United in Diversity or Divided in Difference: Belonging and Opposition in Democratic South Africa

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Abstract

Building durable peace in post-conflict situations involves not just the cessation of hostilities but the formation of a unified sense of peoplehood and the creation of cross-cutting alliances. In the history of the South African move toward inclusive government, several mechanisms of the transition were engineered specifically to produce a sense of South African peoplehood. However, there exists an imminent tension between senses of belonging to ethnically and racially defined communities that characterized the past struggle and a sense of belonging to a national community. Because both belonging and strategies of opposition vested in parties and outside of them continue to be characterized by racial divisions, rather than through more complex networks of association, the character and quality of democracy in South Africa remains underdeveloped.

Introduction

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) concluded more than a decade ago. It was part of a path-breaking effort to reconcile former combatants and negotiate a peaceful transition from the racist apartheid system to an inclusive democratic regime. Despite the fact that the TRC has been praised as a success, its efforts to produce a more unified society within South Africa have not proven durable over time. Racial divides and racialized conflict are now as significant, if not more so, than they were at the beginning of the truth commission process (Posel 2001; Fisher 2008). Racial labels and attributions continue to be the source of conflict in schools (Dolby 2001), within and between political parties (Ferree 2010), in the renaming of public spaces (Orman 2008: 125-9) and in the management of public monuments (Coombes 2003). The experience of transitional justice, in some cases, seems to even have strengthened the salience of sectarian racial and ethnic identities (Gibson 2004). Additionally, since the end of the commission, the majority of South Africans seem to be growing more prejudiced (Gibson and Claassen 2010). Why should this be the case?

Although it is certainly true that any one commission, with a mandate to investigate 34 years of a country's history, and with a lifespan of just over two years, cannot be expected to single-handedly produce a unified society. Neither can it be expected that more than 300 years of injustice at the hands of myriad rulers from every corner the of South African social fabric could be dealt with and consigned to history within 18 years of democratic rule. The question remains, however, why is South Africa divided along racial lines now, under a universal suffrage democracy and after the efforts of so many to produce a peaceful transition, than it was after decades of racist-exclusionary rule?

The "miracle" transition away from apartheid in South Africa[1] produced a new democratic order, but seems to have stopped short of delivering the conditions necessary for producing the unity of a nation, or the basis on which cross-cutting social and political alliances can be formed. If the goal of the TRC was "to provide a principle of commonality that would ground South Africans, despite their differences of culture, religion, language and race, as a *people*" (Chipkin 2007: 173-4), then the persistence of contentious racialized divisions, and the lack of cross-cutting alliances in evidence, seem to point to a lack of durable and long-term positive change that resulted from the commission.

That a multi-racial/multi-ethnic society should experience conflict among groups is not, in itself, surprising, especially in a young democracy like South Africa. That the conflict should manifest itself through opposition in political parties and outside of them because the identity-based cleavages are salient political movers is not unusual (Posner 2004). There exists an imminent tension between senses of ethnic belonging and national belonging that makes "political personhood a fractured, fractal experience" in South Africa, as in other multi-ethnic societies (Comaroff and Comaroff 2003: 447).

However, in the case of South Africa, the nation that engineered an electoral transition away from apartheid that has served as both "miracle and model" (Graybill 2002; Cole 2009; Shore 2009) for political transitions around the world, the fact that racial and ethnic categories remain so politically salient may indicate that South Africa is "a *nation*-state that both exists, as a state, and has still to be created, as a nation" (Maré 2005: 503).[2] This is borne out in a recent study by Robert Mattes (2012) who finds that racial cleavages that dominated discourse in the apartheid era are being replicated and retain salience for generations born in the twilight years of apartheid and afterward.

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[1] Quoting from an EU report on the first South African elections in 1994: "given South Africa's history of racial discrimination and oppression, its massive problems of poverty and unemployment, and the tragically high levels of violence, the success of the election is little less than miraculous" (Van Kessel 2000, 58).

[2] Later in the same article, Mare observes, "People carry South African identity documents and passports, pay taxes, accept the powers of the police and courts, argue over the independence of the judiciary. And all the time "race" remains, confirmed as the common sense of the essence of social identity" (Maré 2005, 509).

This contention is, in part, due to the persistence of narratives of racialized belonging and opposition that reinforce the contentious identities of the anti-apartheid struggle. Because of these exclusivist and non-permeable forms of both belonging and opposition, the project of building a South African nation and the creation of sustainable and democratic forms of opposition are under threat today in South Africa. Evidence of this can be seen in the lack of inclusive political communities, as well as the racialization of political parties, and citizens' participation in non-party forms of opposition in South Africa, such as strike action, emigration and racialized civil society organizations.

This paper seeks to theorize about the state of both belonging and opposition in South Africa using broad societal trends like the recent incidents of strikes and violence, emigration and public opinion data. Ultimately, I conclude that non-racialized senses of both belonging and opposition are under-developed in South Africa, and the absence of both is hurting the quality and character of democracy in South Africa.

Belonging and Opposition: Social Cleavage Theory

Belonging and opposition are, in fact, intimately connected in the context of a democratic state. Democratic politics necessarily involves contestation, but also a sense of unity that binds it. Indeed, part of the value of the process of undergoing transitional justice mechanisms, like the TRC, is that they try to create an underlying unity that serves to bolster and strengthen the democratic processes of contestation, and engender trust in state institutions that are run by former opponents. Without a clear focus on creating and maintaining the structures of opposition and democratic contestation, the project of creating a political community of belonging is ultimately destructive of democratic functioning, in favour of unity. An excess of unity, or indeed, an enforced kind of unity, is almost certainly undemocratic in practice. An excess of opposition, on the other hand, is profoundly volatile. It is also destructive of democratic politics, in favour of instability. I contend that if we are to take seriously the goal of post-conflict state and nation building, regardless of context, there must be a focus both on creating unity and fostering opposition.

Building durable peace in post-conflict situations involves not just the cessation of hostilities, but also the formation of a unified sense of peoplehood and the creation of cross-cutting alliances. By creating an overarching sense of unity, along with complex networks of affiliation and opposition, based on issues of policy and public interest, rather than simplistic modes of identity-based belonging, political communities also create the foundation of democratic contestation. Sustainable and civil contestation is central to the consolidation of democratic politics in formerly divided countries. Cross-cutting alliances promote such competition and overall democratic stability by "inhibit[ing] the extent to which political alignments intensify along any single dimension," (Chandra 2005; Chandra 2006; Dunning and Harrison 2010: 21; Lipset and Rokkan 1967).

Although social divides between citizens are inevitable in large democratic systems, the sustainability of democratic political contestation relies on the presence of divides that allow

people to cohere with others in a variety of different ways (Almond and Verba 1989). Cross-cutting cleavages are centrally important in creating stability in ethnically, linguistically or religiously divided societies (Lijphart 1977: 75). The process of political reconciliation is intimately connected with the formation of cross-cutting cleavages, insofar as they promote identities that undermine the salience of conflict-era divisions (Hayner 2002: 161; Verdeja 2009: 3). These networks of intersecting social divisions allow for citizens to be active and politically engaged without the group identities that they possess threatening the political system as a whole. If, instead, the divides roughly coincide, both conflicts are intensified and create the deeper and more fundamental societal divides. In the wake of political violence, the drawing out of social cleavages that cut across, rather than reinforce, the identities associated with the past struggle allows for robust political contestation to occur sustainably.

A long term debate in the cleavage theory literature engages the question of whether social cleavages determine the form of party systems (Lipset and Rokkan 1967) or whether party systems serve to bring about salient social cleavages (Colomer 2000). Regardless of the direction of the causal arrow, it is accepted that when party systems stabilize around a particular cleavage, they keep the divides represented by the system salient as long as the party system remains stable (Zielinski 2002). The determinism of the earlier approaches has been augmented by new scholarly viewpoints on identity formation. This research indicates that social cleavages are, in general, in decline partly because of the variety of new identities that people can claim or abandon. This model of electoral systems, regardless of the direction of the causal arrow, goes some way in explaining the persistence of race, rather than other social divisions like class or region, in South Africa. As will be discussed in more detail below, the party system in South Africa seems largely to be consolidating itself along racial lines.

Just as in consolidated democracies, myriad groups in the public sphere, including parties, pressure groups and non-governmental organizations, present alternative ways of conceptualizing or defining what it means to be a member of some "political we", which underlies the networks of social cleavages that define the arenas of political debate. For the purposes of this study, I call these narratives of belonging and opposition. These narratives, which form the basis of what Rogers Smith (2003) called "stories of peoplehood", define who is inside of a community and who is outside, as well as who has the right to speak and to be heard within such communities.

Narratives of Political Belonging

The question of belonging in post-conflict societies and the role of reconciliation processes in creating peaceful coexistence are of the utmost importance in an era characterized by intrastate conflict. Even when armed struggle is over, persistent societal divisions threaten the renewal of civil violence. Who belongs and who does not, especially in post-conflict states, is not only a matter of personal feelings of identification, but also comes to bear on the full range of state power, both in distribution and extraction. These feelings or narratives of belonging go beyond the juridical concept of citizenship, and include the affective orientation of citizens toward one

another as individuals and as groups. Indeed, citizenship or residence in a territory is an insufficient threshold for belonging, as it is possible for people to be "…born in a particular state, be educated there, be its formal citizens, and yet not be constructed as 'really' belonging. For that to occur, they would have to be not just citizens but also members of 'the nation' " (Yuval-Davis 2011: 80).

When groups are classified as belonging based on seemingly immutable identities or identifications, then the new democracies that emerge in post-conflict states are fundamentally threatened (Gibson and Gouws 2003: 43) because of the seemingly impermeable boundaries of the emerging political community (Yuval-Davis 2011: 21). Some researchers have even gone so far as to argue that, "without some degree of interracial accommodation…the South African experiment in democratic change will founder" (Gibson 2006).

Even if the divisions do not fundamentally destabilize the state, the gradations of belonging have major potential impacts on the functioning of the state, and how individual actors experience it. Concretely, this can manifest itself in terms of fewer public services or lower levels of service provision for certain sub-groups of the population (Habyarimana et al. 2009) or in asymmetrical applications of social welfare policies (Lieberman 2003).

There is evidence that these kind of insidious divisions within the South African populace are affecting a number of different aspects of democratic governance, including individuals' evaluations of the government itself and optimism about the future. Several surveys, including the Afrobarometer, have shown a durable and statistically significant difference between racialized sub-populations in individuals' evaluations of the post-apartheid government and the possibility for creating a unified, reconciled South Africa. Two questions, in particular, are of interest for evaluating this difference. In the first, which asks respondents whether they believe that a unified South Africa is desirable, the race of the respondent has not been statistically significant for the last two rounds of data collection.

By contrast, the second question, which asks whether a unified South Africa is possible, has demonstrated a remarkable level of racial division. Put another way, race remains a highly statistically significant (at the 0.00001 level) indicator of how a respondent would view the possibility of creating a unified South African nation, but there is no statistical difference between racialized subpopulations on their view that a unified South Africa is desirable. A 2004 Kaiser Family Foundation poll found that a white respondent was five times more likely to be pessimistic about the future of South Africa than a black respondent (Hamel et al. 2006: 359). This lack of confidence in the possibility of interracial reconciliation, but expressed desire to see it implemented, seems to belie the simplistic, racism-based explanations for continuing divisions in South Africa. It does, however, point to the persistence of differential evaluation between racialized sub-groups in South Africa.

Evidence from South African media sources also seems to suggest a level of violence and intolerance based on race. A recent upsurge in violence against rural white landowners, with reported murders occurring at an average rate of two times per week, has sparked outrage among the Afrikaner community. To make matters worse, this is happening while ANC spokesperson

Julius Malema invokes apartheid-era imagery of killing off the 'foreign' whites to drum up support, more than 15 years after the conclusion of the anti-apartheid struggle (Marrian 2012; Allen 2010). Because of the incident, Malema, the president of the ANC Youth League, has been suspended. At the announcement of his suspension, however, a crowd of about 500 people gathered in support of Malema and vowed that they would "kill for Malema" if given the chance (Prince and Chauke 2011).

Narratives of belonging that are based on identity, rather than compliance with laws or residence in a territory, such as those being developed in post-apartheid South Africa, stand in contrast to the ideas of civic, non-racial nationhood for which the ANC and other groups had historically fought. According to Gibson and Gouws, "People learn where they belong in society, and this knowledge of belonging often leads to beliefs about not belonging. This process of adjustment results in people learning who their enemies are, which then leads to perceptions of threat and ultimately to intolerance" (2003, 94). This connection between reconciliation and opposition, between belonging and alienation, lies at the heart of the project of democratic consolidation.

Interestingly, while the gap between the rich and the poor in South Africa remains large and appears to be growing larger since the transition to democracy in the country, there is little or no political language that directly addresses class-based interests as separate from racial interests. In a famous 1998 speech in Parliament, then-President Thabo Mbeki characterized South Africa as being divided into "two nations, the one black and the other white," (Cited in Nattrass and Seekings 2001: 45). Although seeking to address economic inequality and poverty, Mbeki reverts to the language of race, as opposed to class, to address the issue. He uses this language, regardless of the fact that, "In South Africa, black and white are *no longer* synonymous with rich and poor" (Nattrass and Seekings 2001: 47, emphasis in original text). The middle- and upper-classes of South African society, according to the 2011 census, are increasingly multiracial, though black families still form the vast majority of the poorest households.

The community of political belonging in South Africa remains fractured and deeply divided based on the identities associated with the struggle against apartheid. In the struggle, the creation of the racialized "us" along with the racialized "them", as the basis of both governance and resistance to apartheid, fundamentally shaped both the experience of being South African, and the ways that opposition was expressed (Lieberman 2003). This continues to be true, both in the realm of party politics and the non-party modes of political participation that are utilized in South Africa.

Narratives of Political Opposition: Parties

South African political parties seem to be crystalizing around the issue of racial exclusivity, with some parties being consistently labelled as "white" while others are labelled as "black" or "African" (Ferree 2010; Maloka 2001; Maré 2001). Additionally, the voting patterns of the South African electorate fall, in large part, along racial lines, with black voters supporting black parties and white voters supporting white parties. This argument is complicated by Ferree (Ferree 2006;

Ferree 2010), who argues that the existence of the racial-census elections in South Africa is not due to primordial attachments or even racial/identity voting, but because of the importance of racialized and exclusive party images. These party images are produced by politically calculating elites in the dominant African National Congress (ANC) as a move against opposition parties, in order to prevent voters from abandoning the ANC. Therefore, it is not the individual attachment to race, but the continued use of race as a party label that drives the vote choices of South Africans.

Electoral contestation in South Africa provides myriad data, in the form of public speeches, election returns, and voting patterns. We also see evidence that the racially-organized parties of the opposition are polarizing politically around the twin problems of ethnic ownership and racial externalization. In a recent article, opposition leader Helen Zille accused the ANC of still being "caught in a toxic trap of racial nationalism" (Zille 2011). This is played out through the rhetoric of opposition in South African democracy, which is plagued with deeply undemocratic tendencies. White opposition leaders, even those firmly left of centre, who lead coalitions that are multi-racial and multi-ethnic, are frequently accused of being Nazi or apartheid sympathizers, or of committing treasonous acts by criticizing the ANC (Maré 2001). Ballentine (2004) argues that this "re-racialisation of the public sphere" is a direct strategy of the ANC government, and is aimed at silencing opposition, especially from white South Africans.

> …the government [of South Africa] and some of the new elite have sought to organise what has been called a 'blood bond' and to line up a 'blood enemy': all 'Africans' – racially defined – against, in particular, all whites. As the *Washington Post* observed in February 2001, any black who supports to opposition is now branded as a 'race' traitor, and any criticism of the government is equated with racism (116).

Interestingly, although racial party labels have persisted, ethnically organized parties, especially those purporting to speak on behalf of a cultural nation within South Africa, have not fared well since 1994. Two prime examples of this are the Vryheidsfront Plus (VF+) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Since the first inclusive democratic elections, both parties have lost significant shares of the Afrikaans/Afrikaner and Zulu votes, respectively. This result holds true, despite the apparent resurgence of ethnic sentiments, and the persistent salience of language and group-rights issues within politics. With Afrikaans/Afrikaner voters largely supporting the multi-racial (but "white labelled") Democratic Alliance (DA), and Zulu voters flocking to the Jacob Zuma-led ANC, the ethnic claims of these parties stand on weak ground.

Many scholars of developing democracies have viewed opposition as coterminous with electoral competition. This conception of opposition has led some scholars, like Huntington (1991: 267), to propose a threshold of two electoral turnovers of power to achieve the status of consolidated democracy. Although the importance of this threshold has been debated by scholars (like Lindberg 2006; Karl 1995; Seligson and Booth 1995; Bratton 2004; 1998), the idea of party turnover remains an important one in evaluating the consolidation of young democracies.

Scholars tend to focus on party competition and elections as the major vectors of contestation and opposition within consolidating democracies. Merely looking at electoral competition, or vote choice among racial or ethnic subpopulations, however, provides an insufficient view of the state of democratic culture in practice.

What seems to be missing from this conversation is a more robust and philosophically informed conception of what forms opposition takes, especially in post-conflict democratic spaces. Opposition itself is vital to the democratic process and it is incumbent on democracies to "…foster and value informal deliberative enclaves of resistance in which those who lose…can rework their ideas and their strategies, gathering their forces and deciding in a more protected space in what way or whether to continue the battle" (Mansbridge 1996: 46-7). By examining opposition, not just through the contesting of elections, the discussion about the content and quality of democratic dialogue in South Africa can be more comprehensively evaluated.

Narratives of Political Opposition: Non-Party Action

Given that South Africa has been ruled by the ANC since the end of apartheid and that the party has won by large margins in every national election, the exclusive focus on political parties as vectors of opposition seems to be unnecessarily limiting. An exclusive focus on this kind of opposition can lead the observer to overestimate the importance of small electoral changes, and miss the ways in which the very idea of what it means to be a post-apartheid South African is being contested. By employing a wider definition of opposition, in concert with the idea of belonging, it will become clearer how the process articulating demands and proposing new ways of being South African are vital to the formation of both a reconciled public and a consolidated democracy.

Unsurprisingly, many people in South Africa have turned away from party politics in their effort to express opposition in South Africa. Although the vast majority of the South African public does vote in Parliamentary elections, only 29 per cent reported trusting political parties in 2010, and the majority of voters said the most effective way to address poor party performance was through loyalty, rather than party change (Human Sciences Research Council 2011). This perplexing voting behaviour may be better understood when taken in context with other strategies of opposition that are currently being pursued by groups in South Africa.

Strike Action, Street Violence and Popular Culture

In 2012, violent protest in the gold and platinum mines in South Africa, including the deeply troubling clash between strikers and police at the Marikana mine in Rustenburg (Anon 2012) brought protest action to the forefront of political discussions in South Africa. These strikes represent just one portion of a growing set of strike actions undertaken in recent years in South Africa. Nathi Mthetwa, Minister of Police reported to Parliament in March 2012 that each year since 2009/2010, there had been an average of 10,864 "crowd management incidents" in South

Africa, with an average of 1,024 of those "incidents" involving violence (Alexander 2012).[3] There is evidence that individual strike actions, as well as encounters between strikers and police are becoming more violent (Chiviru 2010).

The intensity and nature of protest action in recent years in South Africa, whether to protest poor service delivery or in relation to workplace grievances, indicates a growing unrest within the population. Strikes, like other forms of social unrest, are often used by people who have lost faith in existing institutional channels, and use extra-institutional means to make their voices heard (McAdam et al. 2001). The violence, concentration and frequency of the strikes in the current South African situation seems to point to a particular level of desperation among demographically defined section of the population; that is, poor, black and supportive of the ruling party (Lavery 2012).

What remains compelling, however, is that the language of class largely eclipsed by racial language in the mass gatherings in the wake of these violent actions. Just taking the example of the Marikana incident, when the youth leader Julius Malema addressed striking miners, he argued that the government failed to protect "its own people" because it was "benefitting with white people" from the labour of black miners (du Plessis 2012). Later, in a briefing on the state's actions in trying to manage the protestors, Jacob Zuma defended the actions of police by saying, in fact, this did not signal a return to an "apartheid system" in South Africa, despite the accusations levelled against his government (SAPA 2012).

In the lead up to the December 2012 ANC Elective Conference in Mangaung, factionalism in the ANC seemed to contribute to the proliferation of strikes, but as of the time of this publication, it seems that there will be no major opposition candidates, even within the ANC that would have a reasonable chance of removing Jacob Zuma from office. Because of this apparent lack of meaningful choice in leadership, both at the national and party level, it is unsurprising that people who feel that their economic and social needs are not being met would turn to alternative channels to express their discontent.

Immigration, Semigration and Removal from Public Life

Another extra-institutional channel that South African voters from a different socio-economic background are choosing to exercise their discontent is exit, whether completely or in part, from the South African political community. Exit or claims to exit, form an important set of political

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[3] Interestingly, the Afrobarometer finds a steady and durable decrease over time in the number of South African citizens who report having protested in the last year. Equally durable, however, is the number of South Africans who report their willingness to protest if given the opportunity, which remains near 30 per cent since 2000. Additionally, those citizens who report protesting also are most likely to come from the section of the population that also reports the greatest amount of economic and food insecurity (Lavery 2012).

speech acts. Using Hirschman's (1970) model of voice, exit and loyalty,[4] I see this choice to exit the political sphere as a kind of opposition. The huge number of émigrés from among the Afrikaner community seems to indicate a level of unrest or instability in the political placement of the white, and especially Afrikaans-speaking white population (Griffiths and Prozesky 2010; DeGelder 2004; Van Rooyen 2000). According to statistics compiled by the South African Institute of Race Relations, the white population of South Africa has shrunk by more than 16 per cent between 1995 and 2005 (Andrucki 2010: 359). In addition to emigration outside of the country, there exist opportunities for internal relocation to ethnically defined and "protected" spaces within the bounds of South Africa. The most definitive of these projects is the settlement in Orania, which seeks to establish a *volkstaat* for Afrikaners, with the dream of one day becoming a sovereign territory (Vestergaard 2001: 32–34).

Although emigration and the persistence of ethnically-protectionist communities within South Africa presents one set of possibilities for exit from political community, other, more quotidian actions are undertaken by large swaths of the South African population. A recent proliferation in gated communities in major South African metropolitan areas, and the reliance on securitized (and therefore class- if not explicitly race- segregated) spaces for leisure activities present a kind of internal exit from larger and more inclusive forms of political community (Griffiths and Prozesky 2010). This phenomenon, sometimes called *semigration*,[5] divides South African public spaces and makes wider associations difficult (Ballard 2002).

I contend that this expression is, in itself, a kind of opposition. It is not immediately clear, however, what the content of this opposition is. Both internal and external exit present serious difficulties for the development of a wider sense of political community by segregating sections of the population based on race- or ethno-linguistic group. As stated above, the lack of meaningful electoral possibilities for change leads many citizens to feel a sense of futility about participation in institutional politics (Human Sciences Research Council 2011). This frustration, in turn, could be leading to a desire to quit the political and social sphere in South Africa and retreat to segregated spaces.

Civil Society Organizations and NGOs

There are avenues for participation in politics that don't directly deal with parties, like civil society organizations or NGO's, but in large part, these organizations display the same racialized labels and labelling as the political parties in South Africa. Groups like Afriforum, the Transvaal Agricultural Union or the FW De Klerk Foundation have formed to respond to particular issues

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[4] By citing Hirchman, I do not mean to imply that South Africa is deteriorating, as the firms about which he theorizes are. I only mean to employ his tripartite categorization for leverage in understanding forms of opposition.

[5] Semigration is defined as "withdrawal from democratic south Africa, to achieve some of the effects of emigration without actually leaving the borders of the country. Spatial practices such as gated communities and enclosed neighbourhoods are examples of this" (Ballard 2002, 2).

in South Africa, like the protection of private property and civil or workers' rights, but have consistently been involved in campaigns that seem to service only subgroups of the population. Afriforum, for example, has been instrumental in the campaigns to classify Julius Malema's song "Dubul'ibhunu (Shoot/Kill the Boer)" as hate speech, to seek special protections for white farm-owners who have been the targets of attacks, to seek protections for Afrikaans language, music, and literature, and to stem the trend of white emigration. The calls from these organizations for protections of minority rights are not often explicitly framed in terms of race. However, whether fairly or unfairly, they are consistently labelled as fighting only on issues that affect the white community in South Africa.

Other organizations that seek to represent the interests of the economically disadvantaged in South Africa, like *Abahlali base Mjondolo* (the Shack Dwellers Movement) use a de-racialized language of class to argue for land reform and social welfare programs. The yawning economic divides between the rich and poor in the country are no longer strictly racialized as in the past (Durrheim et al. 2011: 151-2). In the context of the South African economy at present, however, the vast majority of those people living in informal settlements, or demanding service delivery through civil society organizations are Black African. The issues of land reform and service delivery, therefore, although they are being addressed in many ways on the basis of class, are labelled and discussed racial issues. Why should this be the case? I contend, that at least in part, it is because the political language of class, as divorced from race or ethnicity, is not yet a salient political issue within South Africa.

The apparent separation of issues and issues-based organizations into racialized sub-populations mirrors the process happening with political parties in South Africa. The absence of issues or groups that allow individuals to cohere in ways that complicate social divisions does indeed allow for "political alignments intensify along [a] single dimension", namely race divisions, as Dunning and Harrison (2010) warn. Some multi-racial issues that could prove salient in the future, like class or region, seem to be developing salience. However, without a meaningful vector through which to express these interests, or the politically resonant language with which to articulate them, it is more difficult to consolidate these interests into meaningful bases of such coalitions.

Conclusion

Less than 20 years into the new democratic dispensation, it is difficult to render final judgment the character of the democratic culture in South Africa. However, given the prominence of the South African case within the international community of practitioners and scholars of political transitions, it remains important to understand in detail the complexities and progress of South African democracy post-apartheid.

Communities of belonging remain fractured in South Africa, as evidenced by the startling incidence of racial hate-speech and violent rhetoric from all political sides. Modes of opposition, both within the political party system and outside of it, remain racialized and issues become the province of racially defined sub-national communities. The persistent salience of race-based

categories for defining communities of belonging, as well as strategies of opposition within South Africa, points to the lack of cross-cutting alliances and divisions within South Africa. These trends, in the long term, could seriously hinder the development of a culture of democracy in South Africa, especially because of their recurrence among even post-apartheid or 'born free' generations. Because categories of belonging and opposition continue to be defined in terms of racial divisions in South Africa, a vicious cycle is emerging in which these divisions are being intensified and therefore continuing to define the political landscape further.

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