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SA Elections 2014: Political Opposition - Cohesion, Fracture or Fragmentation?
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Fragmentation and Fracture – The loss of trust and confidence in political parties

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South Africa appears caught in a curious absurdity. Political rogue and political royalty seem as one. It is the fourth world this, where abnormality pretends to be the norm. The first world, its privileges and excesses, simultaneously co-exist with the third and its deprivations. But alongside the third world’s quad-evils of chronic socio-economic under-development, high unemployment, deep poverty and extreme inequality, South Africa presents the blight of intolerable levels of extreme criminality, rape (including that of children and the elderly), murder and social violence. Incivility and inhumanity are this fourth world norm.

Arguably, it couldn’t be otherwise. Conditioned as we are by the inhuman and impudent injustices of racial colonialism and apartheid capitalism, struggles and resistance to them, the collective legacy bequeathed the society is the conjoined effect of social marginalization and economic exclusion, perpetuated by twenty years of poor policy judgement, inappropriate policy and a myopic, self-serving political governance and corporate business leadership. Endemic social pathologies haven’t helped along the path to rehabilitation, reconciliation, redress and reconstruction either.

All the while, however, political parties appear to behave as if the pursuit and capture of power and its trappings can quite acceptably be their normal rationale. This may be theoretically appropriate in conditions of theoretical normality. But we exist in neither theory, nor normality. No one does. So it isn’t appropriate for political parties to pretend that electoral contests can serve to legitimate parties in power. Yet, it is precisely this mode of behaviour that political parties appear to have adopted, abandoning even a faint pretence otherwise. Undoing a past which more than lingers in the present doesn’t appear to be a priority for any of them. Capturing power at all costs does.

That political parties exist to capture power and exercise influence in economy and society is something we must accept. But the capturing of power and the exercising of influence for its own sake is something we must not. Pursuing power for its own sake is authoritarian. Exercising influence for its own sake is duress. Neither is a desirable condition of democracy. The exercise of power and influence needs to serve a purpose if the agents exercising them are to enjoy legitimacy in authority and power and credibility in influence. South African political parties are at risk of jeopardising both. Widely held public perceptions appear to suggest that parties exist merely to pursue power as an end in itself, rather than to shape society for the better, or create the conditions and agency for citizens to flourish. Bearing in mind the quip that there are three kinds of lies – lies, damned lies and statistics – how else are we to interpret consistently declining levels of public trust in political parties across the board?
While it is a global phenomenon, declining levels of trust and confidence in political parties has particularly acute consequences for a divided society such as South Africa’s. Since 2005, reliable public perception surveys conducted by both the Human Sciences Research Council and the Institute for Justice & Reconciliation (IJR) show that trust in political parties has been in precipitous decline. A South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) 2011, 2012 shows that in 2011, 25% of people surveyed demonstrated some trust in political parties. A year later this figure had gone down to 21%. The IJR’s SA Reconciliation Barometer Survey for 2012 shows that only half of all adults (50.3%) and less half of the youth (49.7%) trust leaders to do what is right. This same survey shows that less than half of people surveyed (44%) think that the economic situation is likely to get better in the next two years and only one third (33%) trust that the government is doing well getting young people into jobs. With such low and decreasing levels of trust and confidence in political parties, lower levels of voter turnout may well present a real issue in this 2014 election.

So the pursuit of purposeless power is what our politics appears to have become. More perniciously, politics seems premised on the capture of power to serve narrow personal, recidivist ends rather than address the most urgent social, economic and political issues confronting society. Such has been the consequence of the normalisation of politics in conditions of social abnormality – even within the governing alliance, which with increasing veracity can be charged with having abandoned its historic mission to serve society and govern in the collective interest.

In most societies a party in power will be kept in check by other social actors. Its propensity for executive and other excesses will be curbed by constitutional and legal writ, benefit and behaviour regulated through policy, criminality and social infractions policed by organisations dedicated to rooting them out, and misdemeanours adjudicated by an independent judiciary. But viable opposition political parties in functional institutions play an equally vital role, as do internal curbs exercised through different factions within a governing political party. Few of these are what citizens perceive to be happening in South Africa.

With a governing alliance presiding over the hollowing out of state institutions, ineffective policing and indecisiveness in macro-policy, trust that the current governing alliance will deliver collective public goods is low. A creeping homogeneity in collective thinking in the upper reaches of the governing party is evident. Silence for fear of exclusion animates any dissenters that there might be, while subservience breeds complicity in acts of corruption. A fracturing manufactured and often imposed consensus through the practice of “democratic centralism”, and the decline of a once powerful and progressive labour movement wrapped in internecine ideological, policy and personality squabbling hobbles any prospect of internal oversight and accountability in the excessive atavistic cannibalisation of the state and its resources.

Hope that opposition parties can in fact play this role is misplaced. Of the two parties that have emerged from a split and schism in the governing party, both at inception ostensibly claiming to be recapturing the true essence of what the ANC once was, one, COPE seems
intent on self-imploding while the other, the EFF, appears to be a little more than a rabble-rousing band of miscreants.

It is impossible to say how well either of these two parties will perform in South Africa’s 2014 elections, as it is to predict how any of the serious parties will. But it is possible to suggest that prospects of a decent electoral showing for COPE, with its self-imploding organisational structure, perpetual leadership squabbles, and schisms that have given rise to a splinter party (the United Congress Party of COPE under co-founder Mluleki George), seem dimmer than they ever did. George’s party, on the other hand, may have its best prospects as a purely regional and localised political sect with a minimal showing outside of one or two regions of the Eastern Cape, and even then it’ll be faced with the monumental challenges of resources, organisation, identity and policy, challenges which Julius Malema’s Economic Freedom Fighters won’t.

With a discernable emergent political identity with some degree of coherence, well-articulated positions and an identity that ventures beyond one of the key founders (Julius Malema), the EFF is positioned as a radical, if somewhat recidivist project. In reality the EFF is a hodge-podge of different ideological and political strains melding the incendiary politics of ‘radical blackness’ with the seeming elements of socialism. Seemingly radical in its approach, it is essentially an empty rhetoric captured in the politics of spectacle, where even complex ideas get pared down to mere slogans. Premised on the idea of nationalising the commanding heights of the economy (mines, banks and large factories to rest of us), expropriating and redistributing land seized by “white thieves” in a process of grand theft, without compensation, and distributing unused state land, the supreme unconfronted irony is that some of these strategies were part of the policy arsenal of the apartheid era National Party.

Regardless, the issues tabled by the EFF are vital. Some of the most intractable socio-economic problems receive the EFF’s attention, notwithstanding that their proposals may have paid little regard to the executive capability, state capacity and policy instrumentality required to achieve them. The second broad problem is that the past behaviour of some its leaders are questionable in the extreme. Disconnected to current popular struggles in South Africa, much of what the EFF proposes appears to be masked by perceptions that its policies are a cover for the personal pursuits of some of its leaders. After all, Malema led the ANC Youth League for near on two full terms before he was unceremoniously expelled with little benefit accruing to any significant constituency of the Youth League. Why would it be any different this time round? In any event, the vote pool that the EFF may rely on are the marginal and disaffected youth, with many in that cohort not having ID books and satisfying the rudiments for voter registration. Still, they are likely to gain representation, and with that more forcefully table an agenda that for too long has been blithely ignored.

The credentials and integrity of Agang and Mamphela Ramphele may not have been questionable in the same way that the EFF’s leader could have been. But what the EFF has in ideology, identity, coherence and an agenda, Agang lacks. After a hearty public reception, especially from the media, Agang is now struggling to get its star to shine in the political
firmament, especially after the botched and short-lived flirtation with the DA. Despite its able and elegant articulation of South Africa’s problems, short of a diagnosis Agang is like a doctor that is unable to prescribe a treatment. Likely to attract an aspirational middle- and upper-class vote across race, it is likely to end up being a niche party playing a critical oversight and accountability role, but it is hard to imagine Agang doing much more than this positively. Its negative consequences are that it is likely to further polarise an already fragmented and fractured opposition.

As the best of an otherwise genuinely untested lot, the DA has its own serious shortcomings. Quite apart from its own policy flip-flops on justifiable race-based black economic empowerment and affirmative action, it is faced with the serious dilemma of defining itself ideologically. Its institutional and organisational establishment shows it to be a model political party with a well-defined decision-making process, regular elections for leadership election and renewal, a constitution its members accept and whose provisions they respect, a raft of well-developed if inappropriate policies, a branch structure and operationally effective caucuses in representative institutions. In government, even with somewhat skewed governance priorities and inappropriate policies, where the DA has won majorities and is in power it governs through processes of decent public management and administration. In opposition it has (modestly) increased its support among black voters. At the same time, however, the DA has also scored some spectacular own goals. In the hurly burly of both government and opposition activity, a critical ingredient giving the DA a vitality and vibrancy it might otherwise deserve appears to be missing. In the most obvious sense, the missing ingredient is a connection to the mass of voters and citizens, and this holds the DA back from what it could be, and what it could become.

So what are the problems? Unlike the ANC, it is not a social movement with deep penetration into societies’ grassroots. It has no history rooted in struggle and therefore no automatic claim to legitimacy. The DA, like the ANC, is a broad church in an alliance, as its name suggests. However, unlike the ANC alliance, it does not wield an ideologically disparate set of communists, capitalists, workers and nationalists together under the cover of “non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy”. Instead, the DA cobbles an altogether more homogeneous group of like-minded people rallying behind “an open opportunity society for all”. For all the ANC’s incoherence it appears strong, but for all the DA’s coherence it is in fact weak in numbers. If the ANC alliance is ideologically diverse and disparate, then the DA can be said to be de-ideologised. To suggest that the DA is decidedly liberal is a misconception. It is anything but. That it is a legitimate political formation is not at issue. That it cannot forge its social legitimacy in the deep cultural roots of the majority in society is at issue.

Bringing up the rear are a host of small, special-interest parties that will essentially be reduced to bit players in the political scheme, few if any exceeding a three to five per cent threshold, and many falling way below that. Most, like the IFP, PAC, UDM and AZAPO, appear to be in terminal decline or localised to the specific regions within which they found their genesis, and may best serve the special interest constituencies they do by aligning with
others. The literal springing up of Kenny Kunene’s Patriotic Alliance, while possibly entertaining, is unlikely to cause any significant waves in electoral support.

Is a grand realignment of the opposition a necessary condition for extracting greater democratic gains or even oversight and accountability? My view is that it is likely to prevent progress rather than promote it. There will be evident difficulties in constructing a common policy platform or a coherent political identity out of a set of unwieldy and disparate special interest parties. Such incompatibilities, though, are likely to be overshadowed at a more basic level by inevitable fractious leadership squabbles, contestation over the distribution of offices and resources, as well as rent-seeking position bargaining. Evidence available thus far demonstrates that working together situationally and contingently may be a better option for opposition parties instead of a grand opposition coalition. The constituent sum of opposition party support is unlikely to be greater than the sum of the bit parts it currently enjoys. There are rumours of eight opposition parties currently in talks, but it may be that they cannot satisfy even the most basic requirement of identity and policy proximity, before any enduring tactical and strategic insertion into the political sphere.

In restoring the promise of freedom, it seems that ordinary citizens signal quite clearly through the, on average, five acts of direct action and social protest that occur every month, that elections are no longer the sole instrument of democratic political contestation. While nevertheless important as a political instrument conferring the consent of the governed on the governors, the role of smaller parties remains an important part of the political firmament. At the same time the fetishisation of the plurality and diversity promoted by the use of a pure proportional representation electoral system cannot be sustained in the face of the low political, policy and governance impact they have had, and 2014 may be an appropriate time, 20 years into our evolving transition, to seriously consider prospects for some degree of electoral reform.

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Figment or Fragmentation? – Focus on the Governing Alliance and Political Opposition

Aubrey Matshiqi – Independent Political Analyst and Research Fellow: Helen Suzman Foundation

The National Party was the ruling party of South Africa from 1948 to 1994, and the African National Congress (ANC) has been the dominant party since the advent of democracy twenty years ago. The constant refrain that the South African political system is akin to one-party rule is not only a form of amnesia but is also conceptually and politically dishonest. It is partly a function of a racial or racist logic - according to which the black majority which votes for the ANC does so with its heart while the white majority that votes for the Democratic Alliance makes choices on the basis of reason and rationality. Put differently, the party system of South Africa will, supposedly, become more competitive when the majority of those who constitute the support base of the ANC switch their allegiance to the rational choice, the DA. Implicit in this notion is the suggestion that effective opposition politics is synonymous with and is, therefore, reducible to the effectiveness of the DA as the only credible alternative to the ANC. At one level, this notion is a function of the single-party dominance of the DA in opposition politics. As Steven Friedman noted during a radio debate, for some the problem is less about single-party dominance in a post-apartheid setting and more about the fact that the ‘wrong’ party has been dominant since 1994.

Two points are critical therefore, with regard to the points made above:

First, given the historical fact that South Africa has had single-party dominance for the past sixty-six years, can it not be legitimately argued that the South African political system suffers from both the problems of single-party dominance and, more importantly, the absence of a culture of effective opposition politics? Furthermore, what is effective opposition? Is the answer to this question contingent not only on the strategic choices of opposition parties but also on how opposition itself is defined and understood?

Second, is the 2014 election the election that is going to deliver political realignment? One in which the ANC will start losing its grip on power with the result being a competitive party system? Should we rule out the possibility that, even if realignment occurs, it will deliver a new political order? In fact, such a re-alignment may amount simply to the reconfiguration of single-party dominance, instead of the end of uncompetitive electoral politics in South Africa. This may well be a possibility.

An appropriate response to the questions above must be based on the assumption that the idea of political opposition is broader than the set of political activities, campaigns, strategic and tactical choices of political parties, intra-party and inter-party engagement, as well as the interaction between political parties and citizens/voters which populate the opposition space in particular and the party political space in general. One of the implications of this assumption is that we must accept that the idea of opposition must transcend the confines of
both the opposition space and party political space to straddle both the non-party and the party-political spaces. The further implication, therefore, is that, conceptually and as a matter of practical politics, the idea of opposition cannot be limited to political parties and professional politicians. One of the most important implications, however, is the possibility that we must countenance the recruitment or co-option, or attempts to this effect, of actors in the state as a strategic option for actors in both the party-political and non-party political spaces in their attempts to widen the circle of opposition beyond the boundaries of the interests of non-state actors in both the party-political and non-party political spaces. It is in this context that we must try to understand the choices and strategic orientation of actors in civil society, the tripartite alliance and the party political space. This, however, does not tell us what opposition is or even, for that matter, what constitutes effective opposition.

For historical reasons, the idea of opposition has a very specific meaning in the post-apartheid context. Over and above conceptions of opposition that are part of the liberal-democratic tradition and the adversarial Westminster tradition, the conception of opposition must take into account that the South African democratic project is a product of anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles. During apartheid, one of the main contradictions was the tension between the liberation impulse and the anti-liberation impulse. To some extent, opposition to the ANC is still part of the anti-liberation impulse, and this explains, in part, the coincidence between race and voting patterns since 1994. In other words, there is an extent to which the idea of opposition and the practice of opposition politics are informed by the fact that the liberation and anti-liberation impulses are still in opposition to each other. As we mark twenty years of democracy, however, the failures of the ANC and its government, perceived and/or real, have introduced an element of complexity to this tension and, therefore, to the idea of opposition itself. Some dimensions of the idea of opposition are shaped by the misperception that the failures of the ANC constitute everything that is wrong with our post-apartheid condition. But to the extent that the failures of the ANC are an element of objective reality, the opposition impulse is located between the liberation and anti-liberation impulse as well as within the liberation impulse itself. But an important element of the complexity is the fact that some dimensions of opposition are independent of the two impulses.

Given all of the above, we must ask the question – opposition to what? It seems, to me at least, that we must conceive of opposition, among other things, in the following ways:

1) In South Africa the idea of opposition is informed by a clash of world views: one includes a vision of a society that is the antithesis of the apartheid racial content of social, political and economic relations, and this world view is in contradistinction to a world view that coincides with whiteness as the main indicator of privilege, which, as part of our post-apartheid condition, has become part of a logic that seeks to escape the implications of the 1994 democratic breakthrough by entrenching whiteness as the dominant social and economic reality despite the fact that black voters are the main content of the single-party dominance of the ANC. In other words, to the extent that the ANC has always been seen as a threat to this logic of whiteness, voting for the ANC has never been an option for the majority of white voters.
2) Coinciding with this logic is the matter of ideology. While the ANC’s position at the centre of the South African political landscape is, in part, evidence of its success when it comes to appropriating policy positions from both the right and the left, especially with regard to what its opponents on the left refer to as its ‘neo-liberal’ macro-economic policy and its welfarist agenda in relation to the poor who form the bulk of its support base, opposition from the DA is based on the belief that its economic policies are not market-friendly enough, while parties such as the Pan-Africanist Congress, Azanian People’s Organisation, Workers and Socialist Party as well as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) are of the view that ANC policies are not socialist enough.

3) What must not be underestimated, however, is the fact that some of the opposition to the ANC is, across the political spectrum, based on deficits in the pace, scope and quality of delivery. And an interesting convergence has emerged between forces that are both part of the liberation and anti-liberation impulse, as a basis for opposition, with regard to the emergence of a gap between the ideals of the ANC and what it has since become as a ruling party.

4) In the context of the tri-partite alliance, opposition as an internal dynamic is inevitable given the fact that this is an alliance between a nationalist movement, a labour federation and a Communist party. Therefore, it is not surprising that on economic policy in general and the National Development Plan in particular, tensions have at times emerged between the alliance partners.

5) An interesting dimension of internal opposition relates to what, during apartheid, was the broad democratic movement, including the United Democratic Front (UDF). The disbanding of the UDF after the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 was partly based on the idealistic notion that the ANC, as a liberation movement, was an organism genetically predisposed to always act in the best interests of citizens. The gap between myth and reality in this regard has produced another interesting dynamic of opposition politics. The civil society formations and social movements that have come out in opposition to policy and legislative proposals such as the media tribunal and the Protection of State Information Bill almost always have as a component elements that were part of the broad liberation movement.

6) Even more interesting, though, albeit for a brief moment during the period between the 2007 Polokwane conference and the recall of Thabo Mbeki as head of state, is the fact that factionalism produced an element of internal opposition when the supporters of Jacob Zuma in the National Assembly positioned themselves as the opposition in relation to an Executive that was deemed loyal to Mbeki. In other words, the two centres of power that came into being as a result of Mbeki being removed as ANC president and head of state produced another internally oriented dynamic of opposition.
7) Given the fact that Western ‘civilisation’ and the liberal-democratic aesthetic, particularly the Anglo-Saxon variant, are the main ingredients of our democratic dispensation, it is not surprising that the watchdog role of opposition as a series of duels between the ruling party and the official opposition has become the main content of our parliamentary opposition politics.

8) What is of critical importance, however, is the fact that opposition is not an objective reality. It is the manifestation of a range of subjective interests in the party-political and non-party political spaces which exist both in conflict with, and in support of, one another depending on how opposition is configured, practised and understood.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with these conceptions of opposition as it pertains to South African politics, one also has to consider whether the 2014 elections will deliver both a conceptual reconfiguration of opposition as well as the realignment of the South African electoral landscape.

In the foreseeable future, the liberal-democratic aesthetic will be the main content of opposition politics and politics in South Africa. What remains, therefore, is to examine whether the 2014 elections will deliver political realignment. However, in examining the prospects of opposition parties, this article does not engage in prophesying or predicting the percentage of the vote that will be garnered by different opposition parties.

Since 1994, the alternation between opposition parties with respect to the position of official opposition has occurred only once. It happened in 1999 when the Democratic Party, the precursor of the DA, dislodged the New National Party as the official opposition party of post-apartheid South Africa. It is for this reason that it was argued earlier that opposition politics is characterised by the single-party dominance of the DA. The question, therefore, is whether political realignment will occur to the benefit or disadvantage of the DA, since the dominant assumption is that it will happen at the expense of the ANC. But, what must be borne in mind is the fact that political realignment occurs when a dramatic change occurs in the political system. If the dramatic change must come by way of the ANC losing power at national level, the 2014 election is not going to result in political realignment. The same can be said about prospects for another opposition party dislodging the DA as the official opposition. What can be debated, however, is whether the ANC will suffer a significant erosion of support compared to 2009 and whether, therefore, the DA and the opposition as a collective of opposition parties will make significant gains. If the debates of the past few months are anything to go by, political realignment will occur if the ANC falls below the 60% threshold at national level.

In this regard, there are only two parties worth mentioning outside the possibility of the ANC suffering a significant erosion in support as a result of the collective gains of all opposition parties that are contesting this year’s election, namely, the DA and the EFF. Since the DA has, since 1999, been achieving the same kind of growth, that is, among white voters and so-
called minorities in general, it needs to make serious inroads among black voters. The capacity to reach this goal will be limited by the fact that South African elections are, to a large extent, still a racial census. In addition to this, the DA has not been able to strike an electorally beneficial balance between levels of black support that will not be a threat to its traditional support base, on the one hand, and the imperative of keeping traditional supporters within its fold. The real problem, however, is that the DA would be able to abandon sections of its traditional support base if the black vote materialised significantly. This it was able to do during the 2011 local government election in Meyerton, Gauteng, when the leadership of the party insisted that a bust of apartheid architect, Hendrik Verwoerd, should be removed from the offices of the Meyerton municipal offices where this decision was never going to risk its majority in the Meyerton municipal area.

At national level, however, because of the DA’s ambivalence towards policy measures such as affirmative action and black economic empowerment, it has now become almost a truism to argue that the black vote is not going to materialise significantly. The DA will most probably grow in the same way it has been growing since 1999 – mainly among white voters and other minorities. Another challenge the DA is facing is that in both the 2009 and 2014 elections internal ructions in the ANC have produced political opposition parties formed by former ANC members, which parties pose the problem of fighting in the same struggle heritage kraal as the ANC to the disadvantage of the DA. In 2009 the problem was caused by the Congress of the People and in this year’s election the EFF will constitute a similar headache for the DA. Since there is nothing to benchmark the EFF against, the most reasonable thing to surmise is that it will be represented in the National Assembly and that it will probably be the official opposition in Limpopo, Mpumalanga or the North West province.

As for predictions that the decision by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) not to support the ANC in this election will impact negatively on support for the ruling party, it is difficult to measure the impact of the decision but, in all likelihood, it will be a small component of the reduction in levels of support for the ANC if such a reduction does indeed occur given the fact that the core that is part of Numsa has historically never had a natural affinity towards the Congress movement anyway. What may be of interest is whether the internal battles in the Congress of South African Trade Unions will lead to a split and whether the split, in turn, will produce a labour or workers’ party. Whether the formation of a workers’ party will lead to the realignment of opposition politics specifically and electoral politics in general will depend on factors including the political forces that will coalesce to form the new party, post the 2014 elections.
This contribution focuses on political campaigning, with specific focus on opposition parties and the ruling African National Congress (ANC) in the Free State (FS) Province. Besides the traditional methods of campaigning such as posters, public meetings, door-to-door, and roadshows, technology has become the backbone of the campaigns of the ruling party and major opposition parties in the FS.

An assessment of the election campaigns of a number of opposition parties in the FS shows that the focus is on the failures of the ANC. The most devastating critique thus far against the ANC in the province has been an outcry from opposition parties that the ruling party has been dishing out food parcels, blankets and toiletries at election rallies. This allegation is currently being investigated by the Public Protector.

**Political campaigning of opposition parties**

The political campaigns of opposition parties in the FS vary tremendously between the different parties. Early in the campaign, the Congress of the People (Cope) was the first opposition party to unveil its election posters. Cope was followed by the Democratic Alliance (DA) and Freedom Front Plus (FF+). Of late, a few posters of Agang SA, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) can be seen in the capital city of the province.

The political campaigning of opposition parties has been centred on the weaknesses of the ANC in the province. For instance, the FS provincial government under the leadership of Premier Ace Magashule has over the past few years been making headlines for all the wrong reasons. Firstly, due to alleged poor governance, the national treasury put in place strict monitoring procedures over the provincial treasury, and the department of roads, police, and transport has intervened in a few provincial departments in 2012. Secondly, the national treasury also launched an investigation into the controversial dairy project in which the province invested R570-million. Thirdly, the provincial government awarded a R40-million contract to Letlaka Communications to redesign its website, a job which industry experts state could have been done at a fraction of the cost.¹

**Forms of campaigning of opposition parties**

During the 2009 General Elections, Cope, as a new kid on the political landscape, managed to erode, though minimally, the support base of the ANC to become the official opposition party

in the FS. Since then, the endless leadership battles within the party, which were arbitrated not politically, but in the courts, has seriously dented its chances to improve on its election performance of 2009. Meanwhile Cope’s provincial former leader, Casca Mokitlane, and Gertrude Mothupi, a former prominent member, have defected back to the ANC in the province. Mokitlane blames Cope for failing to connect to communities. Perhaps, the current lacklustre election campaign of Cope is indicative of the immediate impact of the defections of these senior provincial leaders. It is thus not surprising that in mid-2013 analysts already predicted that Cope will lose votes in the FS following the party’s infighting over leadership positions.

The DA, which has enlisted the services of renowned advertising agency MC Saatchi & Abel to assist with its TV and radio campaigns at national level, has also bolstered its social media operations in the FS. Thousands of FS voters have been targeted by the DA through SMS messages which ask them to consider the party as their party of choice. This is followed by intimate talks at schools with party members and adverts in the community newspapers. The party’s support has been bolstered by the “know your DA campaign.” According to the DA provincial leader, the campaign assisted them in changing the negative attitude of associating the party with the National Party. Buoyed by the huge crowds at its rallies in the province, the DA is cautiously optimistic about its performance in the forthcoming elections. Another strategy used by the DA in the province is to use its national leader, Helen Zille, at provincial rallies. She has called on residents of the Free State to vote for her party as “the DA is the only party big enough to challenge Jacob Zuma’s ANC dominance in the Free State.”

The vote-wooing tactics of smaller opposition parties such as FF+ and ACDP have largely revolved around posters on lamp posts, public meetings and the distribution of leaflets. Agang, on the other hand, recently joined the Unemployed Voters Organisation’s march for service delivery in Bloemfontein. This was the Agang SA leader’s fourth visit to the FS, showing her willingness to participate in the final push to garner support and swing undecided votes.

Expelled from the ruling party in 2012, Julius Malema, the former ANC Youth League president, heads a party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) that seems to be the ANC’s

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biggest opponent going into the 2014 provincial elections. Malema has visited the province several times, attracting huge crowds at rallies in Bloemfontein, Botshabelo, Thaba Nchu, and Welkom. The main focus of the party has been on the hopelessness and anger of the unemployed youth. In addition, the party has also been using direct contact with voters in the form of door-to-door campaigns and spending a lot of time talking to commuters. According to the EFF national co-ordinator Mpho Ramakatsa, the party is confident of toppling the ANC in the FS. This is a concern shared by the ANC provincial general secretary, who noted that the EFF is taking young people away from the ANC and should not be underestimated.  

**Media coverage of the political campaigns of opposition parties**

Opposition parties in the FS have been receiving a substantial portion of media coverage from both the national broadcaster’s TV and radio stations. Similarly, influential community and regional print media have also covered much of the campaigns of opposition parties. It appears that most of the media attention on opposition parties has been on the visits of national leaders of the different parties and less on the campaigns of the parties in the province.

Interestingly, though, most of the media coverage is unrelated to the key policy issues of the parties. The DA seems to be the only opposition party in the FS that has increased its media coverage due to its continued critique of ANC provincial government’s failure to deliver a better life for all. The DA also received wide media coverage for promising FS voters that it will save the province from corruption and to what the ANC leaders failed to do: to uphold the values of the Constitution. It is still to be seen what the impact of such media coverage will be for the election campaign of the DA.

**Political campaigning of the governing party**

The FS has been one of the ANC’s strongholds since the dawn of democracy in 1994. In fact, the ANC in the province is important for the party’s performance nationally. It is also in this province where the party has been dogged by intense faction fights. This, in addition to the onslaught from opposition parties, has hardened attitudes within the ruling party.

Against this backdrop, members of the ANC continue to stand firm behind the party leaders. As the criticism against the party and the provincial government intensifies, it is remarkable that an oasis of tolerance characterises the current atmosphere within the party. Party insiders believe that this is largely due to Ace Magashule’s efforts. He has lately apparently been reaching out to all members of the party, including calling upon those members who left the party to return. It is astounding that this clarion call has already led to the return to the party of once hardened critics of Magashule, including Mxolisi Dukwana. Dukwana was part of the so-called Regime Change faction within the ANC.

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Forms of political campaigning of the governing party

The ANC’s presence is spread widely through all the towns of the FS due to its strong national footprint. The party’s election machinery includes both traditional methods such as door-to-door campaigns and handing out of T-shirts at rallies, as well as advertisements on taxis and hosting fundraising events such as banquets and car washes. In defence of the performance of the ruling party in the province, Bulwana stated that some of the accusations against it are politically motivated.9

The FS ANC’s political campaign started in earnest after the publication of its candidate list. The party adopted the slogan ‘Forward to 85% ANC Victory, all forces on the ground’ while continuing to work closely with civil society organisations. The party has so far managed to counter the claims of opposition parties that decry the high levels of unemployment, corruption and poor service delivery. The overarching strategy has been to one of accepting its faults, but also indicating that the party has a plan to resolve the current challenges it faces.

The provincial campaign of the ruling party has been further bolstered by visits by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the ANC. Various NEC leaders engaged with communities on the significant successes achieved together as part of the 20 years “good story to tell” narrative.10 This campaign was followed by the visit of President Jacob Zuma. Zuma’s visit coincided with door-to-door campaigns, meeting with elderly people, a youth rally and a gala dinner in honour of Solomon Mahlangu. The party stepped up its election campaign by hosting a minority rally targeting coloured and white communities.

Fracture and opposition in the governing party in the FS

The ANC in the FS, as elsewhere in the country, has a history of factionalism and internal competition. There also seems to be widespread despondency and uncertainty among party members about senior appointments made in provincial departments without due processes being followed. According to party insiders, jockeying for positions in the ANC and provincial government has already started, and this could be partly ascribed to the proportional representation party system. Generally, though, the ANC is facing the forthcoming elections without any major rifts between the main factions in the party.

Media coverage of the political campaigns of the governing party

The ANC’s election campaign in the FS has received significant coverage and elicited the expected accusation of bias from opposition parties. There seems to be a co-ordinated plan to raise the visibility of the party. The party is making use of radio advertisements and will also

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host several public lectures. This includes the Chris Hani Memorial Lecture, where Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa acted as guest presenter.

Conclusion

The main election campaign strategy of the opposition, as expected, is focused almost exclusively on criticising the ANC. I find the inability of the major opposition parties in the FS to communicate why their parties represent the aspirations of FS voters to be most disconcerting. It is just not enough to make bold statements such as “Vote against Nkandla” or “Vote out corruption” without presenting alternative approaches that are attainable. A major boost for opposition politics in the province is the emergence of the EFF. Despite its limited budget, there is no doubt that the EFF will play a significant role in the politics of the FS after the May 7 elections. It is thus not surprising when the ANC’s provincial secretary states that the EFF should not be underestimated, but that “all the political parties in the Free State are just talking, but they are not on the ground …. I only see them in the media.”

**North West**

Dr Ina Gouws – North West University (Vaal Triangle Campus)

**Campaigning**

**Opposition**

This section pays attention to the DA and the EFF, since these seem to be the two parties realistically competing for the position of official opposition in the North West Province. Opposition in the North West was handed lots of ammunition after several violent service delivery protests and allegations of corruption in several municipalities. The choice the opposition has to make is how to use the ammunition. The DA has shown steady growth in the North West Province since 1994. It has the advantage that it is governing the Western Cape Province and thus has a governance track record to campaign on. The party has taken the role of oversight seriously and has effectively pointed out the shortcomings of the current governing party. However, the DA appears to have chosen a predominantly negative campaign in terms of focusing largely on the governance weaknesses of the ANC, instead of on its own message and offering. The ANC and its failures are getting more attention than the DA’s governance achievements and manifesto in the current DA campaign.

The DA has nevertheless embarked on a grassroots campaign in the North West Province. It has had rallies in the Barolong Ba-Ga Bodiwa chieftaincy in Bodibe in North West near Mmabatho, where it claims to have gained 500 more supporters, mostly defectors from the ANC, according to Helen Zille.\(^{12}\) Chief Keorapetse Motlhako says his tribe has lost confidence in the government and stated:

> “We made that decision because the ANC government has failed us. We have tried to engage theANC in the matter of land disputes and Chieftaincy. So at the end of the day we have tried from 2001 up until 2012 and we couldn't receive any help from our government”

The DA has also indicated that it will meet with former Bophuthatswana Bantustan leader Kgosi Lucas Mangope of the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP). The UCDP was founded by Lucas Mangope and was the Governing party in Boputhatswana. Mangope was expelled by a newly elected party leadership in 2013. Those unhappy with this decision have been defecting to other parties, and the DA says that it has welcomed over 200 former UCDP members into its fold. The UCDP has two seats in the provincial legislature, but support has been dwindling and prospects for the upcoming elections look bleak.\(^{13}\)

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\(^{13}\) SABC. “UCDP leadership battle over”. (2013) [http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/3ccc9c804136b70db8c7bf3895839b19/UCDP-leadership-battle-over-20132409](http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/3ccc9c804136b70db8c7bf3895839b19/UCDP-leadership-battle-over-20132409)
Such ‘victories’ are bound to be important to the DA in its effort to create the image that they are accessible to black communities. The activities by the DA leader Helen Zille during the rally and ceremonies in the Bodibe village created some controversy. Pictures were posted on social media of her arriving at the rally in a donkey cart, and later stirring a traditional pot wearing a blue dashiki and matching headscarf (kopdoek). Critics said she tried too hard, while others praised her for respecting tradition.  

This kind of campaign where candidates show solidarity/respect to voters by participating in some of their daily activities is nothing new in countries like the USA and Britain, but South Africans, it appears, have had mixed feelings. Those who are supportive of the DA suggest that this is a demonstration of respect and attempt to honour local cultural traditions, whilst critics interpret this as insincere “electioneering”.

The EFF has made it very clear that the North West Province is a point of focus in their campaign and have identified the North West as a large pocket of support. The campaign the EFF chose is also one of scathing criticism against the ANC, with a major focus on unemployment. Since Julius Malema has shown solidarity with the mine workers’ plight after the Marikana massacre, the EFF was launched in Marikana. The EFF has campaigned in mining compounds and hostels where discontent with the ANC is rife. In its manifesto the EFF has made populist promises which resonate with the unemployed in the North West.

The EFF said that it planned to be present ‘at every possible funeral, party and wedding to engage with communities’. According to the convenor of the Marikana branch their supporters take part in “Red Friday” gatherings every week clad in full EFF regalia. The red shirts and red berets are visible and an effective way to recognise EFF campaigners, called fighters.

A challenge to the campaign is Julius Malema’s tax and criminal charges. The EFF campaign has to adjust and attempt to distance the party from its leader’s alleged indiscretions. The party has recruited young professionals with post-graduate degrees into its ranks. Although the EFF claims to speak for the unemployed, it does not want its supporters to be seen only as ‘uneducated, unemployed and stupid’.

The EFF has embarked on a door-to-door campaign and has hosted large rallies and community meetings. It has also organised protest marches such as the one to the Moretele local municipality (Makapanstad).

Both parties realise the importance of social media in this election. They have twitter and Facebook accounts which are used quite effectively to spread party messages and keep

potential voters and supporters up to date with upcoming events. Both parties use highly visible posters, billboards and stage regalia during rallies. The DA has been using state of the art audiovisual equipment to play election ads and introductions during rallies. Both parties have also taken to attending church and other religious services in the communities where they campaign.

**Governing party**

South Africa is celebrating 20 years of democracy. This was supposed to be the ANC’s biggest trump card on the campaign trail as ‘liberators’ of the people kicking off their national campaign under the theme “Together we take South Africa forward” as well as the campaign payoff line, “We have a good story to tell”.

The ANC in the North West Province has experienced difficulties with factionalism and violent service delivery protests. Accordingly, on 17 February 2014 the ANC announced that it would be travelling ‘the length and breadth’ of the North West Province for its Nineteen Days of Revolution/Setsokosane Campaign. Setsokosane means ‘whirlwind’. This campaign in the North West runs along with the national phases identified by the ANC:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Concludes</th>
<th>Main Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lay the foundation</td>
<td>5 Months</td>
<td>July 2013</td>
<td>Prepare campaign structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to the people</td>
<td>7 Months</td>
<td>August 2013 to launch</td>
<td>Door-to-door work, report to the people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayihlome</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>9 April 2014</td>
<td>Popularise the ANC Manifesto. Identify our voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siyanqoba</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>30 April 2014</td>
<td>Dominate media with positive messages. Arrange to get ANC voters to voting stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election week</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>7 May 2014</td>
<td>Final rallies. Get the vote out. Monitor processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The aim of the current Siyanqoba phase is to listen and give feedback to the people. The Setsokosane campaign seems to facilitate these aims in the North West Province, but with a specific aim to talk about the ANC’s service delivery record since 1994, in an attempt to unify the ANC in the province. This campaign is supposed to highlight the ANC’s achievements as well as challenges. In addition to this, the ANC included the ‘popularisation’ of the ANC Election Manifesto as a priority. This campaign includes a door-to-door approach and walks about in public areas such as taxi ranks, shebeens and churches. The ANC provincial chairperson explains the phases of this campaign as follows:

“... the Setsokosane concept document, the first phase of the programme contained amongst others, the establishment of elections structures, as espoused in the Election Manual.
The second phase of the Setsokotsane programme, highlights the processes, analyses the collected data and helps in the interpretation of the voting data. Our watertight process and the voter's roll analysis, in the Ngaka Modiri Molema and the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District confirms that the ANC structures and voters are solid and combat-ready for elections.

Whilst we proceed with our programme to visit Dr Kenneth Kaunda and Bojanala districts, the programme will steamroll to the Siyanqoba election phase and ultimately, the elections.\textsuperscript{18}

As with previous elections, the Siyanqoba phase is the culmination of the ANC’s countrywide campaign, which will end with a rally at FNB stadium on May 4\textsuperscript{th}. President Zuma is scheduled to address this rally (Julius Malema also addressed this rally back in 2011 when he was still President of the ANCYL).

The governing party has made use of the normal election media such as posters and flyers. The ANC is active on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Its website is more user-friendly than most other parties and contains a wealth of documents.

Service delivery protests and the publication of the Nkandla report by the Public Protector have changed the ANC’s campaign. The ANC was set to run a positive campaign focusing on its achievements. In the North West Province, like in every other province, officials and delegations campaigning in the province must answer difficult questions about Nkandla and corrupt officials. Protesters in Zeerust and Bloemhof, specifically, blamed corrupt officials for the lack of service delivery they experienced. With the EFF in the picture with a message that seems to resonate with the vast numbers of unemployed and poor people in the province, the ANC provincial government in North West has to try to put divisions aside amidst these conflicts. On one hand the ANC has to run its campaign and restore the trust with its voters. On the other hand it has to restore peace in certain protest areas while spreading a message of no tolerance of violence and destruction of property from protesters. And it will have to seriously consider decisions such as redeploying discredited cadres like Maphetle Maphetle (former mayor of Tlokwe) to the provincial legislature. Negative perceptions the ANC is trying to reverse in its campaign will only be reinforced by such decisions.

In spite of these challenges the ANC has embarked on the door-to-door campaign one town and village at a time. It is projecting an 80% victory in North West. With the EFF in the picture and the DA showing some growth such a victory seems unlikely. The ANC is however likely to still win the North West Province with a comfortable victory.

**Media Coverage**

North West Province is served by national broadcasting and print media such as the SABC, eNCA, and Media 24 newspapers. There are several regional radio stations and newspapers serving the people of the province. The following tables give a glimpse of the kinds of

community papers and radio stations operating in the province, the areas they serve and their focus on politics.

Newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Area Served</th>
<th>Political coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potchefstroom Herald</td>
<td>Potchefstroom</td>
<td>Eng/Afr. Mooivaal Media Group with Media24. Local news. Has a section focusing only on voter education i.e. where to vote etc. Some commentary on local politics. Available online and has a mobi site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mafikeng Mail</td>
<td>Mafikeng</td>
<td>English only. Local and national news. Editorials covering political news – e.g. service delivery protests in the province and elsewhere. Available online.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Radio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Political coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUKfm 93.6 fm</td>
<td>± 2000, Potchefstroom – 50% Eng. 40% Afr. 10% Setswana</td>
<td>Political interviews with local politicians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Mafisa 93.4 fm</td>
<td>±100 000 Targets Setswana speaking listeners aged 18-35. Rustenburg, Hartbeespoort, Magaliesburg, Swartruggens, Ventersdorp, Ga-Rankuwa</td>
<td>Focus is music. Some political commentary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motsweding FM 87.9 – 107.9</td>
<td>SABC station, covering the entire North West, Northern Cape, Gauteng and Free State. Based in Mahikeng. Targets Setswana audience.</td>
<td>Lots of political news coverage and talk shows. Interviews with politicians such as EFF Premier Candidate Motsi earlier this year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opposition

Both the EFF and DA’s North West campaigns have received media coverage from national television, online and print media. The SABC, eNCA and ANN7 have reported on the DA’s Bodibe campaign and the controversial pictures mentioned earlier. The EFF got national coverage for its rallies in Mafikeng, and about EFF supporters complaining about lack of service delivery during service delivery protests in North West.

Local newspapers are not as keen to venture into hard political reporting, despite the impact of service delivery protests and the like. Some editorials had some political commentary (for example, the Mafikeng Mail) without providing new insight into specific provincial issues.19

Most national newspapers have grouped provincial news under the heading of each province to make access to regional news easier. The SABC and New Age have done this well.

Governing party

The ANC’s campaign in North West has been getting attention in national news. The SABC reported on President Zuma leading the campaign in the province in March 2014. The campaign started in Potchefstroom a day after the Public Protector’s release of the Nkandla findings. The headlines reiterated that Zuma ‘will have to convince the traditional leaders and other residents of Potchefstroom that the ANC can still deliver a better life for them’.20

The ANC has received very negative news coverage because of the violent service delivery protests in the province (Bloemhof, Zeerus, Brits). The provincial government under leadership of Premier Thandi Modise had to embark on serious damage control in these areas. The attempt was to be seen to come down hard on lack of service delivery by local authorities, show (sometimes unwelcome) sympathy with residents but to also speak against violence and destruction of property. The governing party has had difficulty creating the perception that it was successful in its handling of conflict situations where it is solely blamed for residents’ unhappiness.

SABC has involved party representatives of the ANC, EFF, FF+ and EFF in a string of debates initiated by Radio Sonder Grense (RSG). These debates are taking place in all provinces running up to the elections. The debate in North West took place in Potchefstroom. While province-specific concerns in the North West were neglected in these debates, which were subsumed in the “blame game” played by party representatives, it did insert the province into the national political discourse. Striking a balance between national concerns and province-specific issues would be the ideal point of departure for these debates.

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19 Editors Viewpoint. “Service delivery protests are politically motivated- Editor”. (2014).

20 SABC. “Zuma to lead election campaign in North West”. (2014).
http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/2f2c880435505b754cffe0bd5d3b76/Zuma-to-lead-election-in-North-West
**Gauteng**

**Waseem Holland, Independent Researcher**

Gauteng is the wealthiest province in the country with the largest population. Being the “powerhouse” of South Africa’s and indeed Africa’s economy means that issues around economic development and transformation are crucial to parties’ campaigns in the province.

**ANC Campaign**

Gauteng is the province where transformation is very visible, and the province where broad-based black economic empowerment is tangibly identifiable by the fact that Gauteng has the largest proportion of the black middle-class, compared to other provinces. The transformation and development of South Africa’s most well-known township, Soweto, is testament to the ANC’s economic successes and perhaps a worthy source of ANC plaudits. The construction of a relatively well functioning modern transportation system, Gautrain, is another demonstrable effect of public private partnerships working for the modernization of the province.

According to the ANC Gauteng Province Election Manual, the ANC campaign is focused on being visible on the ground within communities that are traditional supporters of the party, as well as venturing into areas that are not necessarily ANC “strong-holds”. Unlike the DA and EFF, the ANC has not revealed its candidates for premiers in the provinces, so is not relying on individual representatives to be the faces of their campaigns in the provinces. The ANC has a strong reliance on campaign teams that conduct door-to-door campaigns in a personalized, face-to-face way. Door-to-door work is the main component of ANC election campaigns where they meet voters to find out who they support. If these people are ANC supporters, then the team makes sure that they are in possession of a valid ID document and that they have been registered to vote. This information is recorded on the system. The ANC election campaign occurs in five phases. Phase 1, called “Lay the Foundation”, was conducted from February to July 2013, and is a preparation period for campaign structures. Phase 2, called “Back to the People”, was conducted from August to December 2013, and used as a platform for interface between campaign teams and voters where the party reports back to communities, engages with voters and addresses any problems community members may have. Phase 3, Mayihlome (“Prepare for Battle”), from January to April 2014, is the period where campaign teams that are now in possession of the election manifesto are able to engage comprehensively with voters through the framework set out in the manifesto. The work in this period is aimed at popularizing the manifesto as well as launching all forms of campaign advertising. Phase 4, called Siyanqoba (“We are winning”), from April to the 24 hours before election day, is broadly focused on building enthusiasm for the election. In this phase all public representatives of the ANC will be deployed on campaigns on a fulltime basis. Finally, the last phase, called election week, is focused of the deployment of party agents and election observers to all polling stations across the country on election-day.

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21 ANC Gauteng Province Election Manual, Election 2014, C U Shortened version
The 20 years of Democracy theme is clear and visible in the ANC’s campaign. The “good story to tell” narrative remains the predominant feature driving the ANC’s current election campaign. The ANC has tended to almost ignore the opposition parties and dismissed their presence as a mere formal requirement in the process of multi-party democracy. The ANC campaign is geared towards a focus on what it has achieved and the celebration thereof, not the weaknesses and shortcomings of the opposition parties.

**Opposition Campaign**

The DA has never governed Gauteng, but only specific wards and districts within the province. It is therefore unable to tap into the kind of narrative that the ANC is able to. Because the DA is unable to reach all citizens with the merits of its proposed economic policies in its manifesto, its attacking the ANC is unsurprising as it seems the easiest strategy to fall back on.

In November 2013, the DA launched a campaign that focused on the generally disliked E-toll system. The campaign posters read: “A Vote for the DA is a Vote against E-tolls”.22 The billboards, placed on the major highways in the province, ridiculed the ANC for the construction of the E-toll system as well as the many problems associated with electricity that have recently been in the spotlight in the province. The visible component of DA election campaigns (posters) has always been strong and clear, with bold writing and a clearly defined message. The new campaign posters, however, are confusing and it is difficult to extract the nub of the message. The difficulty is created by the DA having both vernacular and English writing on its posters.23 This difficulty is driven by the fact that the DA is, as ever, attempting to expand its sphere of support into the black African electorate while trying to make certain that it does not alienate its traditional support-base.

In this year’s election-period, the DA campaign began strongly with a focus on unemployment and the economy, which was exemplified by the March to ANC headquarters under the banner “Real Jobs”. However, the DA has fallen into the same pattern as it did in previous elections with an apparent preoccupation with attacking the ANC in general and Jacob Zuma in particular. Though it is natural for parties to campaign on the basis of pointing out weaknesses and inadequacies in incumbent parties, a sole pre-occupation with negative campaigning can prove to be both counter-productive as well as socially explosive. The DA’s offerings in their manifesto have not in reality received much coverage and at its campaign manifesto launch in Limpopo, the party was caught in a reactive mode. Having a narrative imposed upon them, the key messages at the DA’s campaign and manifesto lunch centred around three key messages:

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a. That after ANC leaders on the campaign trail suggested that the DA would bring back apartheid if elected into power and that the DA would not (and because of the Constitution could not) do so since as a party it was never in favour of apartheid
b. That it supported social grants and the welfare system and was not in favour of reducing either the number of different grant types or the amount, and
c. After ambiguous messaging about black economic empowerment, it announced that it supported the idea in principle while seeking to improve its operations and outcomes. Little else of what was contained in the DA manifesto was part of the key messages at the manifesto launch.

Having a narrative imposed upon it, the DA was caught in a reactive mode rather than in a proactive campaign.

Gauteng seems to be the most significant province in the DA’s election campaign. This is reflected by the fact that its national spokesman Mmusi Maimane is the DA’s premier candidate for Gauteng Province. Ironically, Mmusi Maimane, while being the embodiment of the DA’s newfound campaign strategy, could also be viewed as an embodiment of ANC successes. A young black man from Soweto, who is the child of a cashier and a factory worker, was able to be successful in the face of the legacy of apartheid. This may explain some of the pronouncements made by Maimane in the lead-up to the 2014 elections. In a speech at Walter Sisulu square in Kliptown, Soweto, at the launch of the “Believe in Change” campaign, Maimane paid homage to former liberation leaders like Albert Luthuli and Oliver Tambo, who of course came from the ANC. He has on numerous occasions also expressed admiration and support for Thabo Mbeki, an ANC president. The focus of the DA’s national campaign and indeed the Gauteng province is reflected in the speech where Maimane talks about the way that the former President Mbeki “saved” the South African economy.24

The crucial part of the speech that directly reflects DA strategy in Gauteng and Maimane being the embodiment of that strategy, is where Maimane explains that he supported and voted for the ANC previously but has recently become disillusioned with the party. It seems the message the DA want to project is that the black middle-class and black voters in general in the province must acknowledge the achievements made by the ANC in the liberation of the country and the subsequent economic development that took place under the Mbeki administration, but these achievements are supposedly being eroded by the current Zuma administration. This kind of campaign reasoning is elaborated in the DA’s “Ayisafani” television campaign, which is meant to convey the message that the ANC “has changed”. The reverence for Mbeki is also in stark contrast with the vilification of Zuma, which was expanded on when the DA sent a million Gautengers an SMS stating that Zuma stole citizen’s money in the upgrade of his private home at Nkandla.

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The EFF campaign has several interesting characteristics. The leader is charismatic and the identity of the party remains intertwined with the identity of the leader. Therefore, unlike most of the DA or ANC posters that you will see, most EFF posters have the image of party leader Julius Malema.

The EFF’s manifesto indicates that its ideological stance is markedly different to other prominent opposition parties (DA and Agang) in this year’s elections. Following from this, the EFF’s campaign strategy has been clearly focused on the working class and issues of economic failures of ANC policy from a pro-poor perspective.

Dali Mpofu has been positioned as the EFF’s remier candidate in Gauteng. Dali Mpofu is probably the highest-profile EFF member apart from the leader and is also himself a defector for the ANC. This, as with the DA, shows that the EFF has identified Gauteng as the most important province in which it will be competing. In a speech made at the EFF Gauteng election campaign launch on 4 April 2014, Mpofu set out the central tenets of the EFF’s plan for Gauteng Province. This is centered on job creation and the reduction of inequality. The following quote exemplifies the kind of strategy that the EFF has undertaken during its Gauteng campaign, which is directed as an indictment of ANC economic policies that have served to deepen inequality: “There is no province in ... South Africa which demonstrates the problems of the country more than Gauteng; poverty and squalor sit side by side with opulence”.25

**Media Coverage**

A scan of the print media in the province indicates that the coverage of the election period has been balanced by and large. The ruling party and opposition parties have received similar amounts of coverage in the media.

The depth of the coverage of the election period has not been good, however. The media have seemed overly focused on sensationalistic stories that do not consider the substantive differences in policy, approach, ideology or party orientations between the different parties but appear to focus on confrontational interactions between parties. For example, the DA march in the Johannesburg CBD on 12 February, which was conducted in opposition to the ANC’s proposed expansion of the public works programme that is meant to create six million job opportunities, was covered only from the angle of the violence that ensued from the march. The DA’s claim that the proposed expansion does not guarantee job creation but merely an expansion of short-term work and government economic dealings exclusively, was completely overlooked. The discourse that may have been able to be generated as a result of a

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better-quality media coverage of the merits of this policy debate would have gone a long way to informing the electorate.

The public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Commission (SABC), has recently been shown to be biased towards the ruling party. The DA “Ayisafani” television campaign was pulled from being aired on the SABC because the broadcaster claimed that it incited violence. The advert shows DA premier candidate Mmusi Maimane talking in the mirror about how the ANC has changed from its former glory days. In the advert, Maimane talks about several things that have gone wrong with the ANC and South Africa in general, which includes the gross overspending on the upgrades at Nkandla and the perceived increase of police brutality in recent times. The DA applied to the Independent Communication Association of South Africa (ICASA) to appeal the SABC’s decision to remove the advert. ICASA subsequently ruled in favour of the DA. On 25 April, however, the South African Police Services also laid a compliant with ICASA about the content of the advertisement, claiming that part of its visual content incites violence against the police.
Political campaigning by opposition parties

On 7 May 2014, South Africans will be going to the national polls for the fifth time to elect the national and provincial governments. All political parties that are registered with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to contest the national and provincial elections are campaigning. The key message among almost all parties is a promise to provide better governance than the one offered by the current governing party, the African National Congress (ANC).

While democratic elections are still relatively new in South Africa, Norris (2004) argues that there is widespread agreement that the process of election campaigning, particularly the roles of parties and the news media, has been transformed in recent decades. One of the most common observations heard in popular commentary, and widely echoed in the political communication literature, is that in recent decades many established and newer democracies have experienced the Americanisation of election campaigns. Norris goes on to categorise campaigns as taking three forms: pre-modern, modern and post-modern campaigns. The pre-modern campaign is defined as a campaign that is based upon direct forms of interpersonal communications between candidates and citizens at local level, with short-term, ad-hoc planning by the party leadership. Pre-modern campaigning originated in 19th century democracies with the expansion of the franchise, and continued in recognisable form in most post-industrial societies until at least the 1950s. The modern campaign is defined as one in which a party organisation is coordinated more closely at central level by political leaders, and advised by external professional consultants like opinion pollsters. Post-modern campaigns are understood as those where the coterie of professional consultants on advertising, public opinion, marketing, and strategic news management become more co-equal actors with politicians, assuming a more influential role within government in a permanent campaign, as well as coordinating local activity more tightly at the grassroots (Norris, 2004).

Rather than claiming that all campaigns are inevitably moving into the post-modern category, this view emphasises that contests can continue to be arranged from the pre-modern to the post-modern, due to influence of a range of intermediary conditions such as the electoral system, campaign regulations, and organisational resources (Norris, 2004). However, as the argument by Norris suggests, South African political campaigns cannot claim to have

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26 Norris, P, 2004, The evolution of election campaigns: Eroding political engagements? Harvard University, USA
27 Ibid
28 Ibid
adopted any single form of the above campaigns as a form of election campaign. South African political campaigns across provinces include both the pre-modern and modern forms of campaigns.

The Eastern Cape province of South Africa is the third-largest province in terms of the IEC voters’ roll, with 3.24 million voters, a 24.53% increase from the 1999 voters’ roll. The province is largely rural with a high level of poverty and illiteracy, and political parties do not have easy access to recruiting voters outside urban areas as compared to other provinces around the country. Like their national counterparts, opposition parties in the Eastern Cape are also centring their campaigns on the weaknesses of the ANC’s governance record.

Media coverage

This section discusses the role of the print media – that is, the local newspapers in the Eastern Cape Province – in covering party campaigns, focusing on both the governing and opposition parties. It also looks at the outdoor media, namely party posters and billboards. The media has a strong effect on educating as well as an influencing role when it comes to persuading and manipulating public views, be it political or any other issue. In the Eastern Cape Province the print media appear to have allocated dedicated columns for political news. These columns report on political party campaigns and general political news that is regarded as topical to EC audiences. For instance the Daily Dispatch confirmed that it has dedicated page 4 to political news, and the main headline (being the front page) is open for any topical story regardless of the focus as long as it catches the audience’s attention.

In an article published in the Daily Dispatch on 11 February 2014, it is clear that all media houses, including the television (Bay TV), newspapers (The Herald) and radio stations (Algoa FM), clearly state that they are against allowing party campaigns in their offices.

In a telephone interview, The Herald political editor, Nwabisa Makunga, stated that the newspaper dedicates page 4 to political news and their journalists always try to report on any party campaigns taking place. When asked about the percentage allocated for each party, Makunga remarked that it depends on the news of the day and how much space they have left for the column. The Herald editorial policy promotes fairness and equal representation of any party, and it should be noted that The Herald is not aligned to any political party. In conclusion, Makunga acknowledged that the parties that make headlines almost on a daily basis (in order of prominence) are mainly the ANC, DA, COPE, and EFF, followed by AGANG and the PAC.

Overall, parties received coverage in print media because of their ability to generate ‘news’ and not because sections of the media were bent on promoting ‘their’ party. Evidence

accessed 16 April 2014
31 Telephone Interview with the Herald Political Editor Nwabisa Makunga (Thursday 17 April 2014)
suggests that the well-resourced and well-supported parties increase their dominance of media coverage through their ability to advertise extensively in print, radio and the outdoor media. In a telephone interview with the Daily Dispatch personnel,\textsuperscript{32} they stated that parties are allowed to use the paid-for advertorial space only for announcements; thus any negative statements against other parties is strictly prohibited.

The ANC, DA, EFF, COPE and AGANG are making more headlines even on news websites such as the ENCA, SABC\textsuperscript{33}. ENCA\textsuperscript{34} reported on its website that on the weekend of 13 April parties were campaigning intensely in the Mthatha area. It states that “On Friday President Jacob Zuma opened a new water project in the area, on Saturday EFF leader Julius Malema held a rally in East London, and on Sunday it was the turn of the DA”.

Across the world, citizens are increasingly relying on the media as a primary source of political information and less on other sources – for example, the family, community and other intermediary organisations (Mughan and Gunther 2000). The media play a very crucial role in election campaigns. This role includes: the provision of information to voters to enable them make informed decisions; provision of a platform for debate through allowing exchanges of opinions among the different contending groups and citizens. The media’s role also includes that of acting as a watchdog for fairness during election campaigning and providing a voice to the voters\textsuperscript{35} (Davis 2004).

The Eastern Cape Province is characterised by a vibrant media sector. The television sector is made up of the public broadcaster, the South Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), ETV (ENCA news) and Port Elizabeth-based Bay TV. The radio sector, which is the biggest broadcaster in the province, comprises the SABC radio stations (including Umhlobo wenene, Tru FM), private radio stations (Algoa FM, etc.) and a host of community-owned radio channels spread throughout the province.

To ensure that the interests of the public are catered for and that fairness and a reflection of diverse and representative views of the public are represented in the media, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) was established. ICASA’s election responsibilities include regulation of political advertising and election broadcasts during an election period. The election period starts with the submission date of the party lists to the IEC and ends 48 hours before the start of voting. During this period, all political parties have

\textsuperscript{32} Telephone Interview with Daily Dispatch Political Editor Mr Zuzile (Friday 11 April 2014)
\textsuperscript{33} SABC News website \url{http://www.sabc.co.za/news/politics} Accessed on 17 April 2014
\textsuperscript{34} ENCA News \url{http://www.enca.com/elections-2014-south-africa/political-heavyweights-set-sights-eastern-cape} Accessed 17 April 2014
to be treated on an equal basis in regard to the time allocated to party political broadcasts and advertising.\textsuperscript{36}

In a discussion with Umhlobo wenene FM current affairs manager, Fezile Mponzi, about coverage of the governing party election campaigns, he noted that his station follows guidelines set by ICASA while conducting a political debate series which focus on key election issues. In such debates, all political party representatives are given equal time and space.

The scenario is different with the print media. For example, according to Daily Dispatch newspaper political editor, the paper covers newsworthy election campaign stories without necessarily focusing on a single political party. However, a closer look at political campaigns and media coverage reveals that the ruling party, the ANC, easily attracts more media attention and coverage not only from the public broadcaster, but from the private media houses as well.

The experience of the last four general elections demonstrates that Limpopo has been the ANC’s stronghold: it is the province in which the party has consistently secured the highest share of votes. The picture of Limpopo as a province where the ANC is almost unassailable has inadvertently shaped the patterns of campaigning by opposition parties. Opposition parties do not allocate their campaign resources across provinces equally. Thus, parties devote resources in proportion to their perceived opportunities to succeed in attaining votes in a province. Even when parties declare during campaigning that they are campaigning in all provinces equally, the reality of resource constraints compels parties to avoid devoting resources to provinces where they do not in reality stand a good chance of attaining a significant number of votes.

Following this line of reasoning, opposition parties would not spend much of their resources in Limpopo province when it comes to campaigning for the May 7, 2014 elections. This is simply because the ANC is much stronger in Limpopo, as the previous pattern of results indicates. The Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces remain the two provinces where the ANC has been able to attain an average of 80% per cent of electoral share of votes. It is only in Limpopo that the ANC has been able to break the 90% ceiling (in 1994). Therefore, Limpopo is clearly a place where the opposition parties would not devote much of their resources, if one considers the fact that it is costly to campaign for elections in South Africa and more so for opposition parties.

The 2014 election campaign period, however, demonstrates a different turn of events, where opposition parties are actually targeting Limpopo and devoting a visibly larger share of their resources to campaigning in the province. The Democratic Alliance (DA) decided to launch its 2014 election manifesto in Limpopo province, defying the well-entrenched idea that the province is dubbed the ANC’s “stronghold” (Nel, 2014). As the DA sees it, there has been remarkable development since the previous elections – sufficiently remarkable to warrant a renewed focus by the opposition parties on capturing more support than they hitherto enjoyed in Limpopo.

The DA stated that the ANC in Limpopo has become vulnerable, with the ruling party having worked through a difficult split, with interventions in its governance from the National Government, replacements at the executive government resulting from factional battles in the ANC, and a textbook delivery scandal twice over. This may mean that there is an opportunity to change the political spectrum, with new and different role-players having emerged.

It is not only the DA that sees Limpopo province as vulnerable to a change in voting patterns. The newly launched Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) also seems to target Limpopo as its first showing of strength in the 2014 elections. The formation of EFF as a political party has much to do with political fractures within the ANC in Limpopo. Julius Malema’s burgeoning
popularity as the ANC Youth League president and his subsequent expulsion from the party also has its roots in Limpopo Province. The main question, however, remains whether the political spectrum in Limpopo has changed to such an extent that opposition parties are justified in devoting significant campaign resources to the province.

**Making sense of the political dynamics in Limpopo**

There is no doubt that the ANC is aware that it cannot allow its electoral hold on Limpopo to slide. But the party’s campaign in Limpopo is more of a ‘maintenance plan’, and not really an attempt to build something new. The ANC’s campaign in Limpopo is meant to close or at least limit the opportunity gap for the EFF and also the newly formed AgangSA. Malema, the EFF leader, has a sizeable support base in the province – some of which can be assumed to have migrated with him into EFF after his expulsion from the ANC.

It is also demonstrable that the EFF’s membership recruitment in Limpopo way outstrips membership recruitment in other provinces.\(^{37}\) The EFF’s Malema often invokes the emotions of being from Limpopo Province. Besides EFF, AgangSA also sees Limpopo Province as a place for the party to demonstrate its first showing in contemporary South African politics. Since its formation in 2013, AgangSA leader Dr Mamphela Ramphele has been steadfastly invoking her identity as someone who originates from Limpopo.\(^{38}\) Mamphela’s entry into politics has therefore become a ‘homecoming’ initiative, where she often sees her role as that of serving ‘her’ people. In one of her statements in Limpopo, Ramphele stated that “My home communities are crying out for a clean government that works for people, not against them”.\(^{39}\)

The campaigns by AgangSA and the EFF in Limpopo are distinctly organic, and quite different from the type of campaign spearheaded by the DA. Both Malema and Ramphle see themselves as rescuers of the communities of Limpopo, while the DA’s campaign in the province is rather more akin to a modern political campaign based strictly on the issues germane to the province. The DA has no ethnic connection with Limpopo, while AgangSA and EFF respectively invoke their ethnic base. The ANC’s response to AgangSA and the EFF’s attempts to capture the larger share of votes in Limpopo has been to send Cyril Ramaphosa, who also comes from the province, to actively campaign there. This raises the question as to whether Limpopo is experiencing an ethnic-based campaign by three important role-players in this election. This raises a significant hurdle for political parties such as the DA or UDM who have no ethnic connection to the province.

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\(^{37}\) City Press, “Juju’s district not an EFF stronghold”, 17 Nov 2013

\(^{38}\) AgangSA, “Mamphela Ramphle returns home to Limpopo to report back to elders and community” 17 December 2013

\(^{39}\) AgangSA, “Mamphela Ramphle returns home to Limpopo to report back to elders and community” 17 December 2013
Voting patterns in Limpopo show that the province has been welcoming to newly formed political parties; however, to the extent that newly formed political parties enjoy some support, all those parties have had a significantly lower share of the votes, with literally very marginal showings in proportion to the support enjoyed by the ANC.

The intense campaigning that the province is experiencing in the lead-up to the 2014 elections comes out of the realisation that the ANC is now weaker in the province and an opportunity may exist for opposition parties to make greater inroads in the province. At this point, however, it is difficult to tell if the political fractures experienced by the ANC in Limpopo will indeed translate into electoral opportunities for opposition parties.

**Conclusion**

Among the three notable opposition parties campaigning in Limpopo (i.e. the DA, AgangSA, and the EFF), only one party has driven a generic campaign. The DA is clearly an ‘outsider’ in Limpopo, while AgangSA and EFF are seen as ‘homecoming’ parties. The DA is the most experienced of all of the opposition parties when it comes to driving campaigns, however. This is attested to by its record of being the opposition party that has steadily increased its national share of votes since its formation. Having enjoyed some support in Limpopo even though in the 2009 election the DA lost the status of official opposition to COPE, the DA’s current campaign in Limpopo appears to be gaining traction, suggesting perhaps that voters in Limpopo are not that easily susceptible to “ethnic-based” campaigns as may be thought given the appeals made by the EFF and AgangSA.

The ANC appears to remain well entrenched in Limpopo and it is likely that the party will most likely secure another victory by a significant margin of majority in the 2014 elections. The campaigns in Limpopo have been well covered by both print media and broadcast media. Much interest in the coverage of the province has been fuelled by the fact that since President Jacob Zuma was elected to the second term as ANC party leader Limpopo has had the most significant fallout recorded within the party at provincial level. This has seen the ANC Provincial Executive Committee being disbanded and Cassel Mathale subsequently recalled as the head of the provincial government.

The institutionalisation of factions in Limpopo has made the ANC weaker, and opposition parties have seen that as an opportunity to gain ground in the province. The ANC is clearly on a mending campaign in Limpopo, and the party has had to deal with President Zuma’s growing unpopularity in the province. The results of the 2014 elections will demonstrate definitively whether the sustained fractures and fragmentation that have characterised Limpopo Province and the ANC in Limpopo since Zuma was re-elected ANC president in Mangaung are exaggerated, or whether such fractures presented a real opportunity for opposition parties to make some inroads into garnering support in the province.
The central message of opposition parties campaigning in the Northern Cape is that they can manage the Northern Cape better than the currently governing African National Congress (ANC). Most visible have been parties such as Congress of the People (COPE), the Democratic Alliance (DA), and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), attempting to capitalise on the 620 000 people who are in the IEC’s voters’ roll in the province.

The Northern Cape is the largest province in the country and also the most sparsely populated, accounting for only 2.2 percent of the total South African population. The politics of the province is dominated by the African National Congress, whose dominance may be challenged, especially in the Frances Baard and John Taole Gaetsewe regions, the most densely populated regions of the Northern Cape where mining in the province is based.

**Political campaigning (opposition)**

The Democratic Alliance (DA), Congress of the People (COPE), Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Freedom Front Plus (FF+), United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) and the newly former Independent Civic Organization of South Africa (ICOSA), led by Cornelius Vernon Peterson, have been campaigning vigorously, with Galeshewe the focal point of many opposition parties, especially COPE. In the 2009 elections COPE secured many of its votes in Galeshewe, the largest township in the province.

Opposition parties in the Northern Cape have been relatively weak, with opposition parties collectively sharing 11 seats out of the 30 seats in the provincial legislature. However, the opposition is looking to use factors such as unemployment, corruption, maladministration and poverty as indicators to show the people that the governing ANC cannot or must not be trusted to continue governing. Apart from the national focus on Nkandla, the opposition have pointed to province-specific projects which they charge are improper, such as the painting of the walls at the official residence of the premier, which cost taxpayers R200 000, a project that has been labelled the premier’s own Nkandla.40

From 1 April Malema made his presence felt in the Phokwane sub-region, which comprises Jan Kemp Dorp, Hartswater and Pampierstad. Malema was canvassing support ahead of the 7 May general elections, and the EFF held its provincial rally of the Northern Cape at the Mcdonald Pitso Stadium, and was highly visible during this period in the streets of Valspan Township, where it appears that everyone was clad in EFF regalia.41 The Phokwane sub-region is seen as the ANC stronghold, and the EFF’s supposed popularity must be causing unease in the ANC. The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) will be counting on the embattled

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40 Micheal Mokoena “Premier gets own Nkandla” DFA 9 April 2014
41 George Mutloane “Parties go all out for elections” Express Northern cape 9 April 2014
municipal manager of Namakhoi municipality, Aubrey Baardman, to win the hearts of more than 600 000 Northern Cape people who are registered to participate in the upcoming general elections. On the 17 March this year Malema announced Baardman as EFF premier candidate for Northern Cape. He said that the EFF had a strong candidate in Baardman – a man who reputedly has only standard 7 high school education, and is facing criminal charges relating to alleged theft, fraud and corruption at the municipality.42

The Democratic Alliance (DA) has also conducted high visibility and high profile campaigning by having its national leader, Heln Zille, Gauteng Premier Candidate Mmusi Maimane, and their Northern Cape Premier candidate campaigning together. In a gathering of more than a thousand party supporters at the Jim Summers Hall, Zille declared that the DA “can win the Northern Cape”.

Even though Zille spoke about what the DA can do for the people the Northern Cape if the DA gets voted into power, the larger part of her speech was directed at criticising the “ANC of Jacob Zuma and John Block”.43 The DA in the province has positioned itself as paragon of good morals. A clinic in Warrenton apparently refused basic medical care to a resident because she was wearing a DA t-shirt. The DA leader in a statement said that the party believed that the woman had the right to have access to health care, as enshrined in the constitution.44 The DA will be using the incident to drive its campaign message that they can provide public services for all inhabitants of the province, regardless of their political affiliation. On 12 April, the DA Parliamentary leader, Lindiwe Mazibuko, and the DA premier candidate for the Northern Cape, Andrew Louw, took the DA’s campaign to Upington in the Siyanda region. This is the region where the chairperson of the governing party comes from, and the strategy to take its campaign there was aimed at trying to get support in the ANC stronghold. The visit to Upington saw the DA going door to door, a strategy often employed by the governing party.

Furthermore, the DA in the Northern Cape is hoping that the corruption charges faced by some of the ANC top brass in the province will work to their advantage. Northern Cape ANC chairperson John Block and his fellow party heavyweights, deputy provincial secretary Alvin Botes and provincial treasurer Yolanda Botha, are accused of having received huge kickbacks from Trifecta Investment Holdings in a government lease scandal. The DA is looking at using such incidents as its campaign tools. The DA faces a tough battle, though, since it failed in the 2009 elections to secure the position of official opposition in the legislature, managing to get only 12% of the votes in the Northern Cape.

It remains to be seen if Congress of the People (COPE) will manage to hold on to their position as the official opposition in the province. In the province COPE appears to be dying a natural death. In the 2014 elections COPE has been neither visible nor audible. In March, two senior COPE members and members of the provincial legislature (MPLs) resigned their

42 Micheal Mokoena “Town boss to run for NC top office” DFA 18 March 2014
43 Micheal Mokoena “DA promises NC ‘real change’” DFA 17 March 2014
44 Chantal Halata “No help for DA member” DFA 7 March 2014
seats to focus full time on the elections. Both members, Pakes Dikgetse and Fred Wyngaardt, were previously members of the ANC and MECs in the ANC government.45

What is evident in the Northern Cape is that there is a race between opposition parties to be crowned official opposition in the provincial legislature after May 7 general elections. The Freedom Front Plus and other parties such as NFP, and ACDP are simply not strong contenders and it is unlikely, as it was in the past, that they will feature in the Northern Cape provincial legislature.

**Forms of political campaigning**

Opposition politics in the province is no different from that of other provinces across the country: political parties employ more or less the same strategies to win the electorate over. However, the DA has proved to stand above its counterparts. The DA has positioned itself by focusing on social media, and every premier candidate has his/her personal social page on different platforms, Twitter and Facebook being the main tools of campaigning. The chief DA strategy is to portray its premier candidate as progressive and honourable individuals who can be trusted with government. And the Northern Cape premier candidate Andrew Louw has been promoted by the DA as an honourable man to take the province forward. Like the ruling party, the DA has also done door-to-door campaigning, and sent SMSs to people to make them aware of the DA’s campaign.

Unlike the DA, COPE has focused on door-to-door campaigning, which it feels is a more effective method of campaigning. Most COPE members are former ANC members, so they still believe in the strategies the ruling party is employing to galvanize support. COPE is no longer visible in the province, though, and, as things stand, it might lose its official opposition status to either the DA or the new kid on the block, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF).

Formed less than a year ago, the EFF has managed to make its mark in the province, and its posters can be seen in every town in the province, from Kimberley to Kuruman and from Upington to De Aar. What again is clearly in evidence is its fashionable red berets: every second person one meets around the province is wearing a red beret to show his or her political support. Like COPE in the 2009 elections, the EFF is presenting itself as the real ANC, and is willing to implement the freedom charter in totality, starting with nationalizing the mines, which is what the people of the province would like to hear. Northern Cape is a mining province, so people might think that is a good idea to vote for EFF because it is willing to address the issues of wages at the mines.

**Political Campaigning (governing party)**

The African National Congress has performed well in the Northern Cape in the past four elections, and it is expected to do fairly well in the May 7 general elections. Its strategy is to highlight its governing track record, and being an incumbent it can use government achievements to support its claims. It has also criticised opposition parties in the province for

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45 “Postponement of Cope MPL swearing-in ceremony cause anger” Mail&Guardian 11 March 2014
making empty promises. The ANC claims to be the only party that can deliver on the needs of the people. Nationally it has adopted a slogan “a good story to tell”, and the ANC in the Northern Cape is using the same message.

John Block of the ANC said to the people of Noupoort and De Aar that the ANC-led government will continue to support ideas aimed at improving the lives of the marginalized. Block was accompanied by the Northern Cape premier Sylvia Lucas during a visit to Noupoort, De Aar and Richmond, as part of the provincial outreach programme. They launched various projects around Pixley ka Seme district and also launched the Nonzwakazi street revitalization project worth 2.5 million which employs more than 50 young people around the area. Block reminded members of the community to take a stand on May 7 and make the right choice for a better life. Such statements do not sit well with the opposition parties, who feels that government-driven projects are been used for electioneering purposes.46

The African National Congress and its alliance partners have in recent times come under serious criticism from opposition parties for allegedly using government resources to boost their campaign work for the 2014 general elections. As part of its campaigning, on 9 April SADTU was distributing school shoes to schoolchildren in the community of Steynville. According to the Diamond Field Advertiser, close to 300 learners had received brand new school shoes sponsored by SADTU. The teachers union is an affiliate of COSATU, which forms part of the tripartite alliance with the ANC.

Present at the community Hall of Steynville was Grizelda Giekella-Lecholo, the MEC responsible for education, together with the MEC of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Norman Shushu. The union provincial secretary, Sipho Mayongo, was quoted as saying that the union had decided to give shoes to learners at Vukasiwe Primary School in Steynville to ensure that they did not have to brave the cold winter weather without shoes in their quest for education.47

The ANC is resourceful: its members in the province have made their vehicles available for branding with ANC colours to indicate their allegiance. Nationally the ANC has beefed up the campaign by making available sound-fitted trucks, which are used for campaigning support. And mini-buses in and around Kimberley are also branded green, yellow and black.

The ANC has deployed senior leaders to the province to interact directly with communities on door-to-door visits in communities throughout the province. These leaders visited Pescodia, Barkley West, De Aar, Springbok, Kuruman, Upington and Squarehill, among other areas. Leaders included Gauteng premier Nomvula Mokonyane, Angie Motshega, Naledi Pandor, Aaron Motsoaledi, Zweli Mkhize and Fikile Mbalula.

46NKululeko Lucky Chonga “ANC – government ‘cares’” The New Age 16 April 2014
47“union buys shoes for learners” DFA 9 April 2014
Fractures and opposition in the ANC

Since the Moshaweng provincial conference of the ANC, contestation in the province has subsided, with all members rallying behind one leader. The ANC is led by John Block and Zamame Saul respectively as chairperson and secretary. There no visible signs of fractures and internal opposition. During the list conference there were rumours that certain regional leaders were actually having secret meetings to alienate or oust other leaders, yet little of this has come to pass. The Northern Cape is a province of few opportunities; therefore people rely on the government to provide in terms of business and job opportunities. Northern Cape politics, unlike politics in the metropolitan provinces, can be described as “stomach politics”, which in essence means that a person cannot risk challenging those in political power for fear of a loss of livelihood. Tenders and deployment in strategic government positions are decided by the ANC, and provincial leaders use this power to manage any view that seeks to challenge their authority.

Media Coverage

Media coverage is an important indicator that indeed democracy is in action. All political parties need to receive fair and equitable media coverage in the run-up to elections. The Northern Cape is also fortunate to have a regional office of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), which is based in Kimberley. The SABC has been a major source of election information, most of which is reported in the SABC 2 news. The newly established ANN7 is also contributing to election reporting, and the station has established a program which focuses on all provinces.

Northern Cape Province does not have a high concentration of media. The Diamond Field Advertiser (DFA) is the most popular daily and other publications are relatively small and at times struggle with resources to cover what is the largest province in the country. There are number of publications that are competing with the DFA, however: the Afrikaans-language Volksblad Noordkaap and the New Age are among the new entrants to the market together with the Weekly Northern Cape and Express. In terms of radio, the stations that are reporting on the province, and that feature news, features and current affairs, are Radio Temaneng, which hosted President Zuma when he was in Kimberley, Kurara Fm, a Kuruman-based station, and Motsweding FM. Motsweding FM has hosted roundtable debates with various political parties.

Coverage of the province by the public broadcaster has largely been balanced, fair, factual and accurate. Larger commercial print publications, including City Press, Sunday Independent and Sunday Times, report on the Northern Cape only when a big or an influential figure is involved in corruption. Other than that they have not been giving the province much attention.

Protests

Between April 2012 and March 2014 this year, police responded to 12 399 incidents of public unrest, of which 10 517 were regarded as peaceful. KwaZulu-Natal had the highest number
with 2609, followed by Gauteng by 2401, North West 1667, Mpumalanga 603 and the Northern Cape 433. Of these 433, a total of 74 protest incidences were considered violent. However, in the 2014 period the protests have subsided. It is likely that the elections in the Northern Cape will not be affected by protests, and that they will take place in an environment conducive to free and fair elections.\footnote{Municipal IQ}
Political campaigning

Arguably, the 2014 elections have gifted opposition parties with more issues to campaign against the ruling party than any other elections since 1994. The Democratic Alliance, for example, was the first party to campaign against the roll-out of the Gauteng e-tolls, claiming in the process that its electoral prospects in the province looked more promising than ever as a result of the general anger of Gauteng residents towards the e-tolls. The newly formed Economic Freedom Fighters also took on the battle and made the fight against the e-tolls one of their main rallying calls. The massacre of miners in Marikana in 2012 also sparked ire among South Africans exasperated by the apparent failure of the government to govern. It was the Nkandla scandal, though, that would be the most potent weapon to use against the ANC government in the 2014 electoral campaign by opposition political parties. Political analyst Susan Booysen said the Nkandla issue had become important to the DA’s election campaign as the mileage they got out of it was “phenomenal”.

Also, the Chapter Nine institutions set up to consolidate democracy in the country have come under unprecedented attack. Of particular pertinence has been some opposition parties’ action against chairwoman of the Independent Electoral Commission, Pansy Tlakula. Citing fears that the IEC chairwoman’s credibility, and by extension her impartiality, could be compromised as a result of her relationship with a prominent ANC leader Thaba Mufamadi, these parties approached the Electoral Court and filed papers requesting Tlakula’s removal only weeks before the scheduled elections. The parties leading this campaign are the UDM, ACDP, Agang SA, COPE and the EFF. The parties were acting on reports from Public Protector Thuli Madonsela, and the Treasury-commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers forensic report which essentially put blame on Tlakula and two senior staff members of the IEC for presiding over a procedurally flawed lease of the IEC’s head office. In the papers submitted to the Electoral Court, these parties pointed out that Mufamadi was a candidate for the 2014 elections, placed at number 155 on the ANC list. The parties had been campaigning for Tlakula’s removal following Public Protector Thuli Madonsela’s report accused her of disadvantaging other bidders by flouting procurement processes in favour of Mufamadi’s company, Abland. The same findings were made by an independent forensic report from PricewaterhouseCoopers, which was commissioned by the Treasury. Interestingly, the bigger opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, as well as the Freedom Front Plus, have distanced themselves from this action.

50 Nhlabathi, H. "Tlakula is compromised,’ Sowetan (2014).
A question can be posed, although purely speculatively, whether these applicants, anticipating further waning fortunes in the upcoming elections, are casting doubts as to the legitimacy and credibility of the electoral results – especially against the backdrop of a real possibility of being trounced in the polls by new kid on the block the EFF. What lends some credence to this speculation is the fact that the DA is projecting more electoral gains, continuing on its onward growing trend at the polls, hence its disinterest in pursuing this matter. The popularity of the EFF, the feasibility of its policies notwithstanding, is considered by some observers as testimony to the party’s ability to have sparked for the first time since 1994 a real alternative that resonates with the aspirations of the majority of voters. In an opinion piece published in the Business Day newspaper, political analyst Steven Friedman criticised a campaign led by some veteran ANC members to encourage ANC supporters disappointed with the party’s current leadership to intentionally spoil their votes on May 7, arguing that: ‘Most voters see parties as vehicles to express their identity, not tools to make a point.’ It follows therefore that the EFF might owe its appeal among the poor African electorate to their shared frustration with 20 years of democracy that has yielded nothing more than a flag democracy that has not translated to material transformation in any meaningful way.52

In Mpumalanga 16 parties will be contesting the 2014 national and provincial elections. A glance at the previous results in Mpumalanga suggests that the ANC’s dominance over the province is not under threat. This is further affirmed by the recent Sunday Times/Ipsos surveys, which showed the ANC’s share of the vote at a comfortable 71.7%, while the DA trailed at 11% and the EFF at 7.4%. COPE, which broke away from the ANC following the party’s electoral conference in Polokoane in 2007, has seen a gradual decline in support in Mpumalanga, as has the UDM.

Forms of political campaigning (Opposition)

All parties have been careful to send high-profile leaders on their campaigns, going door-to-door, party volunteers handing out party leaflets to would-be supporters and persuading them to vote for their party. Opposition parties point out the weakness of the ruling ANC: citing rampant corruption, ineptitude at local government level which has led to some of the municipalities being brought under administration by national government, and the scandals surrounding the ANC leader and national president Jacob Zuma. Tellingly, a number of independent candidates who emerged in Mpumalanga and contested by-elections at local government level have defected from the ANC, which further highlights intra-party weaknesses within the ruling party.

Noteworthy is the website of the main opposition, the DA, in Mpumalanga: it provides snippets of its campaign activities and encourages supporters to join its campaigns around issues of particular interest. The website, while used to advise party supporters of upcoming election-related events, also serves as a platform to embarrass the ruling party, highlighting

52 Friedman, Steven, ‘Spoilt votes are blunt instrument of democracy,’ Business Day (2014).
incidents of intimidation and intolerance on the part of the incumbents. The EFF also has a website on which it uploads press releases, informs supporters of upcoming events and has interactive content such as application forms and links to purchase party merchandise.

ANC Political campaigning

The ruling ANC approached the campaign for the 2014 elections with a sense of caution. The embarrassing and symbolically powerful spectre of the booing of President Jacob Zuma at the memorial service of the late Nelson Mandela late in 2013 so worried the ANC that careful measures were applied to manage the event of the January 8 Statement, held in Mpumalanga on Saturday 11 January 2014. In the end the event showed a disciplined crowd showing support to its leader, despite the negative publicity that had been following him with the revelation of the Nkandla scandal.

Premier David Mabuza is credited with astute political skills, holding sway in the provincial ANC’s activities through the various organs of the party throughout the province.

An interesting strategy has been that of the ANC (and some of the opposition parties in Mpumalanga) showing up at church services and pleading with the churchgoers to pray for the party to succeed in the elections and to continue to deliver a better life for all.

This is, however, only one part of the ruling party’s campaigning strategy. A big party with a huge public support, the ANC has relied on volunteers to conduct door-to-door campaigning. Provincial luminaries are also roped in to boost the effort. The party’s national leadership has also visited the province canvassing for votes. The ANC also uses well-known public figures such as famous and popular actor Meshack Mavuso, who shot to fame as the character ‘Javas’ in the controversial but popular television drama ‘Yizo Yizo’ and played the character of Vusi Moletsane in the soapie ‘Isidingo’.

Fracture and opposition in the governing party in the province

With the elections so near, the tensions within the ruling party have been somewhat muted. It had been reported earlier that the province-to-province list had excluded provincial ANC veterans such as Fish Mahlalela (member of the legislature), Candith Mashego-Dlamini (MEC for health), Pinky Phosa (MEC for economic development), Madala Masuku (MEC for finance and SACP central committee member) and Sibongile Manana (MEC for arts and culture).

Other senior members in the province known to be in the anti-Zuma camp, notably Thomas Bongo and Peter Nyoni, also did not make the list. Mabuza’s former deputy Charles Makola was among the PEC members excluded from the list. Former cabinet members Clifford Mkansi turned down his nomination and Meshack Malinga was also left out.

Also not elected were tripartite alliance members, the provincial SACP’s Secretary Bonakele Majuba and William Lubisi, the Mpumalanga legislature speaker and SACP PEC member.
Allegations of impropriety were made against the procedure that led to the creation of this list, including the failure of David Mabuza to recuse himself as the process’s chairperson, given that he had an interest (that of being on the list). Allegations were made that monies were seen dished out and that there was a list of names that delegates were instructed to vote for. These developments notwithstanding, the ANC does not seem to be in danger of losing its traditional support at the polls, according to the recent Ipsos Markinor polls, discussed elsewhere in this update on Mpumalanga.

Conclusions

The dominance of the ruling ANC in Mpumalanga seems secure for the moment, with opposition parties trailing by dozens in percentage terms. Some of the smaller parties in the provinces have been losing votes and have mostly been overshadowed by the new-kid-on-the-block the Economic Freedom Fighters.

The ruling ANC’s election campaigning was effectively launched alongside the ANC’s traditional January 8 statement in January in Mpumalanga. An ANC stronghold, perhaps the choice of venue was propitious for President Jacob Zuma, who had been embarrassed when crowds booed at him at the late President Nelson Mandela’s memorial service, attended by scores of international dignitaries. A carefully managed affair, the launch demonstrated support for the ANC and its leader. The ANC seems to have managed to gradually canvass ANC members and supporters behind the ANC, emphasizing the party’s pedigree over the apparent flaws of its current leadership, and portraying the party as the only vehicle to effect real social transformation. The party has reiterated the refrain from President Zuma’s “We have a good story to tell twenty years into our democracy” speech at the opening of parliament. Focusing the electorate’s attention on the several achievements the party managed over the past two decades, the ANC has tried to downplay the damaging scandals engulfing the party under its current leadership, asking for more time to complete the transformation agenda it has set itself to achieve.

The soil for undermining the ANC’s electoral hopes has apparently never been richer, with the party suffering unprecedented levels of public discontent, exemplified in the service delivery protests, the fallout from the Marikana massacre, divisions in the labour movement (the party’s traditional support base), and public outrage sparked by the Nkandla scandal.

From the point of view of the electorate, however, it seems the ANC is a better devil than the DA, which is often regarded with suspicion by the majority of the electorate, thanks in large part to its identity as a party started and dedicated to defend white interest – despite its record of good governance acknowledged even by the national government. None of the other smaller parties seem to have touched the nerve for the majority of the electorate in the way the EFF has and its popularity, whatever reservations might be held about the practical applications and implications of their policies, speaks to the dearth in the opposition landscape in South Africa, of substantial policy orientation from the point of view of the majority.
The South African constitution and the country’s electoral system enjoy widespread, well-considered support. Regulations regarding the media’s role and conduct around elections are in place and seemingly enjoy legitimacy among most role-players. The public broadcaster has in recent times been in the spotlight for all the wrong reasons, however, and has required journalists to push back what is considered by many to be attempts to capture the public broadcaster by the ruling party (see Op Ed, City Press 20 April, 2014). On the whole, the media has generated a great deal of interest on the upcoming elections, although it could be argued that substance has been compromised for quantity.

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Western Cape

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Introduction

This update focuses on political campaigning that has occurred in the Western Cape in the run-up to the poll on 7 May 2014. The Western Cape has the Democratic Alliance (DA) as the governing party and the African National Congress (ANC) as the main opposition party. Given that the Western Cape is such a highly contested province, most political parties have supplemented their national campaign plans with strategies specifically aimed at reaching voters in the province. Parties have targeted particular groups such as farming and fishing communities as well as areas affected by gang violence. Unfortunately, attempts to capture the usually floating “coloured vote” has degenerated into a situation where campaigning is tainted by racially inflammatory rhetoric.

Forms of Political Campaigning

The DA, ANC, Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), AgangSA, Congress of the People (COPE), Patriotic Alliance (PA), National Freedom Party (NFP) Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), United Democratic Movement (UDM) and Freedom Front Plus (FF+) all have posters lining the streets in the suburbs of the Cape Metro and other towns in the province. Door-to-door campaigning and large public gathering campaign events have featured prominently in the Western Cape. These traditional ways of getting their message across are doubly effective, as they usually generate some level of media coverage as well. The DA, ANC and EFF have been most visible in media reports of the campaign trail in the Western Cape.

The DA launched its “Western Cape Story” campaign on 8 March 2014 at Blue Downs Stadium in Cape Town. About 4000 people attended the event in blue DA t-shirts emblazoned with the DA logo. On 26 March Western Cape Premier Helen Zille launched the DA Braille Manifesto at the League of the friends of the Blind in Grassy Park, in an effort to entice voter support from people with disabilities. On 6 April 2014 she led a march against gang violence and drug abuse in Mitchells Plain, to highlight efforts of the DA-led City of Cape Town municipality to combat these social ills. The march also served to launch billboard messages showing Mayor Patricia de Lille and other prominent Capetonians.

promoting the campaign to combat gang violence and drug abuse, as issues that continue to affect communities in the Cape Flats. Two weeks later on 19 April Helen Zille again addressed an anti-drugs and gangsterism march in Manenberg.58

On 12 April DA Western Cape leader Ivan Meyer and party provincial deputy Theuns Botha also hosted an election rally in Hartenbos close to George to get the DA message across and to consolidate party support that has been tested in the area in recent by-elections.59 On 17 April Helen Zille also delivered a speech at the small harbours picket in Hout Bay, where she addressed fishing communities in an effort to allay fresh fears that proposed government policies on allocation of fishing quotas could negatively affect livelihoods of many in the fishing communities.60

As early as October 2013 the ANC sent two of its senior members to strengthen its volunteer campaign: Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba and Home Affairs Minister Naledi Pandor went to Khayelitsha to engage with ANC door-to-door election campaign volunteers.61 The ANC held its Western Cape manifesto launch on 18 January 2014 at Delft stadium, with Jessie Duarte as the main speaker.62 One newspaper article noted that the ANC is “pulling out all the stops to win back the Western Cape”.

In another high-profile event, President Zuma spent his 72nd birthday in one of the Cape Flats communities, holding a rally at Vygieskraal Stadium, Athlone, as part of his birthday celebrations.63 The ANC also noted that members of its Women’s League and Provincial executive committee members engaged “with South Africans across the Western Cape as part of their non-stop election campaign”, embarking on door to door activities and listening to the concerns of community members.64 Additionally former Western Cape premier and current South African ambassador to the US, Ebrahim Rasool, went on a “whistle-stop” tour of Cape Town in a bid to convince the middle-class electorate, especially those of the Muslim faith, to vote for the ANC.65 Provincial ANC leader Marius Fransman was also particularly active in his campaign efforts. In his campaign tour of the Cape farmlands and the West

Coast, he addressed farmworkers at a rally near De Doorns on April 22 and lashed out at the DA, accusing the ruling party in the province of siding with farm owners instead of workers.66

The ACDP held its official party launch at the beginning of March.67 The party’s Facebook page indicates that it has been hosting various meetings across the Western Cape and that ACDP President Kenneth Meshoe had a five-day walkabout in the province meeting with churches, communities, businesses. The ACDP also deployed Members of Parliament Cheryllen Dudley and Steve Swart as well as ACDP Western Cape MPL Grant Haskin and Councillors Ferlon Christians, Demi Dudley and Gerald Siljeur in the province to meet with communities, walk the streets, and address churches.68

The EFF engaged in some novel forms of campaigning, hosting a “Western Cape Social Revolution Party” at Club 169 in Long Street, Cape Town.69 Later in January Julius Malema gave an address at Khayelitsha’s Mew Way hall.70 The EFF had its official launch in the Western Cape on 15 March in Delft – Julius Malema also visited the West Coast, the Overberg and Mitchells Plain.71

Campaign Content

The ANC campaign has centred on the South Africa’s twentieth anniversary of democracy and the fact that it has “a good story to tell”. This key message was kicked off in President Zuma’s pre-election State of the Nation Address and has been the golden thread weaving the ANC’s election campaign messages together. Much of the DA campaign strategy has been focused on refuting this. While delivering her State of the Province Address, Helen Zille responded by saying that “we have the best story to tell”.72 The DA launched its 2014 election manifesto on Sunday 23 February in Polokwane, where the ANC held its conference that culminated in the removal of Thabo Mbeki as South Africa’s president. Their campaign slogan is “Together for change, Together for jobs”.73 Helen Zille promised to address jobs,

education, and corruption. These themes extended to the DA’s campaign in the Western Cape. A key strategy has been to highlight the DA’s successes and achievements by the provincial government and City of Cape Town council since 2009. The DA is using its record of governance in the Western Cape to drive its national election campaign in the hope to make inroads in provinces such as Gauteng, North West, Northern Cape, and Eastern Cape. According to the DA, the Western Cape story “highlights the great strides made in the province since 2009” as it compares its record in government with the ANC’s record in rest of the country.

The ANC’s call for the support of “smaller political parties” as it prepares to win back the DA-led province was shunned by parties in the province, as FF+ leader Pieter Mulder said: “It … is not in the interests of South Africa to strengthen the ANC. “We have (formed) a coalition with the DA to ensure we keep the ANC out (of provincial government).” Cope leader Mosiuoa Lekota said his party had formed coalitions with the DA in the Western and Northern Capes because of the “strong position taken by both parties to deal decisively with rampant corruption and maladministration, among many of the failings of the (ANC)”. Also, AgangSA said that the party's aim was to put an end to “ANC government corruption that is robbing the country of its development potential”.

The opposition in the province mainly the ANC, EFF and ACDP, have strongly criticized the DA’s ‘Western Cape story’. The ANC has argued that Helen Zille has not kept her promises and has not delivered to poor communities. For example, ANC Deputy President, Cyril Ramaphosa, accused Helen Zille of neglecting delivery in the province, saying that “wherever we go, they (people in the Western Cape) are crying tears because of poor service”. Sports Minister Fikile Mbalula also criticized the DA’s failure to deliver basic services for poor communities. However, beyond criticizing the DA’s record in office he accused the party of oppressing the people of Western Cape saying “these witches are oppressing us, they are trampling on us”.

At a rally in the Free State Helen Zille responded in like manner to ANC secretary-general Gwede Mantashe’s description of attacks on President Jacob Zuma being akin to the crushing

of the head of a snake in order to paralyse the rest of its body, arguing that “an attack on Zuma was an attack on the whole political party”.  

According to another newspaper report, the DA threatened legal action against the Al Jama-ah party for printing an election pamphlet calling on voters not to vote for the DA because it was a “Zionist-funded” party. In the pamphlet Al Jama-ah warns that “a vote for Zionist-funded Helen Zille of the DA is a betrayal of the Palestinian struggle” and refers to the failed DA-AgangSA merger reportedly engineered by a billionaire businessman with close ties to Israel, a move which contributed to the Al Jama-ah political party declaring it haram to vote DA.

The campaign in the Western Cape has thus degenerated into a series of negative appeals, with politicians and political parties discrediting one another. As early as November 2013 UDM leader Bantu Holomisa made the point that the Western Cape had become a battlefield for the powers that govern the province, saying that voters “sit in a quagmire of misery whilst they sling mud at each other; completely forgetting about you”.

A key theme emerging from the ANC and the EFF is that the people of the Western Cape need to be rescued from the DA’s racist governance. Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba criticized the DA’s policies on land, saying the party “wanted land to remain in the hands of a white minority”. Marius Fransman also told farmworkers at a rally near De Doorns that “apartheid still reigned in the Cape farmlands”.

Linked to the theme of saving the Western Cape from racist governance, are campaign appeals designed to attract the Coloured vote. One media article indicated that “the battle for the Coloured vote is heating up”, with the ANC saying its newest member – former DA councillor Grant Pascoe – has great influence in crucial constituencies. But the DA says he “would not be able to swing votes to the ANC”. The ANC also threatened to take the DA to

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court for refusing to apologise for claiming it had bribed former DA mayoral committee member Grant Pascoe with R1 million in cash and a car to cross over to the ANC.\(^9^9\)

Added to this was the fact that the DA issued a pamphlet specifically aimed at Coloured voters. The pamphlet quotes former ANC Director General of Labour, Jimmy Manyi, who in 2010 said that there is an over-supply and an over-concentration of Coloured people in the Western Cape. The pamphlet is captioned with the title ‘The ANC wants to stop you from getting a job, or a promotion’ and indicates that the ANC has issued new employment regulations which will “prevent thousands of Coloured people in the Western Cape from getting jobs”.\(^9^0\) Under the draft employment equity legislation, companies with more than 150 employees would have to use the national economically active population demographics to determine the equity targets of their top and senior management as well as their professionally qualified staff. The DA argues that this would clash with provincial racial demographics and marginalise certain race groups from the workforce in the Western Cape.\(^9^1\)

In reaction to this, the ANC in the Western Cape laid a complaint with the Independent Electoral Commission.\(^9^2\) In his letter of complaint to the IEC requesting investigation, Songezo Mjongile argues that the pamphlet constitutes a clear violation of the Act, the Electoral Act and the Electoral Code of Conduct, in that the pamphlet “was clearly published and distributed with false information in order to create hostility or fear in order to influence the conduct of voters or the outcome of the upcoming election (section 89 of the Act and section 9(1) of the Electoral Code of Conduct)”. He added that “the whole essence of the pamphlets is clearly geared to divide communities on racial lines, and cause serious discontent amongst voters and possible voters”.\(^9^3\) Additionally, President Zuma told supporters at his birthday celebrations “the Western Cape needs a government that will treat the people of the Western Cape equally. Enough is enough with the neglect of predominantly African and Coloured areas in this province… There’s nothing to fear. The ANC is your family.” \(^9^4\)

Meanwhile, Cosatu provincial secretary Tony Ehrenreich reportedly called for white senior civil servants in the provincial government to be sacked. He explained that if the ANC won control of the provincial government in the coming election, Cosatu would call on the ANC to discontinue white preference in the provincial government.\(^9^5\) Some leaders chastised voters in the province. After a two-day visit to the Cape Flats, Gwede Mantashe said Coloured


people would remain a minority if they did not define themselves properly. He reportedly said "You call yourself a minority. You are governed by a minority all the time. It's a mindset. We must liberate ourselves ... and appreciate you are part of a majority." "One thing we are not going to do is give Coloureds presents. Coloured people must play their role and earn their responsibilities. They must earn it among all of us." Songezo Mjongile was cited as saying that internal ANC polls showed that “DA support in the coloured community is weakening”.  

The fundamental problem in all of this is the special significance of the vote to a particular demographic bloc, in this case Coloured voters. As elsewhere in the country, different race groups in the Western Cape are confronted with very different forms of persuasion, different information networks as well as different life experiences and socio-economic positions. In the Western Cape, perceptions of the importance of the ‘Coloured vote’ have resulted in leaders using racially inflammatory political rhetoric.

It is worth noting is that, despite the inflammatory racial rhetoric in the Western Cape election campaigns, there were no signs of high levels of political intolerance, no no-go areas, or reported incidents of political violence.

**Media Coverage**

The media can play a pivotal role in providing information about political parties and their leaders. Leading up to the elections, the major political parties have increased their campaigning in the province and are doing as much as they can to portray a positive image in the hope of gaining support in the upcoming elections.

Provincial media outlets have been extensively covering the election campaign in the province. In some instances local radio stations have hosted debates and panel discussions. The DA and the ANC campaigns that have had high media visibility in the campaign thus far, despite the fact that twenty-six political parties are contesting for seats in the provincial legislature. The newly-formed Economic Freedom Fighters has also gained significant media coverage over the past few months.

The main problem with the campaigns in the Western Cape is the way in which political parties direct messages aimed at “coloured votes” and appeals to entice the “coloured electorate”. In many cases the messages are directed aggressively at opposing parties and party leaders. An additional problem is the way in which the media frames news stories about the “coloured vote” as well as its preoccupation with conflict and hostility between parties and party leaders. While these conflicts are newsworthy, in many instances they divert attention away from substantive issues, and such reporting can contribute to negative campaign strategies by parties in an attempt to secure media attention.

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ANC campaigning

On the ticket ‘Together we move South Africa forward’ the African National Congress (ANC) campaign in KwaZulu-Natal is well underway. President Zuma celebrated his birthday at an event at Currie’s Fountain in Durban on Saturday 12 April. The event was also held to mark the 22nd anniversary of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO). The president employed his well-known crowd pleasing tactic of singing a struggle tune and dancing to the rhythm. He also used the opportunity to appeal to the media to ‘tell the good stories’ and not just to write ‘twisted stories about the president’.99 Regarding protest he suggested that SANCO take a leadership role in communities, which would curb the protests. The president dismissed opposition parties such as the Economic Freedom Front (EFF) and the Congress of the People (COPE) as parties formed ‘out of anger’ and parties ‘depending on a judge to appoint its leader’ respectively.100 His view is that a vote for the opposition is as good as wasted.101 He then called on people to vote for the ANC, saying that it would be like ‘planting a seed that would grow and flourish for the benefit of the country’.102

President Zuma has been actively campaigning in the province, conducting door-to-door campaigns in Empangeni and Hammersdale, where he also visited a local shopping mall and handed out t-shirts.103 Earlier he visited the Interfellowship church in Wentworth (a historically ‘coloured’ area), where he addressed supporters, and has held rallies in Mariannhill and KwaNdengezi (both areas where there have been protest).104 The ANC campaign in KwaZulu-Natal also includes other senior ANC representatives, including Cyril Ramaphosa, Baleka Mbete, Malusi Gigaba, Zweli Mkhize and Jesse Duarte, who have been campaigning in various parts of the province.105 Over the Easter weekend the ANC focused its campaign on the theme ‘inter cultural’. It held a festival in Chatsworth (a historically Indian area) addressed by the provincial premier Senzo Mchunu, who emphasised that the ANC promoted unity of age, gender and race and that the point of the festival was to create ‘social cohesion’ and to ensure that Indians, ‘coloureds’ and whites did not feel marginalised

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98 Shauna Mottiar is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Centre for Civil Society, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa – Mottiar@ukzn.ac.za
100 Ibid.
101 Ibid.
by the ANC. In the same vein, President Zuma attended a Hindu prayer service in Mt Edgecombe, where he spoke of building cohesion and urged people to vote in memory of struggle era hero’s Nelson Mandela, Yusuf Dadoo, Billy Nair and Albert Luthuli. ANC KwaZulu-Natal provincial secretary, Sihle Zikalala, contends that ANC support in the province is strengthening and that the party is ‘gunning for overwhelming support’. Zikalala argues that the ANC has received increased interest from minorities evidenced by 300 new members from Isipingo and 40 new members from Amazimtoti. He also argues that ‘people are leaving in large numbers from the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) to the ANC’. 

IFP and NFP campaigns

The ANC’s strongest opponents in the province, the IFP and National Freedom Party (NFP), also have campaigns underway that began in the run-up to the province’s by-elections. Zululand District Municipality has been a focal site of campaigning by the IFP and NFP given a breakdown in the post-election (local) agreement between the ANC and NFP and a rise in support for the IFP by municipal level leaders. The IFP has also been campaigning in poverty-stricken rural areas such as eMaqadini-Ndwedwe, NFP leader Zanele Magwaza Msibi led a campaign to the urban Umlazi (the site of the 2012 ‘Occupy’), where she interacted with people in taxi ranks, shopping areas and also visited students at the Mangosuthu University of Technology. Among the IFP’s campaign promises are the creation of a special corruption court, an overhaul of the prison system, an audit of state land to address land distribution and the revision of labour laws to create greater flexibility. For its part the NFP is promising free tertiary education, a social grant for widows, increasing the social grant and reducing the pension age for women. IFP national chairperson Albert Mncwango claims that IFP voters who cast their ballot ‘along ethnic lines’ in 2009 by voting for President Zuma will abandon the ANC in the May election owing to ‘buyer’s remorse’ similar to those who took an ‘emotional’ decision to follow the NFP. NFP leader Magwaza Msibi disagrees, however, arguing that violence around recent by-elections proves that the NFP is considered a significant threat by both the IFP and ANC.

106 ANC invites minorities to its big cultural party. 2014. Sunday Tribune, 20 April, p.4.  
DA and MF campaigns

The established political party opposition in KwaZulu-Natal, the Democratic Alliance (DA), has also begun campaigning. A delegation headed by leader Helen Zille accompanied by Diane Kohler Barnard visited Phoenix, Chatsworth, Wellbedacht and Wentworth in a clear target of the province’s minority Indian and ‘coloured’ voters. Speaking in the informal settlement ‘transit camp’ of Wellbedacht, Zille, following the party’s election promise of ending corruption, focused on the Nkandla scandal, and, noting the illegal electricity connections, stated that every ‘transit camp’ under DA control was electrified. The so-called ‘Indian areas’ of Phoenix and Chatsworth have also been the focus of Minority Front (MF) campaigning in the province. The longstanding MF, despite suffering major setbacks in the form of dwindling support, in-fighting and defections to the DA, insists that it has a strong support base in its call for the scrapping of affirmative action and race quotas. According to its leader, Shameen Thakur-Rajbansi (wife of the late party founder Amichand Rajbansi), its election promises include setting up a Minorities Ministry and Minorities Commission.

EFF and AgangSA campaigns

The rally of newcomer EFF in KwaZulu-Natal is scheduled for Freedom Day (27 April). EFF provincial convener Vusi Khoza claims that the party has not been carrying out any high profile campaigning in the province because ‘there are those parties that like to disturb us’. He added that the EFF has found it difficult to campaign freely in KwaZulu-Natal and cited the arrest of ANC supporters in January when they attempted to block Julius Malema’s engaging with Nkandla residents. Khoza added that the party was however hard at work ‘on the ground’, and if it failed to win the province it would at least be a ‘deciding factor’. Another newcomer AgangSA has announced that it will not be competing for representation in the KwaZulu-Natal legislature. According to its national spokesman Andrew Gasnolar, the party has registered candidates for only seven provinces and the national assembly. Gasnolar blamed the political system for failing to support new parties and said that AgangSA had only fallen short of building a competitive party in two provinces, one of which is KwaZulu-Natal.

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Campaign tactics

In addition to the traditional tactics of political campaigning such as posters, flyers, addresses, rallies and door-to-door visits, KwaZulu-Natal contenders have also taken on other forms of campaigning. These include social media – specifically Twitter, Facebook and Mixit. The ANC has the strongest social media profile, with over 100,000 followers on its Twitter profile and 99,866 ‘likes’ on its Facebook pages. The DA follows with 68,000 Twitter followers and 76,000 Facebook ‘likes’. The IFP has 38 Twitter followers and the NFP has 52. Newcomers EFF and AgangSA have 39,500 and 42,700 respectively. Political parties have also continued the trend of using celebrities to invoke support. It seems that the provincial tradition began with the IFP in 1999 when it added popular Ukhozi FM DJ Mandla Malakoane to its provincial legislature list. The NFP has taken up the trend, including DJ Zimpoli ‘Zimdolar’ Biyela to its candidate list. The ANC celebrity support list includes Kwaito star Thulisile Mdihlaba, Bafana Bafana players Helman Mkhaele and Andile Jali and DJ Siyanda. Even the EFF has employed the tactic, enlisting former soap star Fana Mokoena.

Media coverage

According to Media Monitoring Africa the media plays a pivotal role during elections by communicating information to voters and enabling them to make informed decisions. The mainstream (English) print media in KwaZulu-Natal during the run up to the May elections has been fairly comprehensive. An election focus took hold during the various by-elections in the province and headlines centred mainly on the ANC, IFP and NFP jostling for power. The emphasis was usually on violence or conflict, however, such as: Witness ‘KZN councillors hold their breath as volatile wards hold by-elections’; Sunday Tribune ‘War wounds re-open at hell’s hostel’ and ‘Rein in KwaMashu cops’; Daily Sun ‘By-election won’t be free and fair’. Print media has also begun to profile recent political party campaigning. Headlines have focused on the ANC consolidating the province as a stronghold: New Age ‘ANC wants to make history’; Sunday Tribune ‘Gunning for glory’. The ANC campaign in the province has more or less focused on President Zuma, with articles centred on the president’s activities rather than on the party in general: Witness ‘Zuma on a charm offensive’; Mercury ‘Come back to the party says Zuma’. The Witness and the Daily News both reported President Zuma’s critique of the media and the Mercury published a piece (on page 4) detailing a study that found the ANC to be a transgressor in incidents involving intimidation. Opposition parties have also featured significantly in provincial print media, with news of the DA campaign as well as profiles of MF leadership and EFF leadership. These were featured in Sunday Tribune pieces. Opposition party complaints also received coverage such as the Witness account of IFP election poster vandalism and the Mercury’s report of the DA and

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124 Seale. L. 2014. ANC the biggest bully, study finds. Mercury, 10 April, p.4.
IFP’s objections to SABC election coverage bias. Pertinent issues such as service delivery protest in the run-up to elections and education have received coverage by the *Daily News* and the *Sunday Tribune.*