in two caves, fifty in each, and had supplied them with food and water” (NIV Bible, 1 Kings 18:4). While choosing to do God’s will rather than the king’s, Obadiah also chose against evil and violence. The same would be true of the Hebrew women who saved Hebrew babies from death in Egypt against the Pharaoh’s will, as Exodus 1:17 states.

5.2.2. Principles of Christian civil disobedience

Christian disobedience means refusal to obey a direct command, but not to revolt against it (Geisler, 2010:251). This necessarily implies non-violence, and nonviolent resistance, accompanied with taking the punishments handed down for disobeying human law (Geisler, 2010:251). Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego enter the furnace rather than violently revolt against the king. Where possible, it should be fled from, as in the case of Obadiah’s priests, where impossible, it should be refused, and the penalties accepted (Geisler, 2010:251). Romans 13:1 offers a foundation for the source of power, when it states: “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God” (NIV Bible, Romans 13:1), reiterated by Acts 5:29: “We must obey God rather than human beings!”

Civil disobedience in the Bible is a vast topic, the exhausting of which will not serve the goals of this article. A defence must be presented, however, to certain examples of Biblical characters disobeying the above principles. The question may then be asked if they were acting in opposition to God. When one considers the narrative of Samson, whom Christians and Jews believe to have received strength to kill thousands of his enemies by pushing over pillars that held up a roof. In this case, as the text proposes, he was granted supernatural powers, and was not acting according to his own will. He was acting in line with what is recounted in Acts 4:18 and 19, as found in the Christian New Testament:

19 But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges!

Additionally, it must be kept in mind that Samson was the military leader of a people at war with those who were keeping him captive, making his act not one of civil disobedience, but one of war. This seems to be the case with all biblical characters who defied political leaders – it was clearly and unambiguously understood by them that they were acting in accordance with the God of their covenant.

5.3. Alternatives to revolution: In conclusion

The alternatives posed to revolution and violence in this section offer direct rebuttals to canonical Enlightenment Philosophers who planted the seeds of revolution, to revolutionary thinkers such as Marx and Fanon who theorised on practical revolutions, and finally also to radical actors in the current South African context.

5.3.1. Human reason and fallibility

For Descartes, Hobbes and Kant (4.1), the intellect of the currently living human is superior, and a human State of Nature becomes the starting point of reasoning. Burke opposes and rebuts this point, critiquing the philosophical roots of revolutionary thinking.

5.3.2. Violence as absolute versus nonviolence

For Franz Fanon there is no other way of decolonisation, and thus of causing meta-social change, than violent struggle. The biblical examples and principles here discussed prove that an alternative is possible, and that violence is neither necessary nor right.

6. Conclusion

This article set out to identify the current approach to social change and progress in South Africa, and identified a radical, mostly left-leaning group of actors pushing South Africa in a direction through a slow revolution, but a revolution none the less. In considering the violent and destructive failures that revolutions have brought about in the past, this article first indicated the roots of modern revolution, then specified the roots of violent revolution in a formerly colonial context. Finally, this article indicated that the core assumptions of radicalism are highly dangerous and racially divisive.

It can be concluded that a radical philosophy of transformation based upon the premises that one group or ideology or race must be pushed out before the other can flourish and this indeed underpins various actors in the South African political sphere. This radical philosophy is not the only possible approach, and there are alternatives to consider. Based upon the historical success of revolt, it would seem as if the alternatives would serve the country better than the current ideologies.

SECTION C: ARTICLE TWO

A 'radical reinterpretation' of South African struggle mythology: From non-racialism to black nationalism

Abstract:

The Economic Freedom Fighters has, since its creation in 2013, attempted to attract votes from current African National Congress voters by presenting itself and its leaders as the true heroes of the South African struggle for freedom. This article initially indicates how political mythology can be used to unify a group behind a cause or a hero, as well as how it can be used to identify and vilify an enemy. Hereafter a case is made for the use of political mythology by the ANC before, during, and after its period of exile from South Africa. Finally, the EFF's positioning towards the ANC, its reinterpretation of struggle mythology, and the effects such a reinterpretation might have on South Africa, are proposed.

This article wishes to contribute to the conversation on South Africa's political future, by analysing the relationship of the EFF and ANC at the deepest level, that of their shared and contested political mythology. The contemporary importance is that these two parties that might well be involved in coalitions at the highest level of South African politics in the near future.

Keywords: ANC, black nationalism, EFF, M-Plan, mythology, radicalism

1. Introduction

On the 26th of July 2013 former African National Congress (ANC) member, and former president of its Youth League, Julius Malema, created a new South African political party called the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). In the first decade of its existence, this party has been referred to as fascist, populist, and opportunist, among other things. This article introduces and holds the position that these rudimentary insults, while not necessarily false, take a shallow view of the EFF's ideological and political positioning. It analyses the EFF's positioning with regards to the ANC along the lines of political mythology and proposes that the EFF are presenting the ANC as sell-outs of their own mythology, of their own original struggle and of its principles, while the EFF is simultaneously presenting itself and its president, Malema, as the true mythical heroes of the original struggle.

In 1952 the ANC were under the growing impression that their party would be banned from operating in the Republic of South Africa at some nearing point. Nelson Mandela (1994:127)

writes that he 'approached the National Executive Committee with the idea that we must come up with a contingency plan for just such an eventuality', after which he was tasked with writing the Mandela Plan, or simply the 'M-plan', which informs the ANC's strategy in case of the party being banned. The M-plan organised ANC members in small cells, governed by stewards, in a pyramidal structure, a structure that has been argued to resemble that of a Methodist church (Lodge, 2006:5), one Mandela would have been familiar with, having grown up in the Methodist tradition. This structuring also allowed the ANC to disseminate precious information among members without calling large meetings. It has been argued that another aim, possibly the main aim of the M-plan, was the mythologizing of Nelson Mandela, and presenting him as hero and martyr, especially during his absence due to incarceration (Trehela, 1991:19). While Mandela (1994:128) and other ANC leaders felt that the M-plan had very limited success, some argue that it had a more profound effect than was initially realised (Suttner, 2003:124).

This article introduces various themes of political mythology, primarily how it is used positively in legitimising charismatic leadership, and negatively in portraying the opposition as inherently flawed and even as dangerous. It is then argued that the mythologising of Mandela by means of the M-plan during the 1960's and 1970's allowed the ANC and its allies to present Mandela during its 'People's War' phase from 1979 onwards, as a mythical hero figure, a martyr for the cause. Hereafter an analysis of the EFF is developed, during which it is proposed that the EFF's approach and positioning with regards to the ANC falls within the scope of the existing struggle mythology. Finally, it is proposed that the EFF's points of departure from the ANC could pose a threat to peace and stability in South Africa, because of its more radical interpretation of the original aims of the struggle, and a simultaneous rejection of core stabilising tenets of the ANC's vision for South Africa.

2. Mythologising the ANC and Nelson Mandela

2.1. *Mythology as political instrument*

In order to analyse both the ANC and EFF at the hands of political mythology, a theoretical basis of mythology and its political uses must first be developed. While the terms 'myth' (a single story) and 'mythology' (an organisation and compendium of related myths or stories) have come to be understood as falsehoods or tall tales in everyday parlance, such an understanding presents an insincere appreciation of the terms or their original meanings.

2.1.1. The origins and functions of myths in society

Lincoln (1999:3) remarks that the transformation between the mythos of ancient Greek bard Homer and the logos of Plato is associated with a 'move from symbolic to rational discourse...'

yet when ancient Greek poet Hesiod's Theogony from about 700 B.C.E. is analysed, it is noted that 'mythesasthai' means only 'I will tell', and not, as might be presumed by the modern user of the word 'I will tell tales'. In fact, Lincoln notes that the ancient Greek noun **μῦθος** (mythos) is here 'associated with truth'. The Athenian Xenophanes, a 5th century B.C.E. author, uses the term 'myth' to denote stories that are moral, reverent, and socially beneficial. Xenophanes prefers the term 'plasmata' for tall tales, as it means 'fabrications'. Myth is, however, differentiated from history by its origins, which are emotional rather than rational (Raglan, 1936:123). This origin does not, however, mean that it is assumed to be false. A modern contextualisation of the ancient meaning of mythos would be that of an extremely relevant, culturally significant tale or story for a group or culture (Lincoln, 1999:29). Consider biographer Antony Sampson (1999:402) describing the 1988 film Sarafina, and its interpretation of Nelson Mandela:

The Mandela icon was free to develop as a symbol of heroic resistance to oppression, quite independent of physical reality. His generalized image seemed to transcend all the sectarian and national rivalries of Africa, and came to represent the universal black leader, the last great freedom fighter.

While this idea of an iconic and heroic Mandela is developed extensively in point 3 of this article, it seems from the quote above as if Mandela had become mythical by 1988, and that he was as as he was extremely relevant and culturally significant, to use Lincoln's direct words.

Returning to theory, the purpose of using myth in a political sense, although in practice much older, was first theorised by FitzRoy Somerset, known by his title of Lord Raglan. In his 1936 work *The Hero: A study in tradition, myth, and drama* he devotes an entire chapter to *The Genesis of the Myth* which analyses the importance of myths as cultural force (Raglan, 1936:123).

Raglan (1936:127) equates the transferral of myths between generations with the conferral of religious rites and believes that myths must be taken seriously as a cultural force. Myths are not speculation, despite its emotional origin, and so they become fundamental truths with various functions in a society. From the works of Raglan, as well as that of Lincoln (1999) and Kirk (1970), five functions of myths in a society can be identified, which will form a theoretical basis to be used in relation to the ANC and EFF throughout this article. The first of these functions is **unification** of people, and the second is the **identification of a hero**. When this hero's actions are mythologised, they come to resemble rites, which then bind the group together. (Raglan, 1936:123). Myths unify people in the sense that those who have received the myth become 'members' of the myth, which is constantly sanctified and standardized by its transferral between generations and societies (Raglan, 1936:131). Third, myths **organise** a society as it not only identifies heroes, gods, and rites around which society can organise, but it also identifies the will

of these heroes and gods, wills which must be obeyed. Lincoln (1999:54) identifies a fourth function of myth: its provision of **grounds for differentiation** between groups and cultures. He states:

Myths are thus a discourse of differentiation: the distinctive stories *Völker*⁶ develop as they separate from one another, through which they recall and reproduce their distinctive features.

Lincoln (1999:57) further states that myths **form the mentalities and strives** of a society as a fifth function of mythology, for how a society believes the world to have been created, will be informative of why it exists in the present. Finally, Kirk (1970:48) notes that myths provide a normative structure and a logical model which societies then use to overcome apparent challenges or inherent contradictions.

2.1.2. Mythology as basis for charismatic authority

To understand the link between mythology and political leadership, it is first necessary to indicate the relationship between mythology and charismatic leadership, as charismatic leadership often predates the official election into a position of political leadership. This argument was first proposed by the German philosopher Max Weber in his posthumously released 1922 book *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*.

Weber (2019:97) importantly theorises that not all sociological phenomena are rational, and that sociology also attempts to develop irrational phenomena. One of these phenomena that he identifies is 'charisma'. Weber (2019:341) goes on to identify three types of 'pure legitimate rule': Rational rule, traditional rule, and charismatic rule. Regarding charismatic rule, Weber elaborates that this is "the exceptional sanctity or heroic qualities or exemplary character of a person, and the orders that this person proclaims or creates". If it is a function of mythology to identify the hero and the hero's will (pt. 2.1.1.), this mythology can then form the basis of legitimate charismatic rule, which is accepted by the community who have accepted the mythology and its hero as its own.

In developing the concept of charismatic rule Weber (2019:376) argues that charismatic rule is "specifically irrational since it is alien to all rules" and that the charismatic leader "demands new imperatives in the original sense of charisma", backed up by the authority of a "substantive formative will that is recognised as such by a religious, military, party, or other community purely because it issues from such a source". It is also notable (2019:375) that when a charismatic hero

⁶ German: Tribes or nations

⁷ The 2019 translation of *Economy and Society* by Keith Tribe for Harvard University Press was used for direct quotes.

becomes a leader, the leader becomes a 'prophet' for the community, and the community becomes 'disciples', who receive their imperatives from the prophet.

Weber's analysis of charismatic leaders motivates the use of mythology in politics as mythology can identify the hero and the will of the hero, and unify a community behind the hero, giving the leader initial charismatic rule, which can later be translated into either traditional or rational rule, as Weber also explains (2019:379).

2.1.3. Mythology and the identification of the political enemy

While mythology can identify the hero, it can also be used to identify the enemy. It has been indicated that mythology can differentiate between groups, a phenomenon that was applied to politics by the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung (1875-1961). Jung proposed the existence of four archetypes within the collective unconscious of society (Jung, 2001:8). An archetype for the sake of his argument is "pre-existent and supraordinate to the phenomenon", meaning that this collective unconscious reaches out to certain ideas or forms outside of itself, an idea not original to Jung, but rather found in Plato's *Politeia* and presented as "primordial images". The fourth of Jung's archetypes is the trickster, who jokes, deceives, and misleads. Regarding the archetype of the trickster, Jung (2001:173) states:

The best examples of these 'monkey tricks,' as popular speech aptly and truthfully sums up this state of affairs in which everything goes wrong and nothing intelligent happens except by mistake at the last moment, are naturally to be found in politics.

By identifying the 'trickster' in politics, Jung creates a basis for understanding how one politician or political party discussing another politician or party could often speak of their opponent in this vein – that the opponent is up to no good, and if the opponent does anything good, it must have been by mistake, for this opponent could not, due to his/her/its corrupt nature, have done anything good on purpose. In a religious context this could mean referring to the enemy as 'the devil', which needs no explanation, as the community are owners of the mythology and its characters.

It is initially concluded that mythology serves various functions in a society, including the unification of a society around a particular hero, and the identification of an enemy or opponent. Both the identification of a hero or an enemy can serve political purposes, respectively by legitimising charismatic leadership and debasing an opposing character, faction, or party.

3. The M-plan and ANC mythology

In 2021 South Africans went to the polls for the eleventh time since it became a democracy in 1994. In September of 2021 political parties launched their various election manifestos, where it

became clear that there was a difference in opinion of the state of freedom in South Africa. Julius Malema, leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) stated, quoting Winnie Mandela: “What was gained in 1994 was not true freedom”, and later: “Mam’ Winnie never sold out, did not surrender to capitalism which has captured the former liberation movement”.

Malema’s criticism of the ANC is that it has led South Africa on a false path, a path that does not lead to “total freedom”. All these utterances were made during the EFF’s manifesto launch on the 26th of September 2021. While most of the ANC’s electoral mission was focussed on “the unity and renewal of the ANC”, as its president and national president Cyril Ramaphosa stated on the 27th of September 2021, his view of the ANC’s successes regarding freedom are clear in his 27 April 2021 Freedom Day speech (Ramaphosa, 2021):

The democratic breakthrough of 1994 liberated black South Africans from the tyranny of apartheid, but it also liberated white South Africans from the shackles of untruth and the false belief in racial superiority.

These divergent views on the successes of the struggle for freedom may be partially written down to electioneering and mere rhetoric, but it also betrays divergent views among the ANC and the EFF regarding what the struggle for freedom was supposed to achieve in the first place.

This subsection discusses the *M-plan*, the *Freedom Charter*, and the *People’s War* from the perspective of political mythology. While there are many more relevant moments of ANC history that contributed to its political mythology, these three focus areas offer a sample which is wide enough to understand the EFF’s positioning with regards to the ANC, as well as the development of the ANC’s own mythology.

3.1. The origins of the M-Plan

The 1950’s was, for the ANC and its allies, a decade of turmoil and “mass struggle” (Suttner, 2003:129), culminating in the conditions that lead to the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. Walter Sisulu (2001:70), Secretary General of the ANC from 1949 to 1954 explains the origins of the M-plan in his biography *I will go singing* (Sisulu et al., 2001), as being linked to the National Party coming to power in South Africa.

To understand the foundations upon which the M-plan was founded, it is necessary to refer to Sisulu’s memoirs at length. The Programme of Action that Sisulu proposed “departed” from approaches up to that moment, as, according to Sisulu, it was more practical. This approach was named the Defiance Campaign by Sisulu (2001:70).

The main difference between this campaign and previous approaches was a departure from passive resistance and arrival at a moment of defiance, preparation for what Sisulu (2001:70) calls “a struggle at a higher level”. This new approach was opposed by Dr James Moroka, the President of the ANC from 1949 until 1952, who believed that it would lead to the incarceration of ANC members, yet this new approach was eventually passed, due to support by the Youth League (Sisulu et al., 2001:70).

The new idea of defiance gained momentum in the face of the Communist Party being banned on the 27th of June 1950, with the protests of the day before this banning marking a moment of unity, and dropping differences of the past (Sisulu et al., 2001:71). In Sisulu’s mind at least, June 1950 marked a moment of true unity in the struggle. The key issue identified in 1951 was that of pass laws, which was to be opposed by means of civil disobedience (2001:74), and the idea of defiance grew to the end of 1951, when Sisulu’s Defiance Campaign was the main item of discussion, and this approach was further formalised by means of an official letter to Prime Minister D.F. Malan on the 21st of January 1952, which warned that a plan for the “defiance of unjust laws” was being made.

The date for demonstrations was set for the 6th of April 1952, on the day that the Afrikaners would be celebrating the 300th anniversary of Dutch settler Jan van Riebeeck’s arrival in the Cape. Various prominent arrests in 1952 had served only to fire up the idea of defiance (Sisulu et al., 2001:81). In summarising the Defiance Campaign, Sisulu states that “It was one of the greatest events of the movement”, and “It was the beginning of a new situation... The Campaign brought about a situation in which people were not arrested by chance, but by plan”.

After this shift from passive resistance to active defiance was completely adopted, Sisulu asked Nelson Mandela to author a plan of defiance against the government which could be set in motion once the ANC was banned, and so the *Mandela Plan* or *M-plan* was born.

Writing in the early 1990’s, Nelson Mandela describes the M-plan as being conceived by himself after the 1952 annual conference of the ANC. While he was prevented from attending this conference, Mandela (1994:126) comments in his autobiography *Long walk to Freedom* “It seemed inevitable that the state would attempt to put us out of business as a legal organization as soon as it could”.

Mandela was then instructed by the NEC to author “a plan that would enable the organisation to operate from underground. This strategy came to be known as the Mandela-Plan, or simply M-plan” (1994:126). Mandela identified the main challenge as the inability to call meetings, a challenge that the M-plan was to overcome by its intricate cellular structure. In explaining the plan,

Mandela describes the structure of existing out of cells, each cell consisting out of 'roughly ten houses', and each cell having a 'cell steward'. The steward reports to the 'chief steward', who was in charge a 'zone', or simply a 'group of streets'. Finally, the chief steward was to report to the local ANC branch and report back to the cell stewards from the local branch.

One of these stewards, Johnson Mgabela, gave an account of his day-to-day work, stating (Coetzee et al.):

Going from house to house we spoke with the people and gave them some orders, trying to bring political understanding of what the ANC were doing. ... we used the Mandela Plan: going to a house; staying there with ten people; giving them an understanding of what the ANC was doing. ... From the national level the instructions came to us through the leadership of the region. We had to take these instructions to the branches; the branches had to take it to the area committees and the area committees had to take it to the street committees.

Mandela identifies three tasks for the cell steward "arranged meetings, organized political classes, and collected dues" (1994:127). In particular the reference to 'political classes' indicates that the M-plan was not merely organisational, but educational as well, and while Mandela does not claim to be the curator of the contents of these lectures, writing only that 'the ANC introduced an elementary course of political lectures'(1994:127), it can be assumed that he had a forming impact on the contents as he himself "frequently gave lectures in the evening". Elias Motsoaledi offers additional clarity on this matter (Bonner&Segal, 1998:50), saying later: "we took those who understood into a house and continued with political classes in order to give the movement its impetus".

Mandela (1994:128) ends the section of Long walk to Freedom on the M-plan by expressing that it "was instituted with only modest success and its adoption was never widespread".

Suttner (2003:124) offers a profound challenge to Mandela's sentiments, proposing that "literature on underground activity in South Africa is very limited: mainly pages or chapters of biographies or autobiographies, usually of leaders". The challenge posed by this is that workers "below the level of national leadership" tended not to produce much literature of their experience and working. In the relevant article, *The African National Congress (ANC) Underground: From the M-Plan to Rivonia*, Suttner argues that underground activity can never be understood by simply referring to written evidence, and that "oral evidence is most important, though it is extremely limited" (2003:126).

Critical of the view that the M-plan had limited impact, Suttner (2003:128) claims that the M-plan's impact should not only be evaluated by its impact on one phase of ANC-history, and that a wider

focus proves the M-plan to be “one of the more substantial sources on which the ANC underground drew in establishing itself after banning in 1960”. Mandela’s own critical view might well be understood when one considers the 1955 NEC discussion on the failure of the M-plan to be widely implemented, whereas Suttner takes a view of the time after the ANC’s banning in 1960, which is ironically what the M-plan was developed for in the first place. Suttner (2003:137) quotes Eric Mtshali saying that the M-plan only worked “effectively when ANC was banned” and John Nkadimeng saying that the M-plan was implemented ‘much wider than the areas conventionally named’.

Suttner (2003:142) concludes that “writings about early ANC preparations for underground organisation may too readily have written off the significance of the M-Plan, which seems to have had a widespread influence”. When considered from the perspective of political mythology, Suttner’s view seems the more correct view, as some brief conclusions propose: It has been indicated (2.1.3.) that political mythology serves various purposes, namely that of unification of the society around the identified hero, and the identification of the enemy or opponent. The practitioners of the M-plan seemingly identified Mandela with the M-plan, as Mgabela’s testimony shows, and so the myths purpose of creating of a hero and getting members of society to identify the hero succeeded. The intricate cell and steward system unified the society around the ideas and imperatives of the hero, whose opposition automatically became the mythological enemy.

3.2. The aim of the M-plan with regards to Nelson Mandela

Paul Trewhela, editor of the *Freedom Fighter* journal, the official mouthpiece of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, the military wing of the ANC, during the Rivonia Trial of 1963-1964, proposes a mythologising role of the M-plan in a 1991 article *A death in South Africa: The killing of Siphon Phungulwa*. He (1991:11) states:

The ‘M Plan’ of 1953, in which ‘M’ stood for Mandela, did more to surround the leader’s name with a mystique than reorganize the ANC on a cell-system, as it was supposed to do.

Trewhela proposes that this approach of focussing the attention of the media and the populace on the ‘persona of one man’ was causing Nelson Mandela, and later his wife, Winnie Mandela, to be viewed as royalty, in what he calls “the introduction of the monarchical principle”. By means of the M-plan Mandela had served the struggle mythology immensely. This plan created the channels through which communication to the masses could still take place, and through which society could still be unified, despite not being able to arrange large gatherings. Furthermore, as posterity shows, he had created the foundations upon which he himself was to be presented as the hero of the struggle myth, albeit much later, and a basis upon which the Apartheid-government

would later come to be portrayed as the mythological enemy, as that party, which is inherently incapable of doing anything good, unless by accident.

3.3. The Freedom Charter

The ANC's 1949 Defiance Campaign, which has been referred to in 3.1., took a more militant approach to change in South Africa than the ANC had expressed before. The *Programme of Action* closed with the words "Congress realises that ultimately the people will be brought together by inspired leadership, under the banner of African nationalism, with courage and determination" (ANC:1949). The Programme of Action with its very particular stance on African nationalism was, however, followed by a much more universal document, the *Freedom Charter*, which was officially adopted on the 26th of June 1955. In the Freedom Charter there exists a movement away from 'African nationalism' as seen in the Programme of Action, towards **nonracialism**, with the word 'black' only found twice, in both cases as part of the phrase 'black and white'. This charter presents a new narrative for the ANC, where it assumes a unified character that attempts to transcend race and culture.

In terms of mythology, the Freedom Charter is not in and of itself a myth, but it clearly identifies the enemy in the preamble as the "form of government founded on injustice and inequality" (2005, Department of Education). The Charter also sets out the task of the hero, by presenting a vision of the reality if the hero were to be successful, unifying masses behind this cause. In both these ways, the Freedom Charter is an important supporting document for struggle mythology in South Africa. Both the immediate and long-lasting effects of the Freedom Charter are discussed later, in reference to the EFF's 'radical interpretation' thereof (Malema, 2022).

3.4. The People's War

Despite the mythological importance of both the M-plan and the Freedom Charter, the ANC did start fading from the eye of global media after the Rivonia trial in 1964. Sampson (1999:297) refers to the *London Times*, which in 1964 had mentioned Mandela fifty-eight times, in 1965 had made mention of him twice, and in 1966 did not mention him once. A similar pattern was visible on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, with the *New York Times* referring to Mandela twenty-four times in 1964, but not once in either 1965 or 1966. In South Africa this tendency was accelerated by laws prohibiting the use of Mandela's name or that of the ANC in public, with these names being forced completely underground (3.1.).

The first new document that furthered ANC strategy after the Rivonia Trials was the 1969 *Strategy and Tactics* document, which was written mainly by Joe Slovo (Ellis, 2013:76). This document grandiosely praises the ANC as the "primary organisation of the liberation movement" (ANC,

1969), but despite its internal importance, it was not widely read outside of revolutionary circles. Regarding the state of the ANC, Sampson (1999:301) quotes American historian Thomas Karis as stating that the ANC at the end of the 1960's "seemed to be little more than a shadowy presence". While the influence of the ANC never vanished, it was overshadowed during this period by the rise of Stephen Bantu 'Steve' Biko and first his *South African Students' Organisation* and later his *Black Consciousness* movement (Hassim, 2018).

In January 1971 Biko spoke at the *Abe Bailey Institute of Inter-Racial Studies*, carrying the radical voice of the youth by stating, among others (Evans, 2017:124): "One must overhaul the whole system in South Africa before hoping to get black and white walking hand in hand to oppose a common enemy". Biko mentions the ANC but speaks of the party exclusively in the past tense. To Biko the ANC seemed to be part of recent history, not of the present. This view was shared by the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), who in 1972 referred to the ANC's "rather poor level of progress" (Ellis, 2013:86).

There were, however, moments of hope, such as in 1974 when the dictatorship of Portugal collapsed, creating new opportunities for the ANC in Angola and Mozambique (Ellis, 2013:111), and in 1976 when Winnie Mandela, the wife of Nelson Mandela, seemed to become a voice of the people once more in the aftermath of the 16 June 1976 protests.

Pohlandt-McCormick (2000:590-593) indicates that there are differing points of view regarding who was behind the uprising of 16 June 1976, but various of the young people involved had understood Mrs. Mandela to be behind the protest. Despite this momentum, it was not until the adoption of the *Green Book* in 1979 that the ANC seriously revisited its own mythology, and massively expanded its efforts to push the image of Nelson Mandela as mythical hero and martyr for the cause. This is not to say that there weren't many meaningful ANC activities in the 1970's, it simply underlines the importance of the *People's War* to the ANC's struggle ideology. Ellis reiterates this view by stating that by 1978 the ANC had realised that "the strategic vision adopted at Morogoro a decade earlier was obsolete". Jeffery (2009:25) indicates KGB influence in this, writing that the KGB was 'dismayed' at the idea that the ANC were being "eclipsed within the country", a clear reference to the popularity created by the Black Consciousness movement of Steve Biko, and the outcry created by his death in 1977. For these reasons, the ANC undertook a study tour to Vietnam at the end of 1978, a tour that would greatly change the course of the struggle, and the role that political mythology was to play.

Jeffery (2009:25) quotes Tambo stating that the ANC had by 1978 gotten into a "bad strategic situation" and credits the visit to Vietnam as the moment when the ANC revisited its own approach of focussing so much on armed struggle, but not sufficiently working towards 'political

mobilisation'. A key tenet of the theory of people's war, as it was successfully applied in Vietnam, was the combination of "agitation, backed by terror and coercion, while also holding out the promise of a golden future". An important aspect of this mobilisation, and the fourth leg of the ANC's new strategy as set out in the Green Book was international pressure which ultimately "isolates the enemy". In her contribution to *The Cambridge Companion to Nelson Mandela*, Deborah Posel agrees with an intensification of the ANC's renewed efforts with the beginning of the 1980's. She refers to the *Sunday Post's* Release Mandela Campaign (RMC), which started in March of 1980, as the first of many initiatives to underline Mandela as the face of the ANC's struggle. This was followed by a wide array of global initiatives, most of which have been academically analysed, but some highlights include the book *Higher than Hope* by Fatima Meer, the United Democratic Front electing Mandela to be one of its patrons in 1983, the 1988 Broadway concert *Sarafina*, and the now world famous Nelson Mandela 70th birthday rock concert, which took place at Wembley stadium in London, and was broadcast to 67 countries. This renewed focus on Mandela was noticed by the South African government as well, with then President PW Botha, delivering his *Rubicon-speech* in 1985, not referring to freeing ANC members or even reinstating the ANC (Evans, 2017:186). Rather, Botha speaks about releasing "Mr Nelson Mandela from jail". While it seemed as if the world had forgotten about Mandela in 1966, by 1988 he was "the world's most famous political prisoner" (Lodge, 2006). The sustained efforts of the ANC and its supporters had prevailed, aided by the "long isolation had allowed the myth to take off from the man" (Sampson, 1999:402).

When the five functions of political mythology, which were identified earlier (2.1.) are considered, the 'Mandela-myth', which had its foundations in the M-plan but was vastly elaborated upon during the People's War, as well as by liberation movements globally, clearly succeeded in creating a hero, outlining the hero's will, unifying the people, and identifying an enemy. While the struggle was not only fought on the level of mythology, this part of the struggle seems to have been successful.

3.5. Riding the wave of heroic mythology

After the ANC had come to power, the mysticism of seclusion which had aided in the growth of the 'Mandela Myth' was no longer relevant, but the ANC were adamant in continuing to present itself as it had in 1969, namely as the "primary organisation of the liberation movement". To maintain this newfound order, the ANC needed to unify a culturally diverse mass of South Africans, which was aided by the way in which the ANC presented itself, now no longer only to its members or to select publications, but to the world at large. The ANC now needed to be victors of a struggle that transcended race and regime and needed to be seen as "miracle makers". To

achieve this, the existing mythology was found to be a deep well from which it could draw, as will be proposed in this section.

When Nelson Mandela became President Nelson Mandela in 1994, he maintains the role of mythical hero by explaining the ANC's new vision in religious rhetoric, particularly during his very first speech as president (Evans, 2017):

We enter into a covenant that we shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, without any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity – a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world

A covenant, as is referred to here, is not only an agreement, but a bond bound in blood (Gerstenberger, 1965). President Mandela explains the nature of this covenant later in his speech:

We are both humbled and elevated by the honour and privilege that you, the people of South Africa, have bestowed on us, as the first President of a united, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa, to lead our country out of the valley of darkness

Here he equates the ANC with the 'Lord' of the Christian and Hebrew Psalm 23:4, who would lead the believer 'through the valley of darkness'. By introducing himself and his party in this vein, President Mandela uses the mythology of the everyday South African to propose that he and his party not just politicians, but are in fact heroes and saviours of the people. Unification of the society around the hero, key aims of political mythology, are clearly present in this rhetoric. Reference to the ANC in theological terms, particularly within the terminology of Christian theology, was present throughout its rhetoric after 1994, with the most obvious examples coming from former South African President Jacob Zuma, who in 2012 called the ANC "God's elect party". Southall (2017) refers to this as Zuma's "political theology". During the 105th birthday celebrations in 2017, Zuma makes the ANC out to be an instrument in the hand of the Christian God: "We believers never forget that, just like the son of man who came to wash away all of our sins, the birth of the ANC happened to free the people who were oppressed". For Zuma, then, towards the end of his reign as president, the ANC are "just like the son of man", a biblical reference to Jesus Christ, the saviour of the human race in the Christian religion.

It has been indicated from the work of Raglan (pt. 2.1.) that myths create heroes, and while Nelson Mandela is the main hero in ANC mythology, Zuma makes a hero of the ANC by-and-large. The implication of this (Southall, 2017) is that those who oppose the ANC are evil, more particularly, they are the Devil, the evillest character in the Christian religion. Here Jung's archetype of 'the trickster' is clearly visible in Zuma's use of Christian mythology to identify the enemy.

4. Julius Malema and an alternative mythological interpretation.

When the EFF was created in 2013 its political positioning took direct aim at the ANC's voter base by using the ANC's own political mythology against it. In presenting what it has later come to call a 'radical interpretation' of the Freedom Charter (Malema:2022), the EFF directly attacks both Nelson Mandela as face of the struggle, as well as the ANC's interpretation of its own mission statement. This section starts by considering the Pan Africanist Congress's break from the ANC as prototype for the EFF's break, whereafter the features and effects of the EFF's reinterpretation of ANC mythology are analysed.

4.1. Previous breakaways from the ANC, particularly the PAC

Mandela Biographer and notable ANC historian Tom Lodge (2006:81) makes mention of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and Robert Sobukwe, and the impact that it most definitely had on the direction that the ANC took in the years following the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960.

The PAC was created, just like the EFF would be more than 54 years later, by a splinter group out of the ANC. The reason for their leaving the ANC is stated by the PAC (2018) "as a result of the abandoned mission by our former comrades who saw it fit to give away our struggle which we initiated since 1652, the arrival of settlers". This referred to the ANC adopting the Freedom Charter, which in its fourth article proclaims, "The Land Shall Be Shared Among Those Who Work It!", and in the subtext of this article clarifies this to mean 'All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose' (Department of Education: 2005).

There are multiple parallels between the PAC and the EFF, most notably that both were formed by disgruntled members of the ANC who believed it to have abandoned its erstwhile principles. In the case of the PAC, it noted the clear differentiation between the approach of the 1949 Programme of Action and the Freedom Charter. The Programme of Action stated a goal of the ANC as "The fundamental principles of the Programme of Action of the African National Congress are inspired by the desire to achieve national freedom. By national freedom we mean freedom from white domination and the attainment of political independence", while the 1955 Freedom Charter clearly proposes a non-racial approach (pt. 3.3.).

In the case of the EFF, it was not the Freedom Charter, but the alleged abandonment of the principles of the 1955 Freedom Charter by President Mandela after he had been released from prison⁸ (Malema:2015). Despite this notable difference, namely that the EFF accepts and affirms the very document that drove the PAC into breaking with the ANC, Julius Malema (Mvumu, 2019)

⁸ 4.2.2. elaborates on this point.

claimed that “If the PAC was strong, the EFF would have never come to existence because we would have left the ANC to join the PAC”. In 2014 discussions of a merger between the EFF and the now struggling PAC were ongoing, with Malema declaring (Pillay, 2014) that the “EFF and PAC share a common passion about the policy of land expropriation”. During his speech at the 67-year anniversary of the Freedom Charter in 2022, Malema (2022) defended this approach by stating

As the EFF, in accordance with our founding manifesto, we are inspired by the radical interpretation of the Freedom Charter, and salute the brave African people, who chartered the blueprint for an independent Africa. That blueprint has unfortunately been betrayed, and the EFF today stands as the true custodian of the Freedom Charter

The message is clear: The ANC’s interpretation is wrong, and by means of its interpretation, it has abandoned the true vision of the Freedom Charter.

In terms of the Congress of the People (COPE), the political party created by ANC members in 2008 under the guidance of Mosiuoa Lekota, it is simply noted that COPE has positioned itself to the centre of the South African political spectrum, and thus to the right of the ANC, since its inception (Simao, 2008), which renders it irrelevant to the scope of this article. While there are multiple smaller factions that have broken from the ANC besides the PAC and COPE, the focus will, due to momentum and performance during elections, be on the EFF as spearhead of radical opposition to the ANC-alliance.

4.2. The EFF reinterpretation.

Based on support for President Zuma, a young Julius Malema was elected president of the ANC Youth League. While Malema was radically pro-Zuma, even stating that they (the ANC Youth League) would “kill for Zuma” (Anon., 2008), he was also opposed to the way in which the ANC was at that stage handling the issue of land reform. In 2008 the policy on the table was that of “willing buyer willing seller”, an approach proposed in 2005, drafted in 2008, and reviewed in the following years. The policy was criticised from the onset by members of the ANC, even President Jacob Zuma during his Freedom Day address of 2011, the ANC took no definite steps to address the issue at that stage (Zuma, 2011). On this very issue of land, Malema openly differed from the ANC in 2009, seeking a more radical approach to give resources to black owners (Bauer, 2011). Malema then continued his radicalism, notably by singing the divisive *Kill the Boer* (Afrikaner) rallying song in 2010. This led to a temporary and later a permanent suspension of Malema by the ANC.

Here a point of no return is reached by Malema, he was cast out from the ANC, the hitherto vehicle for the heroes of the struggle for freedom. The moment arose, however, for Malema to return as the true hero of the people, the moment during which he was to present himself as the re-interpreter of the struggle mythology which the ANC had hitherto called their own. During his speech at Marikana on the 18th of August 2012, in the aftermath of a bloody conflict between police and mineworkers that saw 34 mineworkers killed, Julius Malema definitively preached a new interpretation of the struggle mythology.

4.2.1. Malema's recasting of the struggle in South Africa

At Marikana Julius Malema recasts the ANC and its ideology in at least three important ways: His selection of ANC leaders to praise and to belittle; his portrayal of the contemporary (2012) ANC; and his portrayal of himself.

Malema started his speech with the traditional way of starting a struggle speech in South Africa, with the word 'Amandla' (power) to which the crowd responded 'Awethu' (to the people) (Evans:2017). Malema then chanted the names of two late ANC members: **Peter Mokaba**, and **Oliver Tambo**, but notably not the names of Nelson Mandela or Thabo Mbeki. Tambo was President of the ANC during Mandela's time in incarceration, thus the final hero of the struggle, and Mokaba was the first ANC Youth leader after readmission in South Africa. Most notably, however, Mokaba was a radical, just as Malema was, who authored the chant 'Kill the Boer, Kill the Farmer' in 1993 at the memorial service of Chris Hani (Brkic, 2010). Malema followed his appraisal of Tambo and Mokaba by a series of insults aimed at the contemporary ANC. Malema would shout "Down with Jacob Zuma, down!" to which the crowd then responds passionately "Down". Malema goes further, and blames the deaths of the 34 mineworkers directly on then deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa:

...these people who work in television and radio do not mention that Cyril Ramaphosa is one of the shareholders of this mine... The reason the workers were killed is because there is a highly connected political figure in that mine

Malema's referral to the governing ANC as 'murderers of their own people', introduces a new chapter to the struggle: the struggle against the 'pretend' liberators. Malema states "From today when asked who is your president, you must answer, saying 'I don't have a president'".

With the enemy identified and vilified, Malema casts himself as the new hero of the original struggle mythology, even the messiah, saying (Evans:2017): "Comrades, those who died should know that we will continue with a struggle, and their fight will remain our fight."

4.2.2. Malema's vilification of Mandela.

Weber (2019:376) had indicated charismatic rule, like that of both a young Mandela and Julius Malema since the creation of the EFF, to be intolerant opposition, and Jung had theorised that in politics the opponent will be vilified as being inherently flawed (2.3.). Malema's approach to attacking the ANC would always have meant attacking Mandela, the face of the mythology, at some point. This point came in 2016. During a speech at the Oxford Union (2016), Malema stated that Mandela was untrue to the Freedom Charter of 1955, as the resources remained in the hand of the white few. "The deviation from the Freedom Charter was the beginning of selling out the revolution". Here Malema elaborates on how Mandela 'dines with the Oppenheims' – a wealthy South African family and says that Mandela was persuaded to "turn against himself". This reinterpretation walks the tightrope of not rejecting the Freedom Charter, while rejecting the way in which the ANC had been using it under Mandela's leadership and thereafter.

Malema opposes Mandela's heroism after coming out of prison, calling him a "Staged, managed Nelson Mandela, who compromised the fundamental principles of the revolution which are well captured in the Freedom Charter". The charismatic leader cannot submit to the previous regime and be legitimate at the same time (Weber, 2019:376). Fundamental to this argument are the very words with which Malema follows this insult to Mandela: In 2016 he says, "The EFF subscribed to the Freedom Charter", and in 2022, "We are the real custodians of the Freedom Charter".

The political positioning of the EFF and Malema towards the ANC thus departs from the point of view that the ANC have betrayed the struggle and are therefore no longer the heroes and prophets of the people, and that the people need no longer be their disciples (Weber, 2019:376). Furthermore, he proposes that he and his EFF had taken over the position of legitimate struggle heroes, as they were true to the original 'scripture' of the struggle (the Freedom Charter), and the heroes of the original struggle (Tambo, Chris Hani, Mokaba).

4.2.3 Finding the source of the reinterpretation

The primary differentiation between the interpretation of the EFF and that of the ANC on the level of political philosophy is to be found in the radicalism that the EFF portrays towards social change. In the preamble of its own constitution the EFF (2014) calls itself 'radical' and 'militant', both referring to an intolerance with the status quo. We take the definition of Böttcher (2017), who defines Radicalism as "a form of hostility against the status quo and its establishment" and also: "Radicalism stands in rebellious opposition against the establishment".

This alternative interpretation of the initial goals of the struggle, as presented by the EFF, is based, according to the EFF in *Marxism, Leninism and Fanonism* (EFF, 2014). Marxism and Leninism had been part of the initial ideology from the beginning, with the South African Communist Party playing an integral role in the development of the ANC, as has been indicated. The Green Book, as well as Joe Slovo's 1988 pamphlet *The South African Working Class and the National Democratic Revolution*, as well as all iterations of Strategy and Tactics make the ANC's connection to Marxism-Leninism clear. The clearest difference in sources is then the EFF's addition of 'Fanonism'. The EFF (2014) states that it subscribes to the Fanonian school of thought "on its analysis of the State, imperialism, class and race contradictions".

Fanonism, based on the works of 20th century decolonial thinker Franz Fanon, takes the stance that the so-called third world is to be decolonised absolutely, with the people of different, mostly European, origin being eradicated completely⁹. Fanon defines decolonisation radically as "substitution of one species of mankind by another" (Fanon, 2014:1), in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*. The EFF echoes this in their 2014 constitution, with its first aim being: "To capture political and state power through whatever revolutionary means possible to transform the economy for the benefit of all, in particular Africans" (EFF, 2014). Fanonism offers an ideological basis on which the EFF may differentiate between racial groups, allowing the party to move away from the ANC policy of non-racialism to a position of racial differentiation and the prioritisation of 'Africans', which is taken here to mean black people.

4.3. Effects of the EFF reinterpretation

4.3.1. Intolerance towards the traditional mythology

It has been indicated at various points in this article that the alternative interpretation of the struggle mythology attempts to convince the masses to unite behind its interpretation of original texts and purports to be the authentic descendant of former generations of heroes. The EFF shows an intolerance to ANC ideas of unity, such as that of the 'Rainbow Nation', the idea of Nelson Mandela liberating black people, and the idea of the ANC as a party of the people.

If this difference in interpretation persists between the ANC and the EFF, both will periodically build up an argument that the other is the trickster, the divisive and opportunistic character, while presenting itself and its leader as the true hero.

⁹ While there are some who propose that Fanon should not be read literally, a thorough reading of especially *The Wretched of the Earth* does not hint at being meant figuratively, and so the authors continue along the lines of a literal reading.

4.3.2. Black nationalism and intolerance towards minority groups

History is fraught with examples of ethnic minorities being discriminated against in various forms when ethnic or racial nationalism becomes popular in a state. For this reason, understanding and criticising the rise of black nationalism under the alternative interpretation of the struggle mythology in South Africa is of the utmost importance.

Koekemoer (2017:69) argues that the EFF are indeed in pursuit of black nationalism, as they see this as an avenue to end what they interpret as the continuing black oppression under the ANC. The EFF, based in Fanonism, classify white people as settlers and black people as citizens (Mbolo & Mabasa, 2019), or more specifically, do not classify white people as citizens – as Fanon holds that the ‘settler’ can never become part of the local community. Writes Fanon: The colonized can “only by challenged by out and out violence” (Fanon, 2014:3). Regarding the ‘native’ sector and the ‘European’ sector, Fanon believes: “there is no conciliation possible, one of them is superfluous” (Fanon, 2014:4). The influence of Fanon on Malema’s approach to black nationalism, as part of his alternative interpretation of the struggle mythology, and the effect it has on his approach towards minorities, is best indicated with contemporary examples:

On 28 February 2018, during a speech in Soweto, Malema said: “We don’t back whites, we don’t care about their feelings... they must be happy we are not beating them up, we are not calling for genocide” (TimesLIVE Video, 2018). In connection with this theme, in November of 2016, Malema uttered “We are not calling for the slaughtering of White people, at least for now” (BusinessTech, 2019). While the South African Human Rights Commission saw this only as an expression of anger, the FW de Klerk Foundation argued that this amounted to the incitement of violence.

The EFF has also proved itself intolerant to other minority groups, primarily indicated in the words of its Deputy President, Floyd Shivambu, opposing a member of the national treasury for “not being African” – the official, Ismail Momoniat, is of Indian descent (Moodley, 2018). Finally, on the 14th of September 2019, the day that Robert Mugabe died, Malema tweeted a quote from Mugabe: “The only white man you can trust is a dead white man”.

4.3.3. The introduction of a new “true” mythology

When finally considering the EFF’s reinterpretation with regards to the initial theoretical framework, it is clear from the excerpts of Malema’s and the EFF’s rhetoric that the party attempts to present Julius Malema as the true face and the true hero of the struggle. The identification of this “new hero” coincides with the rejection of Mandela, the hero of the original struggle, for being untrue to the principles of his own struggle. The reasons for this are on the surface political, but

before it becomes political it is societal, in the sense that the EFF is trying to unify society behind its interpretation. In this way a new interpretation of the existing historical phenomena is introduced, a new hero is presented, and a new enemy is identified.

5. Conclusion

This article set out to analyse the political positioning of the EFF not simply in terms of fascism, populism, or racism, while it was conceded that all these elements might be present resulting from its positioning. The starting point for analysis was the mythology that the ANC created and presented to the public, and how this mythology interpreted the ANC's roll in the South African struggle.

The mythology, which was created and developed by the ANC, served the purpose of unifying people behind a cause, creating heroes, as well as identifying friends and enemies. The role of mythology, especially the creation of a hero and a face for the struggle, succeeded in creating the highly effective Mandela myth. This article indicated that Julius Malema and the EFF have no interest in creating their own mythology, but that he and his party are attempting to take over the ANC mythology by presenting an alternative interpretation which makes villains of former heroes, in particular by criticising post prison Nelson Mandela, the main hero of the ANC struggle mythology, and introducing Julius Malema as the true hero, the authentic hero, who correctly interprets the original myth, and who's charismatic leadership is thus more legitimate.

The alternative, radical interpretation attempts to include more themes of black nationalism, while not breaking with the Freedom Charter completely. Finally, this alternative interpretation has proven highly intolerant of minority groups.

SECTION D: CONCLUSION

This conclusion will centre on four focus areas:

Firstly, the main research question will be revisited, considering in particular to what extent this question has been answered by the research. Second, a reflection will be offered on the research, particularly making mention of key findings, and also where the research deviated from the initial planning. Upon concluding this reflection, some recommendations for future research will be offered, as noted during the research process; and finally, the new knowledge contributed to the field of study will be indicated.

1. Revisiting the main research question

The main research question for this dissertation was: “Has the transformation process in South Africa, which was inaugurated in 1994, been influenced by a broader radical ideology consisting of revolutionary philosophy and struggle mythology?” This question opened the door broad enough for the research to focus in both on the existence of political radicalism and the development of such radicalism – both crucial burdens of proof if the question was to be properly answered.

The research design aimed from the very beginning to capture the essence of both these features by comprising two research articles, the first focussing on the role that radicalism is playing in the contemporary political discourse in South Africa, and the second tracking this radicalism, to a certain extent in a genealogical way, searching for its roots.

This links up to the specific research questions, as the first article analysed revolutionary philosophy while the second considered struggle mythology. Both were, however, not only exercises in metaphysics, but applied and challenged the relevant influence on the transformational ideology.

The first article found that radicalism was in fact present in the South African transformational political discourse and criticised this presence by first indicating the inherent dangers to radicalism and secondly by proposing additional approaches to transformation. This article was published by the *Journal for Christian Scholarship* in August 2021, more than two months before the municipal elections of 1 November 2021, during which the ANC’s support fell below 50% of the total votes cast – for the first time since 1994. The second article identified the origins and development of radicalism in South Africa, but not necessarily the ideological origins and development, as these had been covered in the first article, but the historical origins and development from within the ANC, which later flowed into the EFF. This article identified and

analysed a deep-seeded mythology, created by the ANC and adopted by the EFF, which was developed with the express purpose of making a hero of Nelson Mandela. This second article has been accepted for publication by *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, a British journal under the label of *Taylor and Francis*.

2. Summarising and reflecting on the research

This project was tackled due to the real threat of radicalism in South Africa. Since the finalisation of the proposal, Julius Malema, the leader of the EFF, has taken to the stand in an open court in South Africa and refused to confirm that he will never call for genocide in the country. While this research was done before the court case in question, it serves as an indication that the subject matter is topical and urgent. The first article, which is listed as Section B in this dissertation, serves as an indication that the research started as Aristotle famously started research in a new field: by categorising and defining. Radicalism in South Africa had to be understood, first by understanding radicalism, then by understanding the current South African political milieu and status quo. As the radicalism in question is leftist radicalism, the European and African roots of radicalism and its links to revolution were researched, offering an outline that enables the new reader on South African politics to sufficiently grasp the issues, while offering alternatives to the radical approach as a new contribution which might well be appreciated by the avid reader of South African politics. This first article introduced the author and reader to the works of Franz Fanon, and indicated the line walked from the Enlightenment to Fanon; thus, grounding Fanonism in the European Enlightenment, although notable differences were duly noted. The first article immediately raised the question of South African origin – meaning that the work of Franz Fanon, while it plays a contemporary role in South African politics through the EFF, was not at all relevant to South African politics before 2011, except for a brief mention thereof by Steve Biko in the 1970s, and quite possibly in the literature of underground movements. The impact was however not deemed sufficient to be the only source of radicalism in South Africa. This question of origin drove the second article in the direction of ANC mythology, and the unfolding of the M-plan. This article essentially worked backwards from the EFF's radicalism to the trace elements of radicalism in the ANC, and all the way back to the initial abandonment of peaceful resistance by the ANC. This research answered the questions, which it set out to, but it also warned that many conversations will still be had in South Africa. This study was not written to scare the reader, but it must be stated that some of the findings painted a bleak picture of peace in South Africa after 27 years of democracy, at the time this study was undertaken.

3. Recommendations for future research

There can be little doubt that the works of Franz Fanon, and particularly the impact that they had and are having on the global decolonialism debate, must be researched thoroughly from the perspective of those critical of his work. Upon researching Fanon, the researcher found that he openly propagated violence, but perhaps more worrisome was the lack of response to his work. It could be that most universities with the capability and interest either agree strongly with Fanon, or do not care much for the decolonialism debate, as they cannot be considered colonies. This must, however, be determined by further study.

Based on the shortage of available resources, it can also be stated that more work needs to be done on the M-plan and the ANC's mythology, as well as how this mythology has flowed over into the EFF.

Finally, it would seem as if the political discourse in South Africa has become heavily biased in favour of socialist thinking, meaning that important resources such as Groen van Prinsterer, Edmund Burke and Plato are neglected, and in some cases completely rejected. The consequence thereof can be found in the vast majority of publications on how South Africa should go forward – it would seem as if an echo chamber of centre-left ideas has developed, with those who dare think otherwise forced to motivate their thoughts doubly, a happenstance which embodies a lack of academic freedom and which weakens the flow and quality of political discourse in South Africa. Ideas should, as was the case with Socrates, be tested on their merits, not shunned at the door. This means that Burke, Van Prinsterer, Plato and others referred to in this research should be brought into the ring and be faced head on by those who would see their ideas defeated.

4. New knowledge contributed by this study

In his famous Nicomachean Ethics the philosopher Aristotle says of politics, “τὸ τέλος ἐστὶν οὐ γνῶσις ἀλλὰ πράξις¹⁰.” The first implication thereof is that a student of politics will never come to a fixed and inexorable conclusion such as might have been the case with famous natural scientists as Newton and Einstein. The second implication is the flipside of the first, more particularly that political science tends to constantly produce new conclusions, the lifetimes of which might not be quite as immovable as those produced in laboratories.

The conclusions that follow here must therefore be read within the particular historical context, as well as the status quo of these subjects at the time of publication. The first article, for instance,

¹⁰ The aim is not knowledge, but practice.

was published before the 2021 municipal elections in which the ANC lost notable ground in terms of its electoral dominance, to which this article refers. This being said, quite a few of the conclusions that follow are still relevant and will remain relevant as they document and discuss historical events that are unchanging.

The main conclusions reached by this study are as follows:

It was concluded that the National Democratic Revolution underpins the Tripartite Alliance of the ANC. SACP and COSATU's approach to transformation, and that this approach, especially due to its revolutionary roots, can open a door to leftist radicalism.

It was concluded that the EFF has forced the ANC to move to the left of its previous political position, noting particularly the approach to land reform and the central bank. By gaining popularity with ideas left of the ANC, the EFF made the ANC change its stance on these issues, in order to win back some of those votes lost to the political left.

It was concluded that the revolutionary approach that the ANC has taken to transformation is not the only option, and that there are viable alternatives. The alternatives indicated were those based on counter revolutionary political philosophy, particularly that of Edmund Burke, as well as an approach that considers Christian principles of change.

It was concluded that the ANC developed and entrenched a mythology based around Nelson Mandela in the 1950s, known as the M-Plan. The M-Plan succeeded in making Nelson Mandela, and to a lesser extent his then wife Winnie Madikizela-Mandela mythical heroes. This mythology was gradually developed throughout Mandela's incarceration.

Considering that radicalism was a central subject of this study, it was indicated that a schism had existed within the ANC from early on regarding the use and justification of radicalism. When Julius Malema was removed by the ANC he reinvented himself as the real hero of the mythology previously developed by the ANC, publicly criticising the post-incarceration Mandela as managed and controlled.

It was concluded that, especially in their veneration of Franz Fanon, the EFF is radicalising the existing mythology further, exploiting the status quo in South Africa for political gain, and threatening the fragile stability that currently exists in the country.

5. Finally

South Africa has great potential, and it is the wish of the researcher that this potential be reached. Despite the storied past, and despite the embattled current political leadership, these are problems from which the country can recover. What South Africa will not be able to recover from, however, is the kind of violence, hatred and destruction called for by thinkers such as Franz Fanon. This is not an idle warning, but one that should be taken in earnest, as these ideas have lead to death and destruction, and have proven time and again that they should not be underestimated.

The goal of this study was to serve as a warning that South Africa is at a fork in the road, and the leading thoughts of the coming few years will cast either a long light or a long shadow over the future of the country. We should choose them wisely.

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