

# **The Economic Freedom Fighter's Rise to Power: A Threat to South Africa's Democratic Consolidation**

by  
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## **Abstract**

The world is witnessing a decline in the support for democracy. This has been evident in numerous countries across the globe and in South Africa today. Domestic and Global Social Structures and Ruptures have created fertile conditions for populism to flourish. Populism in Africa has derived from a fertile environment, one shaped by a distinctive historical context imbued with the ideas of socialism and nationalism. The ideological context also evident in South Africa, combined with the current socio-economic challenges, has resulted in high (but unmet) expectations of the state. High levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality, combined with poor and corrupt governance, have left many young South African citizens marginalised, resentful and discontent towards the current ANC government. Young, economically challenged and dissatisfied citizens have as a result turned to alternative forms of political representation. This has led to the rise of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in South Africa.

The presence of populists within a pluralistic, democratic society has been shown to hold dangers for democratic consolidation (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013). The political attitudes and political tactics that populists employ tend to threaten societal cohesiveness and the stability of democracy. An analysis of the EFF's political attitudes, policy preferences and behaviour were therefore deemed imperative in understanding whether the party holds a threat for South Africa's democratic consolidation. An analytical framework outlining the Attitudinal, Behavioural and Structural indicators of democratic consolidation as derived by Schedler (2001) was used in this analysis.

Findings reflect that the EFF do not hold intrinsic and normative democratic political attitudes nor moderate policy preferences. The political party's rejection of democratic norms and their radical socialist policies have reflected this. The EFF's behaviour demonstrates a willingness to use violence, intolerance for pluralism and disregard for democratic norms and procedures that are necessary in strengthening South Africa's democratic consolidation. The analysis also shows that EFF employs populist rhetoric and tactics -that threatens the cohesiveness of South Africa's society. This is discussed by analysing the EFF's official party documents as well as secondary media sources. The research highlights the dilemma within democracy; that while holding the value of broad political representation, such representation may hold within it the seed of democracy's and pluralism's destruction.

### Opsomming

Die wêreld is besig om waar te neem hoe die ondersteuning en bevordering van demokrasie in Suid Afrika afneem. Dis word waargeneem vanaf verskeie lande regoor die wêreld asook in Suid Afrika. Die Verbokkeling van Binnelandse asook Globale Sosiale Strukture het tot gevolg dat populisme in vrugbare kondisies floreer. Die groei van populisme in Afrika is opmerklik; nie net vanaf 'n kenmerkende, historiese konteks nie, maar kan ook getuig van die ontwikkeling van sosialisme en nasionalisme.

Hierdie kontekstuele faktore is opmerklik in die huidige sosio-ekonomiese uitdagings wat Suid Afrika in die gesig staar.

Hoë vlakke van armoede, werkloosheid en ongelykheid, gekombineer met swak- en korrupte bestuur het menigte jong Suid Afrikaanse burger gemarginaliseer, verbitter en ontevrede laat voel teenoor die ANC regering. As gevolg, het dit daarnatoe gelei dat jong ekonomies uitgedaagde burgers omgeswaai het na alternatiewe vorme van politiese verteenwoordiging. Dit het gelei tot die ontstaan van die EFF in Suid Afrika

Daar is bewys dat die teenwoordigheid van populistes in 'n pluralistiese, demokratiese samelewing gevare inhou vir demokratiese konsolidasie. Ook dat die maatskaplike- en samehangende stabiliteit van 'n demokrasie bedreig kan word deur die kenmerke en politiese taktieke wat populistes gebruik.

Om te bepaal of die party 'n bedreiging inhou vir Suid Afrika se demokratiese konsolidasie, is dit dus noodsaaklik om die EFF se politiese houdings, beleid, verwysings en optredes te analiseer. 'n Analitiese raamwerk wat die Houding, Optrede en Strukturele aanwysings omskryf, word nagevors en toegepas deur bevindings van Schedler (2001) in hierdie analise, asook die artikel van Mainwaring & - & Pérez-Linan wat handel oor politiese houdings en verwysings.

Bevindings van hierdie analise reflekteer dat die EFF nie oor intrinsieke en normatiewe politiese houdings en matige beleidvoorkeure beskik nie. Die verwerping van demokratiese norme en hul radikale sosialistiese beleid word sterk deur die politieke party gereflekteer. Die EFF se optredes demonstreer geweld, onverdraagsaamheid en verontagsaming van demokratiese norme en prosedures wat vereis word vir die versterking van Suid Afrika se demokratiese konsolidasie. Die analise het ook getoon dat die EFF populistiese kenmerke en taktieke bearbei wat die bedreiging van samehoringheid in Suid Afrika veroorsaak. Die

offisiële dokumente van die EFF party asook hul waargeneme optredes vanaf sekondêre mediabronne word in hierdie analise bespreek.

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## Abbreviations

<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>ANCYL</b>	African National Congress
<b>BEE</b>	Black Economic Empowerment
<b>BLF</b>	Black First Land First
<b>BMF</b>	Black Management Forum
<b>CAQDAS</b>	Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis
<b>COSATU</b>	Congress of South African Trade Unions
<b>DA</b>	Democratic Alliance
<b>EFF</b>	Economic Freedom Fighters
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>IFP</b>	Inkatha Freedom Party
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>MIT</b>	Middle Income Traps
<b>NACTU</b>	Council of Trade Unions
<b>NFP</b>	National Freedom Party
<b>NGC</b>	National General Council
<b>NP</b>	National Party
<b>NUMSA</b>	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
<b>UDM</b>	United Democratic Movement
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>VF Plus</b>	Freedom Front Plus
<b>Sona</b>	State of the nation address
<b>NA</b>	National Assembly
<b>NCOP</b>	National Council of Provinces
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Service
<b>BCCSA</b>	Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Commission
<b>IRR</b>	Institute of Race Relations
<b>Samrem</b>	South African Minority Rights Equality Movement

# **Chapter 1**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Citizens are becoming continually distrustful of their political institutions, leaders and policies. According to Hadiz and Chryssogelos (2017:400) populist movements in contemporary world politics have been articulated as a rejection of neo-liberal politics. Inglehart and Norris (2016:2) have gathered similar information which indicates there is a growing cultural “backlash” towards mainstream politics within Western societies.

This is largely due to income and wealth inequalities, economic insecurity and social deprivation. As a result of these socio-economic fears and challenges, a group of “left behinds” emerges within society; people feeling uncared for, unheard, and with needs that they feel are ignored by their government. According to Inglehart and Norris (2016:10) this growth in populism can be explained by two theories: the economic inequality perspective, and the cultural backlash theory. Although their research focused mainly on European case studies, there are observable similarities evident in South Africa. South Africa is currently seeing a rise in populism which is Leftist in nature and can be explained by using Inglehart and Norris’ (2016:10) economic inequality backlash theory (which shall be discussed in more detail further on).

The rise of Donald Trump is one of the most well-known examples of the populist phenomenon occurring in politics today. Other populist leaders in Western societies include Nigel Farage in Britain; Marine Le Pen in France and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands (Inglehart and Norris, 2016). All these political figures are testimonies of a truly unique populist revival in contemporary world politics. Norris and Inglehart’s (2016) study focused predominantly on Western, developed societies. Hadiz and Chryssogelos (2017) however mention that this phenomenon is not unique to these developed parts of the world alone. In fact, many countries across the globe are experiencing dismay and dissatisfaction with the process of globalisation and its consequent effects. This is evident in both advanced and less advanced areas of the world, leaving people disenchanted, socially marginalised and dissatisfied with political representation and participation (Hadiz and Chryssogelos, 2017:400). People are turning away from their traditional social institutions and political systems (Suddaby et al, 2017:287). They are searching for new alternative approaches and answers. This is the rise of populism, but is populism the right answer?

Populism “enchants” people by embracing values that oppose the current norms, often values

from the past that attempt to return to more “simpler” traditions (Suddaby, 2017:287). This wave of change is also evident within South Africa with the emergence of the populist party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). The EFF, led by the charismatic leader Julius Malema, has adopted ideals of socialism and black consciousness in an attempt to address the needs of “the people”, and mobilise them against the current ruling party - the African National Congress (ANC). They explicitly state that they are a political organisation rooted in Marxist- Fanonian ideals (Forde, 2014:3). Their ideology can both be identified as an attempt to return to an anti-state, class-conscious and race conscious political culture that was once so prominent in South Africa’s liberation history.

## **1.2 Background and rationale**

Democracy does not appear to be satisfying citizens’ expectations, and political opportunists are seizing the day through populist means. For many South Africans, these democratic expectations are often materialistic goods and services which they expect their government to provide. This, according to Bratton and Mattes (2001), are instrumental democratic needs. South Africans seem to be equating and confusing materialistic outcomes with democracy, which leads to a misunderstanding of government expectations (what they expect government to provide) with procedural democracy (when they vote for their party). Many South Africans are currently experiencing the challenges of poverty and economic inequality, causing them to feel embittered and resentful towards their government. These citizens feel excluded from society and feel “left behind”, which shares similarities discussed by Inglehart and Norris’ (2016) economic inequality perspective. This has caused an emergence of populist politics in the formation of the EFF.

Populism as a concept is very much debated over by various academics and scholars, which shall be explored later in the second chapter. To some scholars the rise of populism alludes to problems within democracies (Arditi, 2005) or perhaps even to the shortfalls within elements of (citizen-centred) democracy itself (Grube, 2013). The study of populism and populist movements can thus provide a way for scholars to examine the “health” of democracies

South Africa’s democratic government has not been spared from these challenges either. South Africans have become increasingly disenchanted with democracy due to the numerous governance deficits of the ANC. The South African media certainly has not experienced a

drought in political stories to report on over the last years: growing unemployment; poor service delivery; corruption (scandals such as the development of Nkandla) and illicit networking with the Gupta family (Malala, 2015:8-16). These issues of governance have led many South African citizens to forsake their allegiances to the ANC, and instead, don the red worker overalls and berets of the EFF, that symbolise a socio-economic revolution that many desperate citizens desire (Dawson, 2014).

The EFF won almost seven percent (6.35%) of the votes in the 2014 National Elections, placing itself third in row behind the ANC (62.15%) and DA (22.23%) (Electoral Commission of South Africa, 2014). While this is still a relatively small percentage of votes, it is considerably stronger than older political parties who scored much lower in the elections: as is the case with the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) (2.4%), the NFP (National Freedom Party) (1.57%), the UDM (United Democratic Front) (1%) and the VF Plus (Freedom Front Plus) (0.9%) (Electoral Commission of South Africa, 2014). The election results indicate that the EFF is establishing itself as another opposition party rising to challenge the ANC alongside the DA. However, IPSOS' 2016 November Approval Ratings have not reflected broad support for the EFF. Although the EFF have gained some support since its formation it is nonetheless not widespread amongst the whole country.

IPSOS' polls tested how much respondents supported certain elite political leaders. This was done on a scale of zero to ten (where zero means totally for and ten totally against). The leaders included former President Jacob Zuma, Cyril Ramaphosa, Mmusi Maimane, Julius Malema, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan, and the former African Union Chair Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. The polls revealed that the most supported political figures were Pravin Gordhan and the deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa with a shared score of 5.2. The least supported political leader (with the lowest score) was EFF leader, Julius Malema with a score of 3.2 (IPSOS, 2017). For both the DA and the EFF, their supporters naturally scored them higher (DA 7 and the EFF 7.6) These results reflect that for both the DA and the EFF, their popularity is limited to their supporters alone. The population at large does not support the EFF's leader Julius Malema. His overall low score indicates that Malema's support and popularity, as well as the EF party is from a much smaller support base, and it can be argued that the EFF and its policies are not that representative of the whole country's interests. It is important to keep this in mind when analysing how representative the party's policies are to society as a whole.

The EFF's participation alone in the Local and National Elections however does not say much about whether its political preferences are in line with the democratic ideals that the South

African society is built upon as stipulated within the country's Constitution. Participating in the country's democratic elections and has granted the EFF entrance to the South African political arena; however, it does not mean that they will continue to heed the necessary regulations, nor value the principles (as enshrined in the Constitution) necessary for a flourishing democracy. In their Founding Manifesto of 2013, the EFF clearly state that they are a radical and militant political party.

*“The ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS is a radical and militant economic emancipation movement that brings together revolutionary, fearless, radical, and militant activists, workers’ movements, nongovernmental organisations, community-based organisations and lobby groups under the umbrella of pursuing the struggle for economic emancipation”* (EFF, 2013).

This radical, political behaviour has proven disruptive, undisciplined and riotous, receiving much attention in numerous media reports. The EFF have displayed their resistance towards the ANC in various riotous ways, often not within the correct political channels and boundaries. The party has disrupted the formal State of the Nation Address (SONA) on numerous occasions (Business Tech, 2017). They have failed to be present at formal disciplinary hearings (Fisher, 2014) - this can be interpreted as a clear dismissal of the state's institutions and sanctity of the judicial system that is expressed in the South African constitution. The EFF were recently reported to have participated in illegal protests, “trashing” and damaging H&M stores when they displayed a *perceived* racist advertisement online (Times live, 2018). DA leader Mmusi Maimane also reported Malema to the Equality Court for hate speech against the DA Mandela Bay Mayor, Athol Trollop (Anderson, 2018). This alleged hate speech occurred during a debate over land redistribution when Malema stated that the EFF intended to remove the Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay in an aggressive statement:

*“We are going to remove a mayor of PE [...] we are going for your white man in PE. We are going to cut the throat”* quoted in Anderson (2018). The EFF leader showed similar behaviour earlier in 2016 when he stated the following in a public gathering: *“We are not calling for the slaughter of white people, at least for now”* (ENCA, 2016).

These incidents in the media alone cannot provide a foundation for a thorough academic analysis to evaluate the EFF party's participation within South Africa's political arena, and thus their effect on the country's democratic consolidation. These incidents however, are provided to bring attention to the fact that this behaviour is not democratic, and a deeper evaluation of the party's political foundations and characteristics is necessary.

### **1.3 Preliminary Literature Study**

The purpose of this thesis is to explore whether the EFF's political preferences, attitudes and behaviour are conducive to democratic consolidation. This section shall provide a brief overview of what shall be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Two.

In order to understand what kind of political party the EFF is, it is important to study the conceptualisation and characteristics of populism. Populism is an often-debated term within political science, as it has no defining ideology as many scholars have noted (Canovan, 1999; Jensen, 2011 and Moffit and Tormey, 2014). According to Jensen (2011) populism is better understood as a political movement, whilst others such as Moffit and Tormey (2014) refer to populism as a political "style" that has defining characteristics, for example the use of emotions in its strategies and discourse. Other scholars see populism as a political reaction to societal changes (such as Germani, 1965 and Laclau, 1977; Inglehart and Norris, 2016 and Hadiz and Chryssogelos, 2017). Many authors (Jensen, 2011; Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013 and Davila, 2000) argue that populism is a political reaction directed against citizens' regimes, who feel that their governments are not looking out for their interests, or are ignoring them, which thus makes them feel threatened and disconnected with their political leaders. This gap between the people and their elite is used by populist leaders to gain support and come into power. Populists claim to represent and speak on behalf of the people (who are made out to be virtuous), who have been mistreated by the elite (who are seen as corrupt and self-serving). Populist leaders and parties sympathise with the people and aim to gain their support through charisma, emotive jargon and playing on the emotions or fear and resentment (characteristics typical of populism) to win over the support of the people (Moffit and Tormey, 2014). Populists gain support by providing simple solutions to complex problems, that citizens feel their current political leaders are not solving. Antagonism felt by citizens against the ruling government is the foundation of populism (2007). These sentiments divide a society into "us" and "them" as it moralises the poor and portrays the elite as corrupt and "evil" (Moufe, 2005).

South Africa like in many parts of the world is currently witnessing the rise of populism, which is evident, with the formation of the EFF (Forde, 2014). Populism in South Africa has developed from a history of growing nationalist sentiments within the country, which has also been evident throughout the whole continent's history (Dikeni, 2017). Nationalism in the African continent developed as a political and economic sentiment that aimed at reacting against colonialism that broke down many traditional societies in the past (Sklar, 1988).

Nationalism in South Africa also has strong roots from the past, which were very much influenced by socialist ideologies.

Socialism briefly explained, derives from Marxist theory. Marxism can be explained as a political and economic, philosophical critique of capitalist societies (Marxism, 2018). According to Karl Marx, individuals in a capitalist society are enslaved and exploited through labour in order to satisfy their human needs (food, housing etc.). In order for individuals to become free from the ills of capitalism, a proletariat, working class revolution must take place to replace this system, which is achieved through an awakening of class-consciousness amongst the working people. Socialism is a social and economic doctrine that promotes these ideals and believes that society should enforce public ownership over the means of production (Socialism, 2018). Socialism fosters ideas of cooperation and the sharing and distribution of wealth and power for the common good. Scholars within the socialist ideology believe that if individuals can share their wealth and resources, they will be able to meet everyone's collective needs, unlike the competition and unfair distribution of wealth and resources associated with an "exploitive" capitalist society (Socialism, 2018).

Examining past examples of the presence of socialism and nationalism within African countries can shed some light on the impact of the growing socialist party, the EFF, in contemporary South Africa. In South Africa nationalism was an attempt to address issues of racial and economic inequalities, and poverty that was left behind from apartheid. The EFF today, have adopted similar nationalistic and socialist inspired beliefs to address current socioeconomic problems, which is evident in their founding manifesto (EFF, 2013).

South Africa has faced various waves of dissatisfaction and distrust from many of its citizens over the years. This shall be more thoroughly explored by looking at the current economic climate and growing resistance toward the current ruling party, the ANC. The stagnant economic climate of the last few years, as well as leadership crisis within the South African government, since the arrival of former President Zuma, have produced a large group within the population to resist the current government (Malala, 2015). Many citizens, particularly young, black employed individuals are articulating their resentment and dissatisfaction with the ANC government in the forms of violent protests. Scholars such as Dawson (2014) and Nieftagodien (2015) reflect this occurrence within their work.

These feelings of economic insecurity among South Africans share similarities with Norris and Inglehart's (2016) economic backlash theory, as South Africans are increasingly experiencing feelings of being left behind, forgotten and betrayed by their government, and are instead



turning to alternative, anti-democratic political alternatives as a result. This wide display of discontent amongst young, marginalised South Africans has created fertile ground for a populist harvest which has been discussed by Hart (2013), Nieftagodien (2015) and Forde (2014). This has resulted in the rise of the EFF.

While there is a fair amount of work written on the EFF as a distinctly populist party, (Mbetse, 2014), the literature however is limited to the EFF's rise to power and its populist characteristics alone. Forde (2011 and 2014), a political journalist, has written an unofficial biography, *An Inconvenient Youth*, on the EFF's revolutionary leader, Julius Malema and his radical, socialist political views, influences, origins and personae. Robinson (2014) has provided insight into how the EFF have provided a dissatisfied electorate with a political alternative to the ANC. Booysen (2015) discusses how the party built itself as an active opposition force against the former President Zuma. Mbetse (2016) has insightfully provided a basis for understanding the origin and environment that spurred the development of the EFF; in particular, the Marikana massacre and government breakdown under former President Zuma. Mbetse (2014), using literature on populism, locates the EFF as a distinctly populist party by analysing and discussing the party's ideology, style, "bad manners" and influences. Shivambu and Smith's (2014) titled "The Coming Revolution: Julius Malema and the Fight for Economic Freedom", supplies ample literature on the character and identity of the EFF and Julius Malema – this is a rich source of literature as Shivambu is the party's current Deputy President and thus the book delves to the heart of the EFF's ideology and foundations. These sources provide a foundation of what the EFF is and how it developed in South Africa's political and economic context. In light of the EFF being a relatively new political party, the current literature does not properly address nor thoroughly analyse the relevance and affect that their presence has on South Africa's political landscape, and in particular, its burgeoning democracy. One possible explanation for is due to the fact that the EFF was only formed in 2013 (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:15-20) and is still a relatively new party compared to the ANC and DA. This thesis aims to address this gap by analysing the political preferences, attitudes and behaviour of the EFF in South Africa's pluralistic democracy. Analysing the EFF's populist nature will also shed some light on the broader populist trend which is occurring in various parts of the world.

Recent literature on populism and democracy shows that support for populist parties is growing across the globe, which enables these groups to alter the current political democratic landscape. Studies have shown that levels of satisfaction with democracy is declining amongst individuals across the world. This has resulted in growing distrust towards liberal institutions and a

disaffection towards traditional, established political parties within a society (Foa and Mounk, 2017:5-6). People are instead becoming more open to radical, anti-state and anti-system political movements that provide individuals with a political alternative to their current regime, thus causing a legitimacy crisis for democracy and leads to democratic deconsolidation (Foa and Mounk, 2017:9). Similarly, the EFF have become the anti-state, radical political alternative for many frustrated South African citizens too. Whilst this study looks at populism in South Africa alone (focusing on the EFF specifically) there are examples of this in other parts of the world too, such as the formation of the AFD (Alternative für Deutschland) in Germany, highlighting that this is not an issue limited to South Africa alone, but is instead a global democratic challenge which many societies are grappling with.

An analysis of the EFF's political attitudes and behaviour is therefore beneficial in understanding the current political trajectory in South Africa, that forms part of a broader, global democratic legitimacy crises. The origins and socio-political environment that helped the EFF flourish, as well as the party's various traits and characteristics are arguably populist in nature (Mbetse 2014). This shall be further discussed in Chapter 3. Understanding why and how the EFF can be described as a populist party highlights that populism is not a numbers game. This is not constricted and relevant to South Africa alone -seen with Germany's populist party the AFD. Like the EFF, the AFD developed against the backdrop of a politically and socially challenging environment. According to Schmitt-Beck (2017) the AFD party was able to gain almost five percent of the electoral threshold within a year of its formation in 2013. The AFD mainly presented itself as a single-issue party, resonating with citizens who felt disgruntled with the German Federal Government. The party mainly addressed economic challenges relating to the Euro-crisis and immigration scepticism felt by citizens. While their support does not represent most of the German electorate, their formation (like the EFF and other populist groups across the globe) reflects that populist politics is a symptom of contemporary political challenges.

Similar to the AFD, the majority of the South African population do not support the EFF party (as discussed earlier with reference to the IPSOS poll) however their presence as an official opposition party needs a deeper analysis. While their support levels are not relatively high, their political attitudes and behaviour are pushing the boundaries of democratic norms and values that are needed to ensure a healthy and stable democracy, and thus these new undemocratic norms and actions have the potential to alter the current political landscape. This is seen in the EFF's disruption of parliament (Davis, 2017); their use of violence and

intimidation (Bornman, 2018) and their intolerance towards political parties (Whittles, 2018) and minority groups (Isaacs, 2018). These examples are some of the various indicators which reflect the EFF's dismissal of the democratic status quo. It is this kind of lack of support for democratic norms and values that instigates democratic deconsolidation (Diamond, 2016:216). The EFF are bringing populist elements into the South Africa's political environment (such as the advocacy of radical land reformation policies, violence and anti-system sentiments) and it is for this reason, that it is beneficial to critically analyse and study the EFF.

In order to fully understand the presence and development of a populist party, such as the EFF, within the South African democracy, it is beneficial to understand the relationship between populism and pluralism within a democracy. Understanding these dynamics will aid in exploring and discussing whether populism is thus healthy for democracy and its stability and survival in the long run. A simple and concise definition of political pluralism refers to the belief that a representation of the multiplicity and diversity of various political groups is healthy for democracy. (Heywood, 2017; 325). Democracy means that people have a say in who governs them, which is made possible through forms of citizen participation and interest. Democratic deconsolidation refers to the "break down" of a democratic regime. This generally occurs when political actors no longer value democracy intrinsically and pursue more radical policies instead (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:125-126). A scholar who has analysed the dynamics of the presence of pluralism and populism in democracies is Plattner (2010). According to his study, both pluralism and populism can be beneficial for balancing the interests of various groups within a society, however if one group gains too much power, this causes an imbalance and an issue of representation and inclusion within a society. Both are therefore needed to regulate and moderate society. This shall be discussed in more detail within the second chapter.

Exploring these concepts of populism, pluralism and democratic consolidation will benefit an analysis to see whether the EFF is an inclusive political party and whether they are supportive of democratic principles and practices. It will also investigate and whether their political preferences, attitudes and behaviour are favourable to democratic consolidation.

## **1.4 Research problem and question**

As previously mentioned, there is a gap within the literature covering the EFF. A lack of

analysis and study has yet to fully evaluate how the EFF (a self-proclaimed militant and socialist party) shall affect South Africa's political stability and growth. The EFF is a relatively new party, however a more rigorous study of its political preferences, attitudes and behaviours is necessary in light of South Africa's democratic consolidation. This subject needs to be explored and addressed to understand our contemporary politics within South Africa, but also the world as a whole. As mentioned in the background of the proposal, there is a growing wave of populism across the globe, which is observable within South Africa too. Studying South Africa's populist experience allows scholars within political science to further study populism as a whole in contemporary politics. This gap in the literature on the EFF thus provides numerous points to consider. The main question for this thesis is thus:

**Does the EFF's rise to power hold a threat for South Africa's democratic consolidation?**

This thesis suggests that it could, however a thorough analysis is needed to show this.

Sub-questions that shall also be discussed are:

- **Are the political preferences of the EFF consistent with democratic norms?** Do they intrinsically value democracy? How do they utilise their influence? Are their attitudes radical or do they hold normative democratic values?
- **Is their behaviour tolerant of other groups: are they inclusive within a pluralistic society?** Do they marginalise and exclude other groups in society? Do they value individual freedom and rights?

## **1.5 Analytical Framework**

The purpose of this thesis is to specifically build on the current literature of the rise of populism within South Africa. The EFF is a populist party, characteristically militant, led by explicitly Fanonian and Leftist ideology – which shall be discussed and examined in more detail in Chapter Three of this thesis. This thesis shall therefore investigate whether these ideological themes and characteristics of the EFF are conducive to democracy, and thus whether its behaviours, attitudes and political preferences are conducive to South Africa's democratic consolidation. This shall be done by examining literature and theory of democracies, populism and democratic consolidation, which shall be discussed in Chapter Two, and apply it to political foundations of the EFF. Specific use of Schedler's (2001) theory will be used to examine whether the EFF's Behaviour, and Attitudinal indicator are conducive to democracy. Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan's (2013) theory, which focuses on attitudinal and policy preferences, shall also be used to investigate whether the

EFF's political preferences and policy positions (Socialist, militant and nationalist preferences) are favourable to South Africa's democratic consolidation.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

This thesis is a qualitative study, using a case study design. Case studies are generally used to investigate and acquire research for a particular group, organisation, individual group or social and political phenomena. Case studies are characteristically exploratory and descriptive in nature (Yin, 2009:6). This research design enables an in-depth study within a specific context (Yin, 2009:18). In order to investigate whether the EFF's behaviour, attitudes and political preferences are conducive to democracy, this thesis shall study the characteristics of the EFF as a distinctly populist party (which shall be done Chapter 3). The Analytical framework provided in Chapter 2 will serve as a guide to answer the main research question, and sub questions. This analysis will discuss whether or not the EFF hold normative political preferences, and whether they are tolerant and respectful of a pluralist democratic society.

Two things will be tested in this thesis: (1) Are their attitudes, values and (2) behaviour conducive to democracy? -The EFF's policies and ideas are inspired by strong Socialist, Militant and Nationalistic ideology and principles. Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan's (2013) theory on normative policy preferences, and Schedler's (2001) theory on Attitudinal and Behavioural indicators shall be applied to evaluate this. The attitudes and political preferences will be studied with the use of content analysis, and the behavioural foundations will be studied by interpretation indirect observations, that are collected from secondary media sources.

The texts (data) that will be used, such as manifestos, public statements and speeches, include contents of communication and thus the research that shall be carried out can be categorised as content analysis (Burnham et al, 2008:259) This text shall consist of documents found on the EFF's official party website such as its Manifesto, Constitution, policy documents, press statements and various other public speeches. Theory from the literature shall be used as the lenses with which to examine the texts. The theory shall provide the thesis with set of extracted themes and a framework to explore and examine the texts.

The party manifesto and constitution are the anchor of the research that shall be analysed. According to Laver (2001:4) the study of political manifestos provides scholars with "mental maps of the social world" that allows us to see how political parties view the world through an ideological embodiment. Manifestos and constitutions provide us with a way to position

political parties along the political spectrum as well as look into their organisational structure, their role in government and policy preferences (Laver, 2001:10). Another benefit of studying this material is that it allows an assessment of political parties by looking at what their “inputs” are (such as policies and objectives) and thus evaluates whether their performance or “outputs” coincide (Laver, 2001:11-12). Party manifestos are often used in comparative studies (looking at various political parties’ manifestos) to make sense of the competition within the political arena. This thesis shall only look at the EFF’s documents, as they are the focus of this study. The research that shall be carried out is a desktop study, as data collected will be derived from texts and documents, making it qualitative data (Saldana, 2011:3).

Texts from the official manifesto and constitution of the EFF shall be extracted and coded to examine what ideas, language and themes are the most prominent within the texts, and what themes may be missing. Coding the texts will help determine what kind of rhetoric the EFF is using as well as what kind of political preferences and characteristics the EFF are communicating through its documents and speeches. The themes extracted from the texts will be analysed with the theoretical frameworks studied in the literature review. The nature of this research is thus interpretive, evaluative and exploratory. The coding shall be done with the help of using the qualitative data software called Atlas ti.

According to Friese (2012:1) Atlas ti. is a genre of Computer-aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) that assists researchers in qualitative data analysis. This has become a useful program for many qualitative researchers because it increases the validity of this kind of data. It can be used as a tool that organises, retrieves, searches and integrates captured data. Atlas ti. stores all data in a hermeneutic unit (HU) which acts as a container for the texts that are being processed. Its basic function is to create quotations and code the texts. Coding refers to the process of assigning categories, concepts and segments of information (Olsen, 2012:9-11). This process originates from the Noticing, Collecting and Thinking (NCT) method which was developed by Seidel in 1999 (92-93). Noticing things entails finding interesting things within the data, which codes are derived from either inductively or deductively. Collecting things refers to coding the data themes and looking for similarities within the texts. This process is essentially influenced by the research objective and research question. The research question guides the coding. The “thinking” part of the process refers to what influences our thinking when coming up with codes.

Using a software like Atlas ti has many benefits as it can capture and code a lot of data and is a relatively low-cost program (Pierce, 2008:264). It is able to quantify qualitative data making.

Qualitative data generally allows for interpretation which can either provide us with a deeper understanding of a topic, however if interpretation is undertaken with bias influences this can be misleading. If data is interpreted correctly, features of coding data can bring to light important and recurrent themes within texts. For example, coding devices such as capturing the frequency of repeated certain words reflects the greatest concern of the speaker. This allows researchers to analyse the directing ideas or values of a speaker or writer of the text (Pierce, 2008:266). There are however, limitations to this as the researcher controls what data is selected and what will be processed and captured within the software.

This second part of this study will use indirect observations to evaluate whether the EFF's behaviour is conducive to democracy and displays tolerance to others in society. Observation or participant observation is a common methodology of qualitative data analyses. It allows researchers to see/observe how humans behave and act in a certain situation or context. Researchers are both participants of the environment and or group of people they are studying as well as fulfilling the role of a researcher. Participant observation refers to recording speech, sounds and images, as well as asking questions of the subject(s). The aim of all this recording is to ultimately understand the meaning behind the behaviour of the subject and what underlying factors influence their behaviour (Guest et al., 2013:75). Observation is usually a method popular in the field of anthropologists and ethnographers. Guest et al., (2013:75) state that there are three elements that are important for the study of observation; the first is location, which is the place or environment where the observation takes place (homes, communities, work environments, places of recreation etc.) -the researcher needs to be able to have access to get into this environment. The second element needed for observation is building and fostering participant rapport. The subjects being studied need to "accept the researcher in the environment so that they are able to be themselves fully, so the researcher can record more genuine data and observations. The third element is that researchers need to be able to spend a lot of time with the participants, to build a sufficient amount of experiences and allow for unstructured interviewing and observations to take place. This also allows for more "natural" observations (Guest et al., 2013:76).

Most of the behaviour of the EFF and its members takes place in numerous environments: rallies, marches, press statements and interviews, parliament etc. These events and locations are all across the country which means they are never restricted to one specific location, making it difficult to gain access to some of these events or locations, as well as observing them. For this purpose, media observations (interviews, newspaper recordings, statements and articles)



provide the closest form of unbiased observation. Whilst this is not a direct and true form of observation, for the time and access limits, as well as the objectives of this thesis, media coverage will be sufficient to evaluate the general behaviour of the party. The media has direct access to many of these places and access to many influential leaders and members of the party, and resources to record and distribute their behaviour to the public. This too has its limitations, because the sources (journalists, newspapers and observers) will always be different individuals (who may be biased) who are recording to the observations.

This type of research solely focuses on examining the EFF as a political party to further the study of populist patterns (specifically Leftist populist movements) and their effect on democratic consolidation. Populism is a contested subject matter and its definition often debated as previously mentioned. For this very reason, looking at a political party that is leftist in ideology within the African continent (a developing state) is restrictive to the broader populist debate. This is thus a case study as it focuses on one particular (political) group (Burnham et al, 2008:6-66). Looking at the EFF does not allow the outcomes of this research to make broad generalisations in an attempt to understand the rest of the political phenomena that is the rise of populism. Countries across the globe experiencing these populist trends have their own political histories and unique practises and structures and should each be studied within their own diverse contexts. To conclude, this form of research is a case study that shall be studied through content analysis.

## **1.7 Limitations and Delimitations**

Due to the limited amount of time, the study is narrow in its research content. As discussed in the research methodology heading, it would be ideal to study past examples of Leftist populist movements in developing countries (seen in Latin America) in order to make more sense of this populist phenomenon seen in South Africa today. However, the content analysis that shall be explored will provide a substantial basis in understanding the EFF as a political player in South African contemporary politics.

As previously mentioned, this thesis is a case study, which makes it delimited to particular period (2013-2018) of South Africa alone (the formation of the EFF), and therefore findings cannot be generalised and applied to other contexts. The rise of the EFF since 2013 already introduces a limitation in the amount of literature and resources available on them, as it is still a relatively young political party in comparison with the ANC, DA and various other opposition



parties. The thesis does however contribute to the overall study of populism in the discipline of political science that might shed light on leftist populism movements, populism in developing countries and populism within the African continent.

## **1.8 Outline of Thesis**

The remaining structure of the thesis shall be arranged as follows:

- Chapter Two: An in-depth literature review exploring the concepts and sources of populism, shall be discussed. The analytical framework shall cover theory on democratic consolidation and ways (indicators) with which to measure it. The literary review shall discuss what factors are necessary for a stable flourishing democracy and how populism influences this desired goal.
- Chapter Three: This section of the thesis will be the context chapter that shall explore the literature of populism within South Africa seen with the rise of Julius Malema and the EFF. This chapter shall also look at literature that discusses how the development of nationalism and socialism has created conducive contexts that have led populism to flourish within the African continent. These developments have also been evident in the South African context which will be discussed in this chapter. This chapter will also discuss what socio-economic conditions have led to the rise of the EFF in South Africa today. The final section of this chapter shall discuss what characteristics define the EFF as a distinctly populist party.
- Chapter Four: This chapter will analyse the political attitudes, policy preferences and behaviour of the EFF, to determine whether the party holds a threat to South Africa's democratic consolidation. This will be done by using the analytical framework provided in Chapter Two. The aim of this chapter is essentially to answer the research question of whether or not the EFF's presence in South Africa is conducive to democratic consolidation. This analysis will be done with the help of Atlas ti. software.
- Chapter Five: The last chapter shall conclude the thesis by discussing the relevant findings, future research recommendations and limitations of this analysis

## **1.9 Course of study**

The duration of this thesis research shall take place between January 2018 and be completed by the start of November 2018.

### **1.10 Ethical Concerns**

This thesis has a very low ethical risk, as it is a case study that only makes use of secondary literature which are publicly (media statement's and newspaper articles) available as well as speeches, political manifestos and party documents of the EFF. There are no individuals needed to conduct this thesis and thus does not breach the ethical requirements outlined by the Ethics Committee of the University of Stellenbosch. Ethical clearance has been obtained by the University's research ethics process for this thesis.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review and Analytical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Introduction**

This chapter of the thesis will deal with the literature and analytical framework surrounding populism and democracy. The first section will look at identifying populism and the various conceptualisations scholars have developed for this political phenomenon. The following section will then explore the various sources of populism which include domestic and global structural ruptures. Domestic ruptures will specifically look at internal factors of a state that develop fertile conditions for populism (such as poor governance), and global ruptures will discuss the cultural and economic developments that have resulted in the development of populism in certain countries. The second section of this chapter will explore the relationship of populism and democracy. The literature in this section is important to investigate as it will help in understanding the presence and impact of populism in a democracy, and therefore its effect in either strengthening or weakening democratic consolidation, which will be discussed in the final section of the chapter. The final and third section of the chapter will discuss the analytical framework, which discusses the specific indicators that are used when analysing democratic consolidation.

### **2. 2. 2 Identifying Populism**

Populism, as seen in this section of the chapter is a term that has been conceptualised in numerous ways by various authors. The main conceptualisations of the term that will be discussed is populism as politics; populism as style; as “the people”; populism as political movements and populism as ideology.

#### *Populism as politics*

According to Laclau (2005) populism can be conceptualised as a “political logic”:

*“Populism means putting into question the institutional order by constructing an underdog as an historical agent - i.e. an agent which is another in relation to the way things stand. But this*

*is the same as politics. We only have politics through the gesture which embraces the existing state of affairs as a system and presents an alternative to it (or, conversely, when we defend that system against existing potential alternatives). That is the reason why the end of populism coincides with the end of politics.*” (Laclau, 2005:48).

Laclau (2005:48) argues that all politics is essentially populist in nature as he states “the people” will always be the subject and focus of political parties, and radical alternatives will always be present to the public. Moffit and Tormey (2014:384) however contend this understanding of populism on the basis that it is too simple and shallow a conceptualisation. Moffit and Tormey (2014:387) instead suggest that populism should thus be looked at as a type of political “style”.

#### *Populism as style*

According to Moffit and Tormey (2014:384) not all political alternatives and developments are necessarily populist in nature, and they instead acknowledge that populism derives from a crisis, break down or threat amongst people and their self-interests. Populism therefore appeals to common citizens and creates a divide between supposedly “bad” elites and the supposedly “good” public. Its style and characteristics are emphasised, simplifying and “*coarsening political discourse*” (Moffit and Tormey, 2014:392). Populists build their movements on the belief that they are outsiders of conventional, formal “inner” politics, and adopt a rhetoric of jargon and slang to resonate with citizens and provide a “directness of representation”.

#### *Populism as “the people”*

Another central tactic and characteristic populists employ to achieve their political objectives is their ability to bring together many dissatisfied and discontent individuals. In order to unify many citizens, populist leaders create an idea of “the people”, where they use techniques of minimising their differences amongst each other, and highlighting their similarities (Jansen, 2011:84). “The people” become united by the fact that they are apparently unjustly treated by their political elite in some manner, and a common enemy or opposition is created. This allows individuals to develop shared experiences of injustice and dissatisfaction, as well as forming common objectives to overcome these problems. (Jansen, 2011:84).

According to Panizza (2005:28) antagonism plays a very important if not central role in political spheres of societies, because it is through antagonism that identities are formed, creating various groups and factions within public life. Populist leaders have a charisma about them, and present simple solutions derived from “common sense” over expert knowledge that

supposedly self-interest seeking elites make use of (Moffit and Tormey, 2014:391). Davila (2000:244) also shares similar themes in his article, stating that populist movements are often accompanied by charismatic leaders that establish themselves within grass-root foundations in society, claiming to represent the people or nation of the country. These charismatic leaders are called “caudillos” in Latin American countries. These tactics are used by populists as a style to resonate and “fit in” with “the people”, in an attempt to display their fervent devotion to the needs and representation of the people. It is a way of siding with “the people” and ultimately creates a political divide amongst citizens and elites. This shall be expanded on later in this chapter.

### *Populism as Ideology*

Jansen (2011:82) importantly notes that while each country has their own different political styles and regimes, cultures, history and various social and economic structures, these unique differences can thus allow populist rhetoric to vary greatly. This makes the conceptualisation more flexible and able to comprehend in various contexts, considering populism and populist movements do not have a common ideology. Moffit and Tormey (2014: 383) expand on this by stating that populism as a concept is not considered an ideology, as there exists no well-defined historical context from which it derives. Canovan’s (1999:4-5) conceptualisation also shares the flexibility of populist ideology as being relevant to that of the political environment (left or right depending on what type of government regime people might resist and oppose in a particular society). Populism forms an alternative “world-view” as to the views held by elites in a particular society. Laclau (2005:33) touches on similar points, stating that movements are not necessarily populist because they are defined by their content or ideology per se, but can be classified as being populist by their “logic of articulation” or methods of mobilising its aims and content. Populist mobilisation is thus a combination of popular mobilisation as well as populist rhetoric.

Studies done by Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013:167) in both Europe and Latin America, show that right and left-wing examples of populism are prominent political movements in both continents. Their results have shown that Latin American populism is relatively more inclusive than examples studied in European countries. In underdeveloped Latin American countries, populist forces are characteristically driven by shared sentiments of anti-imperialism whilst simultaneously sharing feelings of paternalism towards other various Latin American identities. In Europe however, populist movements are generally driven by “*xenophobic views of nationalism*” (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013:167-168), where all foreign and alien

individuals that are not native to a certain country, are immediately seen as a threat towards the safety of that state and its people. According to Mouffe (2005:69) this is largely because there exists “...an absence of agnostic channels for the expression of conflicts, both in domestic and international politics” in many European states. This leads many individuals in well established, European democracies to feel that consensual and coalition parties within Europe do not provide suitable alternatives for their needs.

### *Populism as political movements*

According to Jansen (2011:82) scholars who have published works on populism have failed to define it, by treating populism as a “*thing*” more than a unique action of political events or movements. Jansen (2011:77) shifts away from this more common approach to instead understand populism as political movements, which serve as a means to achieving certain political, social and economic agendas led by political leaders and elites. It is consequently better to understand this type of mobilisation as a more “flexible” way of acquiring support (Jansen, 2011:77).

The above examples show that populism is a term that has various elements and can as a result can be conceptualised in a number of ways. These have been categorised into five main themes: populism as politics; populism as style; populism as ideology; populism as movements and populism as “the people”. Many authors however, also provide various arguments of sources of populism that shall be discussed next.

## **2.2.3 Sources of Populism**

The central sources of populism derived from the literature can be categorised into two parts. The first sources that shall be discussed will look at Domestic structural and social ruptures such as poor governance. The second source of populism that will be discussed will look at Global social and structural ruptures that stem from growing sentiments of discontent towards governments, due to increasing changes in the global cultural and economic advances.

### *Domestic ruptures*

The first body of literature to be discussed is identified as Domestic structural and social ruptures.

According to Moyo and Yeros (2011:22) “*fractured states*” are countries that are unable to provide basic needs for their citizens (such as basic goods and services), or control various territories within the state. When this occurs “*fractious conflict*” develops, especially in rural areas where resources are scarcer, and people struggle to access land and political influence. States that experience unequal development, socio-political conflict and economic crises are prone to produce politics of radicalism. Radicalised states are more likely to adopt revolutionary strategies to deal with these problems, often adopting nationalistic perspectives of their country; strategies of nationalisation of natural resources; and with that a rejection of neo-liberal ideas and practices (Moyo and Yeros, 2011:23). It is in these volatile and sensitive environments that populism finds opportunities to flourish.

Another stimulator of populism from another domestic economic perspective is based on a paper of Luiz (2015) which comprises of literature on the influence of Middle-Income Traps (MITs) that lead to populist trends. According to Luiz (2015:4) MIT’s are economies that once experienced high economic growth, later undergo a decline, making it harder for them to transition back to a high-income status. Economic instability consequently creates political instability within societies, especially seen in countries where there exist high levels of income inequality, where resources become a fought over challenge for many disadvantaged individuals. This creates tension between the poor and disadvantaged (who are thus more likely to seek radical alternatives) and the wealthy that are comfortable to remain with the status quo (Luiz, 2015:8). As the state of the economy begins to change, so do the interests of political leaders, following directions that may allure the support of the average citizen.

Jou’s (2016) findings however presents different conclusions. According to Jou (2016:606) whilst some studies, like the one above, have showed that structural factors such as economic indicators have influenced citizens’ evaluations of a new democratic regimes, Jou’s (2016) article reflects that poor governance is a more significant factor to look at. For many scholars, economic indicators such as levels of inflation, GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth and unemployment have influenced citizens’ evaluations of their regime’s economic performance. If newly established democracies have poor economic outcomes, citizens are more likely to adopt more radical and extreme political preferences. Jou (2016:606) instead argues that citizens are more likely to be inclined to radical political ideologies if their democratic regime has issues of poor governance such as, corruption or ineffective administration. Democracies that instead have low levels of corruption, an impartial judiciary and ingrained democratic procedures, such as regulated free elections, citizens will consequently be less likely to adopt

radical political views. (Jou, 2016:605). Jou's (2016:606) research also argues that despite the lack of democratic political socialisation that citizens in new democracies may have, they are argued to possess a relatively good understanding of what democracy entails and how it should work. The failure of these expectations that citizens have, can lead to the rise of sentiments of dissatisfaction towards a democratic regime.

Pabst (2016:91) similarly argues that democracies in "post war" periods have become increasingly dominated by elites and their own interests. These elected government members and representatives use, manipulate and centralise power and wealth to maintain their position as a "self-serving party" (Pabst, 2016:91-92). Public trust has consequently shifted away from mainstream powers and resulted in the rise of populist groups and oligarchies. When politicians become disconnected with their public, their concerns are more focused on maintaining their support base against their opposition, instead of focusing on more pressing matters that concern the needs and safety of the citizenry. These issues include both national and international concerns, such as immigration challenges, poverty and environmental issues (Pabst, 2016:92).

According to Laclau (1977:147-148) another model of understanding how populism occurs within a society is based on a functionalist approach by the works of Germani (1965). This method of understanding is based on a country's process of economic development that aims to reach a level of industrialisation. These changes evolve from shifts within traditional societies to developing into more modern ones. This results in a growth of increasingly specialised and differentiated institutions, as well as social, elective changes from previously "prescriptive" or controlled actions within society (Laclau, 1977:147). When institutions become more developed and more specialised in various spheres of everyday life, these more "modern" developments influence societal behaviour. Individuals become more mobilised and deliberative in their actions as these advances challenge their existing, traditional ideas and beliefs. Similar ideas have been expressed by scholars such as Kitching (1989:21) who argues that the development of industrialisation and its accompanying pressures produces populist ideas.

Duality in various spheres within society can thus take place. This means that a transition between "old" and "new" occurs, forming a process of "*asynchronism*", whereby traditional and industrial parts of society may exist simultaneously, although they may tug away in opposite directions. Examples that Laclau (1977:148) presents of this include social personalities or attitudes of people that may contain aspects of "backward" or "forward" ways of thinking, as well as geographical differences in central and peripheral regions of a society



or state. Laclau (1977:148) states that these new changes have effects on a society's opposite, older parts, but will not necessarily advance them to modernity. Some new attitudes will advance traditional existing ideas and ideologies within society however, it may also contrastingly reinforce older traditional ones if they are not interpreted or explicated with these new attitudes and ideas (Laclau, 1977:147-148).

Populism can thus occur when the masses suddenly or "prematurely" as Laclau (1977:149) states, enter and become involved in political spheres. These populist surges are more prone to happen when there are not enough means for adequate representation for people to communicate and express themselves within society. Countries where this has proved more challenging and have become more susceptible to populism are seen in Latin America. When societies in countries like these experiences a surge of populist mobilisation, their existing political and social structures are unable to integrate or accommodate this "premature" political development (Laclau, 1977:149-150). It is during these periods of time where political elites find the opportunity to take advantage of this abnormal anti-state shift and lack of integration of traditional and modern attitudes. It is these circumstances when populist discourse occurs.

These authors have presented various ideas of structural and social domestic ruptures that can lead to a rise of radical political preferences and populism. Some of these scholars view structural factors such as economic indicators to be a stimulant of populism (Moyo and Yeros, 2011; Pabst, 2016 and Luiz, 2015). However, other authors such as Jou (2016) contend this, arguing that political factors such as poor governance are stronger triggers of populism. Laclau (1978) has presented alternative ideas, arguing that populism instead occurs when masses of a society struggle to find political representation through which they can express their interests. The following authors contrastingly argue that global ruptures create fertile conditions for populism to flourish and thus present alternative sources of populism in this body of literature.

#### *Global ruptures*

According to Hadiz and Chryssogelos (2017:400) contemporary populism is the pronounced result of social dislocation that occurs from the globalisation process, which is observable in both developed and developing countries today. The rise of populism is seen as a reaction towards two developments which include: a growing resentment and discontent of the order of political representation and participation in societies, as well as the development of social marginalisation that accompanies a consciousness of the shortcomings and disappointments of modern liberal promises. These idealised, liberal promises include social mobility and the improvement of material circumstances achieved through acquiring education, skills and

accomplished and effort (Hadiz and Chryssogelos, 2017:400). Many people facing economic challenges who aspire to overcome this and advance themselves in hopes of a better job and lifestyle, are often limited to do so because of their hindering social circumstances.

Inglehart and Norris' (2016) paper presents two further theories as to why populism is emerging across the globe. Their first theory is similar to the global ruptures mentioned above and is called the *economic inequality perspective* that is more associated with Western, post-industrialist societies. Many western societies have undergone massive transformations with the start of globalisation, which has resulted in new developments and changes within their various industries, specifically within labour, knowledge and information economies, technological automation and industrial sectors. Many of these changes have resulted in income and wealth inequality as well as a breakdown and deterioration of welfare policies that were more prominent before globalisation (Inglehart and Norris, 2016:2). With an increasing number of migrants and refugees entering these societies, many citizens are experiencing economic insecurity and feel excluded from social welfare and state provision. This has resulted into growing sentiments of discontent and betrayal among citizens towards their political leaders. These feelings of resentment towards the government and politicians are mostly felt by groups within western populations such as low-waged unskilled workers, unemployed individuals, families reliant on social and welfare benefits, single-parent families, and poor white males in cities living among immigrants (Inglehart and Norris, 2016:25). Norris and Inglehart (2016:10) explain that these economic challenges leave a large portion of the population to become anxious to any alterations to their society (economically, socially and politically).

Many of these individuals who shared these apprehensive sentiments are largely low-skilled and blue-collar workers of a society that are the most vulnerable of a population to economic insecurity. These feelings of personal failure, loss of social status and anxiety of their livelihood are further compounded when their government's ability to intervene and protect their economy and financial markets becomes limited (due to more open market reformation during the globalisation process). These groups are thus more likely to turn to political alternatives for representation, which are often anarchic, anti-establishment, xenophobic and populist in nature that seem to offer them a channel of articulation, support and identity. These populist groups provide individuals with a voice to express their feelings of being overlooked and ignored by their governments (Inglehart and Norris, 2016:2). Examples of these developments have been observable particularly in European countries that have experienced strains on their resources due to an influx of immigrants and refugees, as well as the growing fear of domestic acts of

terrorism, as seen in Brussels, Istanbul and Paris (Norris and Inglehart, 2016:11).

Whilst Norris and Inglehart's (2016) research has largely been centred on Western democratic societies, similar trends have been evident within South Africa. South Africa's rise of populism has largely stemmed from young economically insecure individuals, which reflects similar characteristics that correspond to this theory of economic "left behinds". While it is recognised that South Africa is not a post-materialist society, it is a materialist society where many individuals are facing economic deprivation. It is worthy to acknowledge that South Africa does also however, resonate with domestic ruptures of poor governance too, and can be said to contain more than one source of populism. This shall be discussed in more detail further on.

The second theory that Inglehart and Norris (2016:2-3) discuss is called the *cultural backlash thesis*. The cultural backlash theory argues that the rise of populist movements is largely the result of a social psychological phenomenon. This is said to typically occur amongst older generations with traditional values and who are less educated and who feel forgotten and "left behind" as the rest of society adopts ever increasing progressive cultural ideas (Norris and Inglehart, 2016:13). The cultural backlash theory developed from post-materialist values, where Western societies adopted more multiculturalist ideals and saw the rise of progressive movements (for example the Green Movement). Many individuals at the forefront of this change were mostly younger generations. Younger generations are more accepting and open minded of cosmopolitan ideals (more accepting of immigrants, refugees, multiculturalism, LGBT (*lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender*) communities etc.). As younger generations began replacing older generations over the years, within industrial societies, the adoption of these new views increased. Older generations contrastingly responded negatively and rejected many of these values, especially seen in groups consisting of older, white males and those less educated (Inglehart and Norris, 2016:3). These older generations felt that their traditional values that were once respected and of importance, were becoming disregarded. As a result, this group of people feel forgotten in their society, and have become resentful to new political and socio-economic developments.

According to Inglehart and Norris (2016:7), to understand the competing values of populists and their supporters in relation the rest of most contemporary societies, we can find populist ideals and values on one side of a cultural continuum, and cosmopolitan liberal values on the far other side. Inglehart and Norris (2016:7) briefly explain cosmopolitan values as "worldly" values, whereby all individuals interact with each other and live within a connected global community. Cosmopolitan values support modern values associated with the process of

globalisation such as: emphasizing open borders, sharing multicultural values, inclusivity in societies, and welcoming of diversity. Cosmopolitans believe that individuals are connected through multiple networks, bringing more diverse people together and thus deteriorates the homogenous nation state (Inglehart and Norris, 2016:7). Cosmopolitan ideals also encompass strong liberal values (such as: protection of minority rights, tolerance, participation through elections, pluralistic bargaining) which also further challenges authoritarian characteristics associated with certain populist elements. These values are supportive of social liberal rights especially that of minority groups, women, environmental and gender and LGBT rights.

Other scholars however, have argued that the above is the rise and ramifications of identity politics, which has served to alienate those with conservative and traditional values. According to Bernstein (2005:51) identity politics is largely rooted in narrow categories or grouping that are unable to sustain and agree on numerous things (except for a common enemy), and thus are often unaccepting of pluralism. This type of politics is characteristically uncompromising and unable to form coalitions, and instead adopt “unproductive defensiveness” in their political approaches (Berstein, 2005:51). This political behaviour is argued to not promote progressive change. Similar sentiments were shared in a speech made by Helen Zille at the fifty-fifth LI Congress:

*“As a start, liberals must accept that “identity” politics is a powerful force that cannot be ignored. In fact, it must be embraced within the open, opportunity society project. If liberals wish to be less misunderstood and more accepted, they must find ways of identifying with a range of groups who are easily alienated by what they perceive as the liberal culture of superiority. Liberals love the rhetoric of openness, but in divided societies often set themselves apart as a rational, analytical and dispassionate elite that has little contact with the trials and tribulations of ordinary people.”* Helen Zille quoted in African Liberal Network (2008).

While the rise of progressive liberal ideas is at the forefront of liberal politics, it is noteworthy to acknowledge that intolerance is still an issue present in many democracies today. This shall be discussed further in the following chapter section.

To summarise, this first part of the chapter has looked at the various literature around populist definitions and characteristics. In order to evaluate the EFF’s political preferences, attitudes and behaviour in the following chapter, it is beneficial to look at what characteristics the party possess that defines them as populist. Populist movements usually derive from sentiments of resentment and discontent amongst citizens toward their government, due to various cultural, political and economic factors. They thrive on and even generate antagonism against political

elites. Populist groups and parties attempt to gain support by citizens by presenting themselves as the true voice and representation of the people; they are supposedly for “the people” by “the people”. In doing so they separate society into two, the self-defined good, virtuous and moral people, against the corrupt and evil elite. They moralise politics to create resistance against the current regime. Populists attempt to address, or take advantage of, very real and genuine challenges of society (political, social and economic), however they often oversimplify these challenges and try to win over support from the masses by presenting forward simple, “bullet-proof” solutions, when they in actual fact need more detailed and complex resolutions. Populists are not confined by their political ideology, and generally adopt political policies and preferences that oppose those of the current regime they are competing against. They often make use of emotive language and jargon in an attempt to fit in with “the people” to persuade and emotionally invigorate people. Their leaders often charismatic and persuasive. The following section will investigate the significance of populist groups within a democracy.

### **2.3.1 Democracy and Populism**

In order to understand the effects and outcomes of the presence of populism within a democracy, it is first necessary to explore the inter-relationship and unique dynamic between the two. This will first be done by discussing the various ideas and roles of democracy, and how populism develops between the gaps of these conflicting understandings, by referring to Canovan’s (1999) article.

The next part of this section will look at the similarities between populism and democracy (Thompson, 2018), as well as the tension between the two that exists within a democracy (Plattner, 210). This section of the literature is important in evaluating the influence of populism in democracy and is therefore important in the later analysis of the populist party, the EFF’s influence on democracy in South Africa.

Canovan’s (1999) article argues that democracy contains two important elements: redemptive and pragmatic democracy. Canovan (1999:2) states that the rise of populism aids us in our understanding of how democracy works by looking at its pragmatic and redemptive sides. While these two elements are indeed different from each other they remain interdependent of each other; it is thus in this “void” between these opposing faces of democracy that populism can develop and flourish (Canovan, 1999:9). This coexisting duality is what encourages and develops populist mobilization (Canovan, 1992-3).

Populist discourse and processes appeal to people in a way and which may be or seem to be democratic in some sense as it utilises direct approaches and simplicity in its logic, while also denouncing any form of “mystification” of illicit and damaging procedures within government and instead promotes transparency to the people (Canovan, 1999:5). This emotionally driven agenda appears to be a cleansing process in an attempt to save society from the ill of the elites and regime, bringing a new change to supposedly better society (Canovan, 1999:6).

Pragmatic democracy includes ideals revolving around peace, stability and moderation. It can be used as a method of navigating through any challenges and conflicts within society with the help of a set of rules and procedures that are of a “peaceful” and moderate manner (Canovan, 1999:9). It is a way of governing that utilises institutions to control political power effectively which will better a society, whilst simultaneously containing power in such a way that leaders do not abuse it (Canovan, 1999:10). Pragmatic democracy is essentially procedural democracy which largely emphasises political process and rules. Redemptive democracy on the other hand is a form of “political salvation” where people have the capacity to make great personal and social changes, when they assume leadership over their lives (Canovan, 1999:10). Redemptive democracy is very much an end in itself.

Pragmatic democracy revolves around the practise of democratic ideals and processes with the guidance and supervision of legitimate institutions; the existence of multi-party systems; free elections, pressure groups and lobbying (Canovan, 1999:11). This creates a tension with the redemptive way of democracy where society is advanced through the personalistic will and actions of the people. An example that Canovan (1991:11) uses to illustrate this tension is seen with the procedures of voting within a society. To democratic pragmatists, voting is a process where power is shifted in the hands of newly elected leaders in a peaceful and cooperative manner; while redemptive see it as a “ritual” of political “renewal” (Canovan, 1999:11). When enough leaders and society at large lose sight of this “sacred” procedure, these ideals and the political system of democracy loses its legitimacy. When this gap between what is believed to be a “sacred ritual” and to others mere political procedures, a space is consequently created whereby populists appear. This however is debatable and can be interpreted as a materialistic understanding of democracy as citizens place too high expectations on regime (democracy) outputs, when in actual fact it is more a problem of lack of individual responsibility and agency amongst political actors and groups (Canovan, 1999:11).

Democracy ideally is a political system that theoretically strives to represent the interests of

the people, giving power to the people. In reality, as with all political systems, putting this theory into practice is more challenging. Democratic regimes are often seen as faulty as they make “empty promises” to people within society; the problem however is not the democratic regime that is not working or ill functioning, it is the failure of political parties to deliver promises they make to people (Canovan, 1999:12). Populism is opportunistic in a sense that it sees this gap of unfulfilled expectations amongst citizens and makes use of a government’s failure to deliver or perform in a certain way as promised to its citizens. Populists claim to be able to fix this gap and represent the needs of all the people, however it is not realistically possible to satisfy everyone’s needs within a society (Canovan, 1999:12).

Democracy’s “ambiguity” as Canovan (1999:12) states is what leads many citizens to believe that their political system and government are not meeting their self-interests, despite considering external influences that a government cannot always control – such as the economy to an extent. Redemptive democracy as Canovan (1999:13) states, promises the public a certain degree of power, so when people feel that their rights or interests are being ignored, they will feel despondent when these needs are not always fully met. Individuals thus develop anti-sentiments towards democratic institutions and leaders. It is in these periods that populist leaders surpass institutions, and reach out directly to the people on an emotional and personal level, and in the eyes of many citizens, a seemingly very genuine appeal (Canovan, 1999:14).

Arditi (2005:77) also states that while populism can act as a “mirror” in a sense, reflecting the various “edges” of democracy, it can reflect areas that need more attention and consideration. For example, a surge of populist movements in a society could reflect that the society is not representing all groups sufficiently or that there are faults within the political system or leaders (Arditi, 2005:77). Similar views have been held by Howarth (2008). Palinka (2013:6) states that democracies are in essence supposed to function as a representative form of government; representing the needs and interests of the people. When democracies become more established and manifest as a form of governance in many countries, populism begins serving as a method of reflection on the state of current democracies, as well as highlighting the faults and shortcomings of its practices and leaders

Mouffe's article (2005:57), like Canovan’s (1999) also discusses divides that exist within democratic society. Competitive democratic society is made up of a centre of consensus that joins people together to form a common identity, a unified “us”, but with this centre comes a frontier, a “them”-neither can exist without the other.



This separation between people can however, be unhealthy when individuals begin moralising their own groups against others. If majoritarian groups for example refer to themselves (the “us”) as the morally good group and refer to minorities (the “them” group) as evil and morally inferior, this causes an unhealthy divide within society. One group's needs are seen to be more important than the needs of others. When this occurs, people from various groups are reluctant to understand the needs and interests of other people. It is thus also easy for democratic leaders to moralise politics and political interests, creating an enemy or danger (populist groups) that must be eliminated, rather than try to understand and engage with them (Mouffe, 2005:58). As soon as politics are moralised, democracies are consequently put in danger, and opponents are created.

When alternatives for political interests and representation are not discussed in society, groups and parties are not able to represent their needs without some form of moral attack. This is not to say that radicalism and potentially bad parties and leaders that could cause political instability, and tyranny do not exist, but that there is a need for political discourse in societies to overcome challenges that unrepresented citizens face (Mouffe, 2005:59). According to Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013:152) there are two ends of populism which they call elitism and pluralism.

The elitist side creates a divide between the common people and the elite. Elites believe common citizens to be inferior to themselves and of a vulgar, unrefined and dishonest in character (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013:152). This according to Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013:152) are attitudes used as a tactic to counter populist ideologies that were prominent since Plato’s era, where ideas of democracy are held as sacred and needed to be guarded from the rule of the mob which democracy can be prone to. Pluralism, which is a concept very much present in democracies today, on the other hand is dissimilar from both populism and elitism as it presents a way of understanding society without moral evaluations, as well as distinctions between the elite and common citizens. It instead looks at society as a formation of many groups with various differing interests and politics should therefore have many of centres of power that can satisfy and represent these numerous interests through a process of consensus.

In this view Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013:152) state that it is not possible to create a unified general will of the people. Populism goes against this notion, as it aims to and claims to represent the general will of the people, whilst opposing elites in society. What essentially differentiates populism from ideas of pluralist democracy, is that while both views hold people as sovereign, populism tends to elevate the nature of “the people” in moralistic ways, seeing



the people as virtuous and pure (Akkerman, Mudde and Zaslove, 2014:1327). People are considered to be the “holy” glue that holds society together.

Thompson’s (2018) paper brings attention to similarities that are found in both liberal democratic pluralism, as well as populism, showing that these seemingly opposite political dynamics are more similar than one might initially think. One of Thompson’s (2017:45) first points that he discusses, is that populist groups claim to represent the true voice of the people that have supposedly been ignored and dismissed by mainstream political leaders. While this is a distinguishing characteristic seen in many populist leaders, groups and movements, it is not unique to populism alone, as numerous parties and political figures within a democracy claim to express the interest and needs of the people. The “will of the people” is thus not an epithet reserved for populists alone but is however, an emphasised characteristic they build much of their support from. Populists groups may differ from broader society as they specify who the people are.

Another point Thompson (2017:46-45) discusses is their shared idealistic perceptions of citizens. Liberal democrats hold romanticised ideas of the nature and character of citizens. For supporters of pluralism such as Rawls (1999) citizens are portrayed as rational, tolerant, reasonable thinking people, who engage in public reasoning to solve and reconcile their differences and encourage each other to societal advancement (Thompson, 2017:45-46). Populists too view citizens, or “the people”, as a large group of individuals who have been disadvantaged and forgotten by their untrustworthy political elites. For populists, the people are virtuous, vulnerable and suffer a crisis of representation, and thus need “saving” from the corrupt state. Both populists and liberal democrats share an idealised belief of civic virtue and civic responsibility, and both aim to represent the needs of the citizens, albeit in very different ways and characteristics (Thompson, 2017:48).

The threat with both of the objectives of populist and liberal democrat idealists is that the process of representation can never be perfected or fully achieved. Thompson’s logic (2017:48) argues that, like the physical representation of money (that makes present an absent form of value as, well as representing units of value), political representation is a process that aims to make present (the will of the people) that is absent from the core of a political regime or system. Absent voters are included and made present in the political process by representative, legislative members. Representative democracy is structured so that political representatives can act on behalf and independently of their voters, who therefore do not need to be present in the process. Political representation cannot fully satisfy all parties as diversity is an inevitable

characteristic of any population. Thompson (2017:49) states that while this system is not perfect and can be successful in achieving basic representation, its flaws and limitations are the cracks of the system that populists immediately see and use as a weapon to undermine a democratic regime, exposing the weaknesses of the system, however they are unable to solve these problems completely themselves.

Plattner's (2010) research also discusses the duality of representative democracy and its challenges. According to Plattner (2010:83) representative democracy has existed since ancient Greek society. Democracy was simply understood as the rule of the people. In many societies today, this is accomplished through systems of free and fair elections, whereby a winning party is decided upon by the support of the majority. It is important to note however, that rule by the majority does not equate to democracy alone. There have been examples in the past (Nazi rule in Germany) that provide an illustration that majority rule is not always liberal democratic rule (Plattner, 2010:83-84). Democracies must also focus on protecting the rights of all citizens (all individuals and minorities) within society. Liberal democracies aim to achieve this, as they emphasise and value freedom and liberty for all citizens (Plattner, 2010:84). The law and constitution of a democracy helps protect these rights and place a restraint on the rule of law to avoid abuse of power.

Zakaria's (1997:24) paper shares similar points, stressing that a simplified democracy that boils down to holding free and fair elections is not a sufficient process alone to ensure a stable or durable democracy; liberal rights must be upheld and by protected. According to Zakaria (1997:24) procedural government, which is demonstrated by holding elections for example, is reduced to a form of acquiring power for elites, whilst constitutionalism places greater emphasis on protecting the liberty of citizens, protecting their human rights and overall aimed at advancing democratic goals: "*Constitutional liberalism is about the limitation of power, democracy about its accumulation and use*" (Zakaria, 1997:24).

Constitutional liberal democracy however is a more complex process where disharmony is a common characteristic, as there is a constant tug between the rights and needs of the individual and the collective majority. Balance between the two is necessary for society to function and thrive. This duality, according to Plattner (2010:84), is the essence of liberal democracy; a process of competing objectives of the individual and the majority which causes tension within itself. Plattner (2010:84) refers to this as a "hybrid regime": it restrains majority rule from overriding the freedom of minority individuals whilst simultaneously making sure that the rule

of the people exists.

Liberal democracies however, have the ability to survive these conflicting objectives through the balance of diversity. Plattner (2010:85-86) argues this in presenting forward the ideas of James Maddison (1787) in the book the *Federalist Papers*, which argues that diversity prevents a singular group of enforcing its will in society. A diverse society and economy, as well as a separation of powers allows different groups to “coexist in peace” as it limits the control of smaller individual or minority groups, while also maintaining the acceptance and support of the majority of the population. This tension within liberal democracy has proven to be durable, however often still leaves parties (majority and minority groups) often feeling dissatisfied and disregarded by their politicians due to the fact that conflicting goals are constantly present (Plattner, 2010:86). The majority of the population will always feel that their popular will is being pushed aside and that private and personal interests are placed ahead of them. Individuals and minorities on the other hand will feel that their interests are inferior in the eyes of their politicians, often ignored and are secondary to the needs of the majority (Plattner, 2010:87).

If one side of the population gains too much power, this can cause a great imbalance and lead to political instability. If democratic processes are manipulated in such a way that individual and minority interests and rights are ignored and overruled, radical pluralism develops (Plattner, 2010:86). If the inverse should take place, where liberal, individual interests are exaggerated and overvalued, and popular will is compromised and ignored, then a lack of social cohesion shall ensue, and populist movements are likely to develop. Both scenarios can have dangerous effects for democratic survival.

Firstly, a danger of populists (as discussed earlier) is their view of the citizens or “the people” which is very narrow. Populists characteristically are anti-elitist and anti-pluralist, and claim to support citizens who are not rich and elitist. This view divides a society into two sections: the elite and rich, and the ordinary citizens who are not wealthy and corrupt. This view is limiting as it interprets “the people” as a homogenous group both culturally and economically- which it is not (Plattner, 2010:87). Populists are therefore intolerant towards and incompatible with minority and individual groups such as religious, linguistic, racial and cultural minorities, and therefore a pluralistic society (Plattner, 2010:88). With these limitations said, Plattner (2010:88) argues that the emergence of populist groups and movements provide political elites with an opportunity to learn, and to place their attention to the needs of the people that might have been disregarded along the way.

The dangers of radical pluralism on the other hand can be a challenge to democratic stability when minority interests are able to override the interests of the majority. If the majority of individuals within a society are unable to agree on core ideals, interests and decisions that are necessary in forming a basis of consensus and congruency within a society, such large cleavages and a strong presence of discord will lead to disunity among people. Many citizens as a result will feel omitted from that community and will not comply or respect new developments within a society. This is particularly evident in previously homogenous societies that are now experiencing new transformations and alterations as the world changes and progresses. This is seen in Europe today with the integration of Muslim immigrants within their society (Plattner, 2010:89). The promotion of pluralism can however be helpful in protecting individual rights, and helping society become more aware and accepting of the numerous interests and rights of its people that is often at times forgotten by the robustness of majority rule (Plattner, 2010:90). Similarly, pluralistic ideals can help regulate society from populist threats that are characteristically hold anti-minority stances, especially towards ethnic and religious minorities when paired with their strong nationalistic sentiments.

Diamond (1993:256) similarly states that in order for a democracy to be well balanced, individuals should possess the ability to question and challenge authority if their power should seem tyrannical, but this authority should also be supported in order to maintain law and order. Diamond (1993:13) refers to Pennock's (1976:256) idea that states that radical individualism cannot foster or sustain democracy, and states that there must exist a bond such as a "public spirit" that unifies a population, and which is dedicated to the interests of the collective society. Individualism (or pluralism as earlier discussed) is beneficial to democracy as it allows for competition and egalitarianism within a society to thrive, however if it undermines the government or political leaders in extreme cases, it prevents political stability, harmony and integration within a country to develop. It is thus beneficial for a state to possess legitimacy in order for there to be democratic stability.

Sandel (2018:357) however, argues that contemporary liberal democracies are hindered by misconceptions of liberal neutrality as he states:

*“Liberal Neutrality flattens questions of meaning, identity, and purpose into questions of fairness. It therefore misses the anger and resentment that animate the populist revolt; it lacks the moral rhetorical and systematic resources to understand the cultural estrangement, even humiliation, that many working-class and middle-class voters feel; and it ignores the meteoric hubris of elites.”* (Sandel, 2018:358).

There are many variations and facets to what individuals believe democracy to be and therefore what they expect from democracy. Sandel (2018:358) argues that it is therefore important to discuss these matters and bridge across the cleavages towards resolving these issues. Politics, seen in a liberal democracy is very much entangled within human elements, and society therefore needs the proper resources and procedures to understand these challenges in order strengthen their democracy. Sandel (2018:358) states that at the end of the day, liberalism is ultimately not a politics of neutrality. Conceiving it to be neutral from of governance whereby its output will never result into an abuse of power, exploitation, tyrannical over powering of parties and tolerance is naïve, and hinders societal progress for effectively dealing with moral, cultural and economic obstacles that populist parties are addressing more avidly (Sandel, 2018:358). There will always be problems within any democracy, as it is ultimately a regime led by people, who are neither completely virtuous or noble. There will be mistakes and failures along the way, however it does not mean that democracy itself is a failing regime. Citizens need to be properly informed as to what democracy entails, otherwise their assumptions and evaluations of a regime will always be negative. This is again reiterated in the quotation:

*“Many liberals distinguish between neo-liberalism (or laissez-faire, free-marketing thinking) and the liberalism that finds expression in liberal public reason. The first is an economic doctrine, whereas the second is a principle of political morality that insists government should be neutral toward competing conceptions of the good life.”* (Sandel, 2018:325).

These authors have showed that the presence of populism is not always necessarily a great danger to democracy's survival or political stability, as elements within populism does indeed share many characteristics with liberalists and can often be a symptom of democratic ailments within a society. Democracy does not have the ability to satisfy every party simultaneously, (no singular political regime can) which is often not realised by many citizens, and therefore there will always be a portion of the population that shares some form of grievances or dissatisfaction with their democratic regime. Democracy can never fully represent every person's needs; however, it has proven to be the most durable and effective form of government. It is therefore important that political groups (minorities or the majority) do not become too overpowered and cause a political imbalance within society. When the majority of citizens however no longer fundamentally support democratic ideals and preferences, favouring instead more radical political preferences, democratic stability is at a great risk.

### **2.3.2 The dangers of populism in a democratic society**

According to Torodov (2012:142) populist groups all share a kind of demagogic characteristic. Their solutions to edify their environment and society are easily understood but are neither practical nor almost very rarely possible to implement. Torodov (2012: 143) states that populist groups often provide solutions to their supporters without acknowledging that their course of political action has an effect that compromises the needs of others.

Torodov (2012:144) further explains this by comparing populist discourse to television: simple and easily consumed. Populists' political strategies are simple so that citizens can understand them and reach conclusions easily. Populist leaders thus often seem more charismatic and reassuring. They gain their support by addressing the grievances that citizens hold towards their governments, which are in most cases very real, complicated and intricate set of problems. Their danger is that they attempt to solve something very complex with simple and definite solutions. They thus avoid anything that seems too complicated, abstract and that does not produce "quick" results. Populists steer clear from grey areas that seem unpredictable such as long-term factors or plans. All the tactics that populist groups employ in their strategies to gain more support is to ultimately win the favour of the people they claim to represent. That is why they depend on playing on the "emotions of the moment" (Torodov, 2012:144). Offering ideas and solutions to citizens that claim to fix their immediate problems helps gain their trust, however these plans are not necessarily plans that will satisfy or be viable for people in the future. Populists hinge on the emotions of individuals. They favour conformity to reformation, order over freedom, and continuity over change (Torodov, 2012:145). They steer away from anything that is unpredictable or that which is an unknown territory to them, that might cause them to stumble and lose their support base.

Canovan also (1999:14) states that democratic institutions, skills and expertise are still a necessity to govern efficiently. While populist leaders claim to represent the needs of the people directly, political "representation" does not equate to good and effective governance. Canovan continues to explain that populism might be a "romantic" and idealistic alternative to prevailing, difficult situations a country might be experiencing, but populist visions are limiting in its short-sighted approaches and solutions.

Zakaria (1997:24) argues similar points, stressing that if populist leaders were to come into power, this poses a great threat to the stability and preservation of liberalism within a

democracy, as they are often dismissive of democratic regulations and could easily do away with the protective boundaries such as constitutions. This was seen in Peru when leader Alberto Fujimori came into power and disbanded the legislature and suspended the Peruvian Constitution. Democracy's liberal ideals are therefore at risk and vulnerable if tyrannical radical groups gain support and influence within government structures.

Gatson (2018) is another scholar who is expressed similar views. Gatson (2018:11) states that populists are characteristically sceptical and non-committal to constitutionalism proceduralism, regulations and institutions that make up the checks and balances of democracy. This is partly due to the fact that these procedures are seen as a hindrance to their ability to immediately implement simpler, majoritarian favoured policies. This is dangerous however, because populists assume that all people (mostly majoritarian views) are alike, and this apotheosized view of a uniformed people ignores the diversity that is present in society. As a result, some groups are placed above others. This idealistic view is not a true reflection of the complexities of society and the needs of the people. Gatson (2018:12-13) does however state that populism is not as big a threat if democratic institutions are strong, and the regular checks and balances between the judiciary, legislature and executive are in place to prevent the concentration of power in a group of elites. Democracy is essentially not an outcome but an ever-evolving process that requires constant evaluation and rebuilding:

*“Liberal democracy is not the end of history; nothing is. Everything human beings make is subject to erosion and contingency. Liberal democracy is fragile, constantly threatened, always in need of repair.”* (Gatson, 2018:18).

Furthermore, the rise of populism within a democracy can cause problems of economic integration with the world economy. If populists come into power within a government, they will also adopt more populist economic policies. When governments change their economic policies in an attempt to stay in power, they disrupt liberal, orthodox policies that their markets and economy has been accustomed to. More populist economic policies result in higher public spending which may lead to an increase in budget deficits and overall national debt (Oxford Analytica, 2017:1). While more western regions of the world, such as Europe, have seen a bigger rise of right-wing populism, Africa has seen more leftist approaches. This too has dangerous effects if more leftist populist approaches influence government, as these political and economic reforms are not conducive to the international standards that very important



structures such as the World Bank and the IMF hold. If countries adopt leftist policies, they lose their legitimacy as pro-democracy and open market supporters and disrupt these important international ties that took years to foster. It becomes an uncooperative player in the global political and financial markets (Oxford Analytica, 2017:1).

These authors have argued very similar points, namely that populists are a danger to democracies because they are not compliant with democratic procedures and regulations, and instead opt for quick, impractical solutions. These short-term tactics are not sustainable towards progressive development for democracies and mostly forms part of strategies to gain support amongst individuals. This is important to consider when analysing the EFF's behaviour, so as to see whether their policies and strategies are suitable for South Africa's long-term development, and to analyse whether the party upholds democratic principles and follows the appropriate procedural channels. The importance of this shall be further discussed in the following section of this chapter.

## **2.4 Analytical Framework for Democratic Consolidation**

Amongst other authors, Schedler (2001) has extensively written on themes of democratic consolidation. According to Schedler (2001:67) democratic consolidation is a process of "deepening" a fully liberal democracy or completing and further establishing a semi-democracy. It can also refer to the more "negative" aspects, such as resolving or addressing challenges of democratic erosion and weakening that might cause it to breakdown. This can be assessed and measured by looking at certain indicators, which can either be categorised as Behavioural, Attitudinal and Structural indicators. While Schedler (2001) does recognise three conditions that affect democratic consolidation, this thesis will only be looking at Behavioural and Attitudinal factors, due to the fact that the nature of this study cannot undertake an extensive evaluation needed to establish Structural factors. Chapter Three will however look at the fertile conditions that have led to the rise of populism in South Africa, and thus briefly touch on some the country's Structural indicators. Behavioural indicators reflect regime stability, attitudes are linked to behaviour and thus can give an indication of the direction of behaviour. Structural indicators can represent a source or context that act as incentives for actors and attitudes (Schedler, 2001:69).



### *Behavioural Indicators*

Behavioural indicators can be interpreted as “symptoms” of a “sick” democracy. By gathering and evaluating these indicators, scholars can build a better understanding of the condition a democracy is in and thus measure it more accurately. Any antidemocratic behaviour is thus an indicator to consider. This includes any political actors or citizens that violate democratic rules and regulations (Schedler, 2001:71-72). This includes: the use of violence (riots, intimidation of voters and candidates, expressive destruction of property, assassination of political actors, attempts to violently overthrow elected officials etc.); the rejection of elections (refusing to participate in elections, denying others to participate in elections or controlling election outcomes), and lastly transgressing authority (disobeying the law and the constitution and ignoring congressional and judicial rulings). Schedler (2001:73) insightfully states however, that the absence of these behavioural symptoms is not to say that a democracy may indeed be consolidated or is in “good health”, as its survival in stable conditions is not as reflective of its true state. The way a democracy withstands challenges is what puts its level of consolidation to the test. When governments face various kinds of crises, one is able to observe the durability and true strength and character of political actors. This is not to say that behaviour during “good conditions” is dismissible, however the latter is more indicative as to whether actors have the ability to endure a storm or are weakened by it: democratic threats can either strengthen or weaken a regime and its actors (Schedler, 2001:73-74). Studying and analysing the behaviour of political actors is useful for scholars by seeing how they interact with other groups, democratic rules and procedures, and aid in understanding their behaviour with core institutions, political and state authorities and members of society. Schedler’s (2001) Behavioural indicators will help in analysing and evaluating whether the populist party, EFF’s behaviour is conducive to democracy in Chapter 4.

### *Attitudinal*

Attitudinal foundations largely focus on the preferences and perceptions of political actors in order to determine and assess whether actors possess an intrinsic and sincere support for democracy, or whether they instead possess a strategic cognitive rationality that supports democracy (Schedler, 2001:75). Attitudinal support for democracy is significant as it provides an indicator of the legitimacy that a democratic regime holds (Schedler, 2001:75). This support stems largely from citizens’ judgment of government performance. If a government is thus democratic, its citizens will as a result have more support for the regime and democracy in return. This kind of support is called Normative Foundations.

Schedler's (2001:76) second attitudinal foundation is classified as Strategic Foundations, which categorises political actors as either democrats (moderates) or antidemocrats (radicals). Democrats and moderates are characteristically actors described as who act to preserve and protect the democratic status quo, whilst antidemocrats are seen as actors of change who wish to alter the current democratic government to an alternative political system (Schedler, 2001:76). The third attitudinal foundation is the Cognitive Foundation, which Schedler (2001:77-78) describes as subjective expectations that are based on the actor's own perceptions of democracy. This can be an actor's perception of how long they think their democracy will last. Most scholars measure democratic consolidation from external observational perspectives (not asking political actors whether they think a democracy will last), and thus it is not a common form of data collection and requires more research into it. This foundational indicator however shall not be applied to this thesis as it would be too great a task to evaluate within the scope of this thesis.

Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan's (2013:124) research shares similar findings that reflect that actors' political preferences are stronger indicators of democratic consolidation or deconsolidation than levels of development or economic performance. According to their findings, actors that have strong normative preferences for democracy, and avoid radical policy stances are more likely to have enduring and strong democracies than actors who have not. Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:125) explain that policy preferences can range from moderate to radical. Political actors develop these preferences over time and are largely influenced by their historical contexts. While these are not necessarily fixed or permanent choices, they are relatively stable preferences. Actors will support or defy their existing regime's preferences based on the influence of both their policy preferences and their normative preferences (intrinsically valuing or supporting a type of regime).

Actors are considered to possess radical policy preferences, when their policy goals are found close toward one side of the political spectrum (far left or far right). If actors demonstrate an intense insistence and urgency in achieving these policy goals (that are not conducive nor representative to the current policy preferences of the regime), they are also considered to have radical policy preferences. When these actors become more extreme, drastic and powerful, political competitiveness becomes more difficult to maintain and support and actors with normative democratic policy preferences as a result might feel more threatened.

When political actors have normative preferences for democracy, they are said to intrinsically and fundamentally value democracy (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126). These actors

are inherently and ideologically devoted and committed to the ideals of democracy. These will be reflected in a willingness to defend these principles, even at an unfavourable cost. An example of this includes accepting an electoral defeat instead of denying or challenging the results. Political actors display this in government when they accept a congressional defeat without manipulating or overriding institutions structures to an outcome that suits their interests. This kind of innate support differs from opportunistic behaviour where policy outcomes are of more value. This is called instrumental rationality or support.

Normative preferences are more conducive to the survival of democracies, as they make competitive regimes more resilient (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126). This kind of support limits intolerable behaviour where actors might overstep procedural and political boundaries to achieve their goals. Instead actors will accept and endure undesired outcomes because they are committed to the belief that democratic principles are legitimate, and thus accept undesired political outcomes to be legitimate too (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126). These ideas are very similar to Schedler's (2001) Strategic Foundations that form part of attitudinal indicator as both articles stress the importance of actors holding internal democratic values that support democratic ideals.

Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan's (2013) findings have shown that above all factors, normative regime preferences the mostly closely linked to regime outcomes (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:132). Structural theories do not explain the policy preferences of actors, however stronger regional democratic environments have proven to increase the stability of competitive regimes. Their research has shown that levels of development and economic performance do not influence the survival or breakdown of a democracy as earlier theorists have argued. Instead, Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:135) argue that democratic regimes have the ability to weather these kinds of challenges (economic decline or) if political actors maintain normative political preferences and policies over radical ones. Actors' normative and intrinsic democratic values are thus very important in developing and shaping a country's political culture which is also influences levels of democratic legitimacy. Diamond (1993) is a scholar that has written extensively on these themes.

Howe (2017:22) also shares similar thoughts along these themes, stating that there exists a link between attitudes for respect for social norms and views and attitudes about the evaluation of democracy. His paper suggests that antisocial and transgressive attitudes greatly influences the growing indifference and disregard for democratic norms and principles (Howe, 2017:24). He does however highlight that individuals who rejected or opposed core elements of democracy

did not in turn necessarily adopted or supported authoritarianism. Instead, these individuals rejected a wide variety of social norms and were accepting and tolerant of numerous antisocial conduct and illegal activity. These people characteristically had a “disorderly” and “tempestuous” manner of thinking and behaving (Howe, 2017:24). Similarly, populists that rejected democratic norms do not always adopt strict authoritarian practises, but instead aim to disrupt the status quo. This growing rejection of democracy alludes to a “social malaise” and social norms needed in a functioning society (Howe, 2017:28).

According to Diamond (1993:7) political culture has been a popular method of studying democracy within many countries in the field of political science, as well as providing a factor with which to measure democratic consolidation. Political culture roughly consists of people’s beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments and evaluations of the political system of a person’s country, as well as including one’s own role within this. According to Diamond (1993:8) individuals’ evaluations of a regime are prone to change more often than their political norms and values, which are more enduring and implanted within a person’s orientations towards a political system.

Analysing the influences and indicators of attitudes and behaviour of individuals and political actors is beneficial as it provides an insight into the kind of political culture a society or group possesses. Diamond (1993:8) states that different social groups often have different political cultures, and thus have varying ideas, attitudes towards and evaluations of a regime or government. Elites within society will have more information and about a political system than other spheres of the population. A country with numerous cultures or ethnic groups will most likely have varying beliefs and attitudes as well. These different beliefs can also be influenced by institutional settings, for example individuals in the military, bureaucracy and university might different beliefs from one another. Diamond (1993:8) states that political culture can be influenced by a number of factors such as institutional change, political socialisation, historical experience, economic and social structural changes, internal factors (such as colonialism) and the habitual running of the political regime itself.

Political culture theories have dated as far back as the era of classical Greek intellectuals. From the works of thinkers such as Aristotle, political culture has provided an important understanding of the themes such moderation, tolerance, extremism and populism that are still present within political life today (Diamond, 1993:10). Scholars have since developed theories that argue that in order for democracy to be functional and resilient, a political culture of moderation, cooperation, bargaining and accommodation must exist for democracy to flourish

and ensures its consolidation. These elements are needed to manage and survive the pervasive challenges of democracy. Scholars also believed that these elements such as moderation and accommodation allow for political tolerance within a society, while also promoting greater acceptance of cultural and social diversity (Diamond, 1993:10). These elements also encouraged a sense of compromise, trust, ideological flexibility and civility within society. Diamond (1993:10) does however stress that these behavioural and attitudinal preferences need to be maintained by society as a whole, and thus not only adopted by political elites and institutions. These ideals and preferences by need to be engrained into the values and beliefs of the population at large.

Another element that Diamond (1993:11) discusses is the concept of pragmatism. Pragmatism is another necessary value that allows for bargaining and compromise, engagement and welcomes new information into the political sphere. The essence of political pragmatism consists of the belief that there is no singular party that holds "absolute truth" on a particular public issue or matter. Pragmatism is thus more flexible to alternative ideas and solutions. When a society displays elements of pragmatism amongst political leaders, the population and its various institutions, it generates an environment of tolerance, policy pragmatism and moderate partisanship (Diamond, 1993:11). If states possess a strong healthy pro-democratic culture, a state will consequently possess high levels of democratic legitimacy.

Diamond (1993:13) states democratic legitimacy needs to be established in two levels, the first as a general principle where democracy should be accepted as the best form of government. The second being an assessment of an individual's own system, where democracy is still accepted despite and shortcomings, failures or disappointments that an individual's regime has experienced within their country. Democratic culture is thus developed over a period of time, allowing citizens to assess their state's economic growth, social reform and ability to maintain law, order, and political stability and uphold the procedures and principles of democracy. Diamond (1993:14) argues that legitimacy is stronger when citizens actively participate in political society behaviourally as well as value participation as a norm attitudinally. When political actors and citizens hold high levels of democratic legitimacy, this consequently strengthens democratic consolidation; if these levels of democratic legitimacy are however low, this will then deconsolidate democracy. These authors have reflected that analysing actors' political preferences and attitudes can help scholars understand whether they intrinsically or normatively value democratic ideals. This will also help in understanding a country's political

culture better, and to evaluate actors' levels of democratic legitimacy towards their government.

### *Structural Foundations*

The third and final indicator that Schedler (2001:80) uses to measure democratic consolidation is the Structural Foundations of democracy. These include any institutional and socioeconomic factors. Theorists studying socio-economic factors focused mainly on economic development and growth, overt and social inequality. While the relationship of structural foundations and democratic consolidation have not always been linear, seen in many Latin American cases, extreme and very dire economic circumstances do have an impact on regime stability (Schedler, 2001:81). Institutional theorists argue that the role of institutional structures can either encourage or discourage democratic behaviour. These intuitions either “reward” certain actors for certain behaviour or punish them (i.e. at the judiciary punishes those who abuse the law).

According to Diamond (2016:83) many emerging market-countries are experiencing a decline of democratic stability and quality due to structural challenges. For African countries, especially seen in South Africa, the biggest problems of democracy have been the degeneration in governance, which have been reflected in the inability of states to control corruption and the abuse of power (Diamond, 2016: 89). The most worrisome challenge that has developed throughout the recessions is the growing decline of democratic efficacy, energy and self-confidence that has been prevalent in the West. Citizens are becoming increasingly sceptical of the capacity of democratic institutions to address issue of established developed states such as infrastructure, dependency ratios, debt burdens and a decline in economic competitiveness (Diamond, 2016:95).

Huntington (1996:4-5) states that the majority of states that have not yet democratised, are mostly countries whose conditions do not favour democracy. The current political challenges that exist in many established democracies today is that they have not successfully reinforced and deepened the promotion of democracy and human rights within their societies (Huntington, 1996:5). This has been evident in Russia, Ukraine, Mexico, and South Africa too. These challenges often originate from problems left behind by their former (often authoritarian) predecessors. In South Africa, this is evident with the many problems left behind after the Apartheid government.

Newer threats in third-wave democracies have stemmed from internal structural factors within society (Huntington, 1996:8). Some of which are often found within the political system

themselves. According to Huntington (1996:8) this has been evident where newly elected leaders and parties are used their positions to manipulate democratic structures for their own benefit and as a result, weakened their democratic systems. In the past authoritarian regimes that attacked democratic governments in coups, aimed at immediately overthrowing the regime and doing away with democracy in one swoop. In present democracies, illiberal political actors aim at eroding democracy and its structures over time, weakening it from the inside (Huntington, 1996:8).

Diamond's (2016:102) research discusses similar structural themes, stating that younger and lower-income democracies are more vulnerable to a decline of democratic legitimacy. However, in countries where governance is bad, where corruption and abuse of power, this will matter more than whether a country's economy is doing well. Political crises (poor governance and government issues) are more important and accurate in predicting the survival of a newer democracy than economic performance. While most Latin American, Asian, Eastern European and African countries have survived as democracies for many years, Diamond (2016:129) stresses that if these countries are not able to reduce their economic inequality, poverty levels and social justice, they might face a democratic breakdown in the medium or long run. Healthy, strong state institutions are vital for these areas to be addressed and improved. Political institutions are needed for economic reform under democratic conditions. Civil Society is just as important in promoting democratic consolidation. The more pluralistic, resourceful, institutionalised and democratic a society is, the better it will balance/regulate the tensions between itself and the state.

These Behavioural, Structural and Attitudinal conditions will be used and applied to investigate how the EFF' political preferences, attitudes and behaviour will affect South Africa's democratic consolidation. This will shed light on themes discussed earlier in this chapter to see whether the EFF is a populist party that poses as a danger to South Africa's democracy. This will ultimately look at whether they are politically tolerant and respectful of other groups within society. This draws on the themes of political pluralism discussed earlier in this chapter. This thesis will also look at the dangers of populism to investigate whether the EFF employs harmful populist tactics such as the simplifying of complex problems and providing simple (and sometimes ineffective) solutions that do not really address the depth of these problems.



## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a discussion of the various conceptualisations and sources of populism. The main conceptualisation of populism has been categorised into five main understandings: populism as politics; populism as ideology; populism as style, populism as “the people”, and populism as movements. The following section explored various sources of populism, namely Domestic and Global social and structural ruptures. This chapter has also discussed the similarities and differences of populism and liberal democracy, and how the balance of minority and majority interests is vital for maintaining pluralism within society. The dangers of populist groups within democracy has also been discussed, which largely focused on populist tactics that undermine democratic procedures and their presentation of short-term, simple (however not always practical and sustainable) policy plans and solutions. The final section of this chapter has looked at various Behavioural, Attitudinal and Structural indicators that will be used and applied to analyse the EFF’s political preferences and behaviour in Chapter Four, which will help to evaluate whether the party poses a threat to South Africa’s democratic consolidation. The following chapter will look specifically at the development of populism in Africa, with special reference to the development of nationalism and socialism within the continent. Chapter Three will also, look at what specific conditions led to the rise of the EFF in South Africa, and what exact characteristics classifies the party as distinctly populist in nature.



## **Chapter 3: Populism in Africa and the Rise of the EFF**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter shall be exploring the development of populism within the African continent. This will be done by discussing how the development of nationalism and socialist ideals provided a conducive context for populism to emerge within the continent. This will be further discussed by looking specifically at how themes of socialism and nationalism within the South African context inspired anti-apartheid resistance movements that were evident in the ANC party, and have been later revived in the discourse of the populist party of the EFF today. This chapter shall also briefly look at the Structural indicators (economic and political factors) that have created a fertile environment for the development of populism in South Africa. The third section within this chapter shall also discuss the EFF as a populist party. This will be explored by looking at the various populist characteristics (discussed in Chapter Two) that are evident in the EFF. Official EFF party documents will be used to discuss this.

### **3.2 Socialism and Nationalism as a conducive context for populism in Africa.**

According to Dikeni (2017) South Africa's current political developments have largely been as a result of growing nationalist and socialist sentiments among citizens and leaders. In order to fully explore the impact of these two dynamics in South Africa today, it is important to understand the historical roots of nationalism within the continent at large. This shall be further discussed by looking at how ideals of socialism have played a significant role alongside nationalism in many African countries.

#### *Nationalism*

According to Ottaway (2010:50-51) nationalism in many colonially historic countries has fluctuated over the years. During the post-World War II and Cold War years, anti-colonial nationalistic sentiments were very strong in developing countries as they struggled for their

independence. This wave of nationalism dwindled in the mid-seventies as most of these states achieved autonomy. Ottaway (2010:51) states that while these countries were adamant in their struggle towards freedom, they never altered the physical and political boundaries that their foreign predecessors previously drew up that divided the land and the many African nations. As a result, many African states suffered from a vulnerability of a lack of a common identity. The period after the Cold War introduced further challenges, as ethnic and religious nationalistic groups within states clashed in their strive for power. In some countries this led to large-scale violence and divided the state even more (Ottaway, 2010:51). This greatly hindered processes of implementing democracy in many of these states.

Mamdani (1990:47) also acknowledges similar points stating that the dichotomous forces of colonial states and nationalism spurred African countries to reach their independence. This gradually happened during the period after the Second World War as more people entered the workforce, and as a result political activity increased. Davidson (1977:41) however, notes that while nationalism did occur in African states, he highlights that two strands of nationalism developed, which also manifested in South Africa's democratic trajectory too. According to Davidson (1977:42) African communities (prior to colonization) were not all alike, as some had kingships, others did not; some were large, others small. Nevertheless, these African communities possessed a "consciousness" as Davidson (1977:42) states, where people had found a sense of belonging in their community. African communities formed the foundation of nationalism many years later as colonised states worked towards independence from colonial forces. The first form of nationalism Davidson (1977:42) states is called or is based on the African model, where African nationalists believed in asserting their nations by being an all-embracing African community (sharing themes of socialism which will be shortly discussed) that was similar to earlier African communities prior to the colonization period.

The second form of nationalism was based on the European model where nationalists following this strand believed that only through the advancement of few (what may be argued as a more capitalist approach) at the expense of many can African states manifest and develop themselves as a nation (Davidson, 1977:43). These two strands of nationalism were very evident in South Africa's early transition to democracy as new democratic leaders and ANC members grappled with liberal and social policy choices after apartheid. Many African states followed the first approach, adopting socialist themes as they forged their new political identities during their struggle for independence. This however did not solve all the challenges that these new states

faced.

According to Thomson (2000:44) demographic and socioeconomic shifts cause grievances and resentment amongst people which is one of the biggest causes of populism to flourish, as there is a lot of pressure on governments and political elites to manage these challenges, to satisfy the interests of the disgruntled people. In Africa political parties have failed to address these grievances of socioeconomic challenges, because for many years their objectives have been largely centred on anticolonial protests. (Thomson, 2000:46). Many early political parties in Africa were very much reliant on foreign aid to strengthen their economies and other various objectives (this was largely due to the fact that industrialisation in Africa occurred later after their independence). Their reliance on outside aid from other developed countries limited their authority and dominance in their political and economic spheres greatly, which often meant that they were unable to cater to many interests of their people (Thomson, 2000:47). There are however a few exceptions seen in Botswana. The majority of the African countries that adopted neoliberal policies influenced by their donors, were not always able to ameliorate the living conditions of the urban poor because of poor governance and mismanagement of resources.

Resnick (2014:48) similarly writes that many dominant parties in countries that were established directly after their democratic transitions, were former liberation movements during the colonial era in Africa. These dominant parties often had a stronghold of support in specific geographical urban areas, and often relied on using nationalistic discourse to unify people in anti-colonial protests. According to Resnick (2014:49) this strong support base made it hard for populists to compete with, however these parties become increasingly personalist in nature, which led to many cases of corruption. It was often difficult to distinguish between the party's identity and objectives from their leader's identity and interests. This increase in corruption gradually diminished support among people, as they felt that their grievances were ignored by the party and its officials. This created an opportunity for populist parties to step in as opposition, which has been evident in cases seen in South Africa and Botswana.

This section has discussed how nationalism played a significant role in unifying people during their transition to independence after colonial rule. For many African countries, the development of nationalism was a method to unite people in achieving political autonomy and independence as a form of anti-colonial protest. It was also used by many politicians to collectively address socioeconomic challenges, whilst fostering unity amongst people. Many African states saw the development of these nationalistic sentiments alongside a rise of socialist ideals, which served as a way for countries to establish themselves as new autonomous and

self-sustaining states. This shall be further discussed below.

### *Socialism*

Socialism has been an appealing option for many African nations since their early phases of independence from colonial rule. Their leaning towards socialism was largely an attempt to become less reliant on help from the West. Capitalism and liberalism were the ideologies of former colonial powers. A shift away from this was arguably a step to restructure their societies and economies in order to pursue development (Thomson, 2000:38). Sklar (1988) has also extensively written on this topic. According to Sklar (1988:3), socialism in Africa has been used as a form of social protest and as political movement by elites, intended to bring change and restoration to African states. Sklar (1988:4) separates these socialist revivals and movements in three phases: Socialism as ethical; socialism as revolutionary and democratic socialism.

According to Sklar (1988:4) socialism and capitalism have existed as two prominent concepts since colonial and anti-colonial thought. Socialist movements in colonial Africa have helped develop nationalist sentiments. To some socialist thinkers, socialism shares themes with African intellectual traditions, and helps encourage community development and cooperation; they simultaneously also believe individual gain through competition does not foster and encourage community growth (Sklar, 1988:4). Socialism to these thinkers restores values and cultural traditions that form part the “spiritual heritage of the African people” (Sklar, 1988:4-5). Socialism is thus more than just a means of advancing growth and development for African people, it provides a way back to restoration of their traditional values, and culture and dignity that African communities were so deprived of during the colonial era.

The second form of socialism that Sklar (1988:5) discusses is called Revolutionary Socialism. Revolutionary socialism in Africa had many ties with Marxist theory that were applied to African social obstacles. These thinkers differed from ethical socialists (who believed modern societies must be built on traditional values), and instead believed that in order to develop their communities, a class struggle was crucial and inevitable. Revolutionary socialists also adopted Leninist principles, such as objectives to represent the interests of individuals by presenting themselves as a people’s vanguard party that fights against the perils of imperialism (Sklar, 1988:5). For Revolutionary socialism to take place however, there must be a well-developed industrial foundation to ignite a working-class revolution. This fundamental industrial basis

has struggled to take root in the African continent, however in South Africa this has not been the case- revolutionary socialism was indeed successful as a means of fighting racial capitalism during the apartheid regime according to Sklar (1988:5). Revolutionary socialism during this time was not only a class struggle but it was also a method for some liberation movements and individuals to reaffirm the identity of those oppressed by racism. This method of socialism was not only a revolution of class, but also had many roots in the theory of black consciousness (Sklar, 1988:6.)

Democratic socialism, the third type of socialism that Sklar (1988:8) introduces, is an unusual combination of capitalist, socialist and democratic ideas. Sklar (1988:9) states that fundamentally this kind of theory is neither explicitly socialist, capitalist nor democratic but instead statist in nature, and in most cases constitutionalist. This too has been very evident in South Africa, especially seen in apartheid with the organised black labour movement. Trade unions such as COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and NACTU (National Council of Trade Unions) share threads of socialist democratic ideas as seen in the Freedom Charter of 1955, that advocated public ownership of banks, mines and monopoly industry and supported political democracy.

According to Sklar (1988:14) there are few socialist supporters that choose its developmental qualities and success over those of capitalism, however many of these socialists are very critical of the exploitation, privilege and domination that accompanies capitalism, and this views it to be morally inferior to that of socialist characteristics. It is perhaps for this very reason that Leftist socialist movements, particularly seen in the EFF, have managed to gain such momentous support by playing on the corruptness of the political elite, and often with that the abuses of capitalism.

Despite its seemingly moral strengths, socialism has seen a number of challenges in African countries. One being that socialism does not possess a sufficient theory of incentives for workers and managers (Sklar, 1988:15). Coercion and moral persuasion have not proven to be successful in pushing people for development and production as much as the success of capitalism does. A second challenge that some countries have faced is that they had very little private capital compared to industrialised socialists of the West. For this reason, some capital-scarce African socialists become very statist in nature (Sklar, 1988:15).

Thomson (2000:84) has also noted similar challenges, stating that socialism was not well suited for the African continent as its roots were envisaged and developed in the Soviet. Thompson (2000:84-85) stresses that the conditions and terrain in which socialism was created differs

largely to the African continent. Africa did not experience a complete capitalist transformation in its modes of production, which meant that there were uneven levels of industrialisation among various countries. Without a large, booming industrial foundation, many African states lacked a working, proletariat class to form the basis of a socialist emergence (Thomson, 2000:38). Applying socialism to Africa was a difficult process alone as the continent has a variety of social structures, often including traditional tribal structures that is unique to the continent, and each country (Thomson, 2000:96).

There are relatively good examples however, seen in Zambia and Ghana which produced more industrial levels in their society and consequently a working-class consciousness developed (Thomson, 2000:90). These workers however were more of a type of “aristocracy of labour” than a proletariat class as Thomson (2000:90) states. South Africa is the best example of an emergence of a social consciousness of the working class, which was seen during the apartheid era which involved its trade unions. This was because South Africa was the only African economy that experienced an “industrial revolution”. Socialism in Africa was largely used to recover traditional values that were lost or under threat to colonial histories across the continent (Thomson, 2000:39). It was a way for African states to promote dignity, alleviate economic and social burdens and create an independent order for their countries to flourish in. Many years later, the EFF is reviving the fragments of socialism and black consciousness to address new problems of poor governance and economic decline that many young black citizens are experiencing.

This section has discussed how interwoven socialist and nationalist developments were for many African countries in their journey to independence. These ideals were ways for countries to restore dignity and self-reliance to their people. Similar patterns were seen in South Africa too.

### **3.3 Understanding the conditions making South Africa ripe for populism**

#### **3.3.1 The Development of nationalism and socialism in South Africa**

According to Dikeni (2017:17) nationalism is a reactive kind of politics that was largely aimed at addressing colonial rule, as already discussed. It was deterministic in nature and had strong economic objectives and aimed to repair the internal collapse of societal organisation that was

broken down by colonial rule. Its determined and resolute nature often contained elements of extremism and xenophobia as a result. This was also partly due to the reason that it aimed at homogenising all societal groups within the colonies to gain strength and unify people. Nationalistic thinkers believed that capitalism was the root of their societal break down, as it created income imbalances and therefore caused disunity amongst people. Their objectives through nationalism was thus not just a means to distribute equal wealth, maintain balance, but also to consolidate people (Dikeni, 2017:17). According to Dikeni (2017) these political developments were present in South Africa too.

As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, socialism and nationalism developed as ideals that were used by many African states to establish themselves as independent states. In South Africa, similar examples have been seen. According to Dikeni (2017:8) nationalism in South Africa had a very strong Marxist influences during apartheid, which was seen with the formation and development of group such as the SACP (South African Communist Party), the ANC (African National Congress) and the COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) (Dikeni, 2017:8). Gumede (2006) also writes extensively on how nationalism and socialism influenced political developments in South Africa.

During apartheid the development of nationalism and socialism was particularly evident in the ANC's attempts to form economic and social policies that were largely influenced by the socialist ideologies and practices of the Soviet Union. The Freedom Charter of 1955 reflected these ideals and guided the ANC's political objectives for many years including economic plans to nationalise major banks and mines, to undertake and address the challenges of inequality that was introduced with the apartheid government (Gumede, 2006:75). As a result, many ANC leaders associated capitalism with the apartheid government, and were starkly opposed to neo-liberal economic policies. Later in the period of the Cold War these opposing ideologies of socialism and capitalism faced greater conflict when Nelson Mandela began negotiations with various significant Afrikaans businessmen and politicians, in an attempt to transition to a democratic state and end apartheid by placing pressure the National Party (NP) government from within (Gumede, 2006:70). When the Soviet Union collapsed Thabo Mbeki (who would later become Mandela's successor) urged Mandela and the ANC to adopt more moderate, "Western friendly", neo-liberal economic strategies.

International economic institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) advised Mandela that that in order for South Africa to integrate into the new global economy, the ANC had to change course from their socialist strategies. Mandela was also



advised by Chinese and Vietnamese leaders who also later adopted more private market strategies to rebuild their states, to follow Mbeki's advice. Some ANC leaders had strong opposing sentiments and still continued to advance the revolutionary ideals of Umkhonto we Sizwe while Mandela continued negotiations. Mandela however realised that in order for the international community to recognise their new democratic South Africa, the ANC's policies would have to resemble those of Germany, Britain and the United States (US) (Gumede, 2006:76). South Africa's transition to neo-liberal policies however were met with many challenges.

According to Bernstein (2002) during Apartheid, South Africa failed to integrate new technologies and management practices that accompanied the early globalisation phases. Its isolationist practices hindered its development to modernisation. With the first democratic elections however, this soon changed as South Africa sought to establish itself in the global economy (Bernstein, 2002:187). New policies were implemented in an attempt to catch up with the rest of the world and aimed to address the many socioeconomic problems that were left after apartheid. This was done by addressing economic and racial inequality and unemployment, by implementing policies such as BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) and Affirmative Action policies. Whilst these policies genuinely aimed to solve these new challenges within South Africa's democracy, they reflected a narrow style of thinking that some political leaders possessed, that were largely characterised by ideals of tribalism, nationalism and homogenising the diverse spheres within the democratic society (Dikeni, 2017:18). These programs failed to fully address economic and identity challenges of many citizens, and instead only helped small elite groups within society.

Diamond (2016:190) also writes that many African states, like South Africa, that have expanded at such a stealthy rate in their post-dependence periods, have done so largely due to their enormous desire and determination to achieve speedy development. As African states became independent and aware of the large gap between their own living standards compared to more established, older developed countries, they strived to push for socioeconomic development and progress. Diamond (2016:190) states that countries whose government were very involved in the development process, influencing its economic and social policies, have often resulted in the misuse of state resources and power. Corrupt officials who had control over economic policies often used their power to serve their own interests above the needs of the country.

These developmental challenges in South Africa's post democratic transition period, failed to



fully address at the obstacles that were left after apartheid. Halisi (1998:425) states that while there has been a considerable development in the black bourgeoisie, there is still a vast majority of black South Africans that are continuously battling with challenges that are a result of past apartheid policies. As a consequence of this, South African society has seen an emergence of racial, ethnic and class populism on one side, with liberal, non-racial citizenship on the other. Populism has therefore been used as a method to respond to the increasing distrust and pessimism towards liberal and capitalism with the accompanying democratic transition (Halisi, 1998:425-426).

According to Halisi (1998), South Africa has witnessed two forms of populism, these are “nationalist populism” and “Socialist populism”. Nationalist populism has been used as a means to overcome class differences and instead create a strong union of national, multiracial and ethnic identity. Socialist populism is comprised in the belief that in order to address and fix challenges of racial and ethnic conflict, capitalism must be ended (Halisi, 1998:426). One idea that developed during the eighties that encompasses themes of both socialist and nationalist populism is the idea of “racial capitalism”. Racial capitalism is the belief that racism and capitalism have been so entwined during Apartheid that it is too big a challenge for a non-racial democracy to prosper and function with capitalist constructs (Halisi, 1998:427).

According to Halisi (1998:428) there has been a rise of two groups within black communities, which is relatively evident within the ANC still today, this divide is characterised by a black republican, racial autonomous group, and the second representing a multiracial union. These two groups have created a “race-conscious populism” that exists within the ANC (Halisi, 1998:431). Black republicanism originates from South Africa’s segregation history where an empowered black racial identity was emphasized and created with the help of institutions (Halisi, 1998:434). While the division between black republicanism and a multiracial union exists, they are not so separated in practise, and their differences are often blurred (Halisi, 1998:435). Black republicanism as however has placed a great emphasis on:

*“...communal virtues of African people, while multiracial unionists have concentrated in a fusion of group and individual interests that transcend the confines of mere race consciousness and non-racial discourse”* (Halisi, 1998:435).

This promotion of race consciousness and empowerment that served as a populist movement for threatened black communities, and a response to South Africa’s old Apartheid government

still exists in the years that followed the country's transition to democracy. When communities and groups of people feel that they are in a vulnerable position of being powerless, they are likely to turn to a "hyper authenticity" of identity as a means of overcoming this threatened state (Halisi, 1998:432), which will be expanded on later in this section.

According to Dikeni (2017:19) the dominant form of populist development in South Africa today is Revolutionary populism. Revolutionary populism builds an idealised understanding and view of the people, and rejects and opposes elitism, progress and similar political institutions. They support charismatic leaders who allegedly represent the will of the people. The aim of revolutionary populists is to take over the power of elites for and by the people. In South Africa today, this kind of populism has been seen in the formation of the political party the EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters), the BLF movement (Black First Land First), the Decolonisation Foundation and the BMF (Black Management Forum) (Dikeni, 2017:19).

These scholars have discussed how developments of nationalism and socialism that were prevalent in Africa after their independence are seen in the South African context too. For some political organisations such as the ANC, nationalism and socialism were used as methods of resistance against the apartheid government. Some anti-apartheid activists and thinkers, equated capitalism with the economic and political models of the apartheid regime. During South Africa's transition to democracy, especially during the period of the Cold War, socialist and nationalist themes were also used as a means to re-establish South Africa within the continent. South Africa however adopted more neo-liberal models and policies that resembled economic examples of the West, in an attempt to integrate with the global economy. Despite these new policies, South Africa still had many socio-economic challenges, which led to the development of nationalist and socialist populism (Halisi, 1998). The development of nationalism and socialism within South Africa has created fertile conditions for populism to flourish today. This will be elaborated on by discussing the current socio-economic and political challenges that South Africa faces.

### **3.3.2 Economic and Political Conditions that have led to the rise of the EFF**

As discussed in Chapter 2, this section will thus briefly touch on what Schedler (2001:80) states as Structural Indicators for measuring democratic consolidation, which consists of institutional and socioeconomic factors that lead to democratic consolidation. This will be done by discussing how poor socio-economic conditions within South Africa have led to citizens

becoming increasingly resentful and discontent with the ANC government, and have led to the rise of the EFF.

Gumede (2013:21) states that democracy within South Africa is experiencing numerous problems, many of them resting in the hands of the elite. This is particularly evident within the internal elections that leaders are appointed into power in the current ANC government. According to Gumede (2013:21-22) when undemocratic leaders are appointed into high positions, they threaten the country's political system, efforts in nation building and upholding democratic processes and institutions, as these leaders are not of a suitable quality to lead. This also means leaders that do however possess the capable skills and characteristics to govern, never find the opportunity to be in a position to govern effectively. This disregard and abuse of democratic power has resulted in many citizens feeling a sense of betrayal and discontent towards the former President Zuma and the current ANC government.

Patterns of protests among youths within South African society, in particular areas such as townships and shack settlements, reflect the anger, disappointment and feelings of resentment and betrayal towards the ANC (Dawson, 2014:862). According to Dawson (2014:862) protests by "youths" are paramount to understanding the context of South Africa's current political climate. The youth comprise a large part of the population that reflect the constant battle of unemployment, and as Dawson (2014:862) puts it "the *politicisation of everyday life, which predispose youth towards oppositional politics.*" South Africa is one of the most urbanised countries on the continent, with roughly sixty percent of its population living in urban areas according to data from 2005 (Resnick, 2014; 199). The remnants of the history of apartheid, such as inequality, unemployment and poverty, are still issues that the majority of the South African population still struggle with today. Unemployment rates today is as high as twenty six percent and the Gini coefficient (income inequality) has hovered around 0.68 percent since 2015 (Statssa, 2018). South Africa's has been battling to fight these figures with accompanying housing shortage challenges, with a backlog of roughly two million houses to still be built as people wait continuously on delayed lists (Nieftagodien, 2015:23).

It is under these conditions that many young black individuals become more marginalised, seeing no sign of any immediate, potential growth. As a result, political protests take place in these suffering areas. According to statistics, the number of recorded protests that occurred before the Marikana Massacre reached up to roughly six thousand in just a few years (Nieftagodien, 2015:23). These protests were namely to do with service delivery, access to basic needs such as education and anti-retroviral medicines, as well as protests against

privatisation and the commodification of basic goods and services (Nieftagodien, 2015:23) Service delivery protests against government municipalities have increasingly become a method of political activism and representation. Since 2004, protest for service delivery has made up to nine percent of the total recorded protests, with the most occurring in the Eastern Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal (Municipal IQ, 2018).

While many of these dire socio-political challenges are very real, South Africans have a very materialistic idea of democracy and what constitutes as democratic legitimacy. According to data from 2006 to 2013, levels of perceptions of government performance have slowly declined (De Jager and Steenkekamp, 2018:160-161). This decline of support is largely due to the fact that South Africa's developmental needs have not fully been met since its democratic transition in 1994. As a result, many South Africans' orientations place a higher value on materialist and pre-materialist goods (De Jager and Steenkekamp, 2018:61). South Africans therefore greatly value their economic needs (shelter, clothing, sanitation and access to education etc.). Government performance is thus declining, because citizens feel that their (material) expectations are not being met. This data is significant to consider, as citizens' understanding of democracy in South Africa is very materialistic in nature, and thus what they perceive and expect democracy should provide, are actually promises and expectations that politicians have made to people. When South African citizens do not receive these economic and material goods, they perceive democracy to be illegitimate, because they see their government and politicians to have poor performance. Declining support in government thus affects the support and legitimacy of institutions as well as a decline in support for a democratic regime. It is thus important to note, that while the country faces many real problems and challenges, citizens' "limited" and materialistic understanding of democracy, has also led to a stark decline in support for democracy amongst many marginalised youths of South Africa.

Youths in this context refers to young, poor and unemployed black individuals that are facing and aspiring to paths of "adulthood". However due to lack of education, amenities and employment opportunities, these individuals are unable to attain these needs and desires keeping them trapped within their poor socio-economic circumstances. Many of these citizens have consequently found themselves in a period of "social navigation" where individuals while being relatively marginalised from society and their needs, aspire and take a course of action to meet these needs and escape their frustrating period of "waiting" and uncertainty towards the future (Dawson, 2014:863-864). Many of these protests are symbolic for some of the protestors, to continue fighting for rights and interests that previous generations within society

fought for during Apartheid (Dawson, 2014:872-873). One of the most evident examples of this which Dawson (2014:874) has analysed were the 2011 protests in Zanspruit. Julius Malema was an active speaker with many of the protesting youths in Zanspruit, representing the perfect example of a man from a poor-socio economic background that transcended his limiting circumstances and achieved wealth and power (Dawson, 2014:874).

According to Dawson (2014:880) the ANC provided an allegiance for many South African youths wanting to overcome limiting socio-economic obstacles, however with the growth of recent protests, these once loyal attitudes have taken a sharp decline in some youths. For many, the ANC is seen as a party that has lost the trust of many of its supporters, and the decline in election votes reflect that. The ANC's support in elections have witnessed an increasing decline over the years. In 2006 the ANC won 64.8% of the votes, this decreased to 62% in 2011 and 54% in 2016 (Bisseker, 2017:13). Spaces of local participation that once provided individuals with representation, have led a large portion of citizens to take up protests as an articulation of the dissatisfaction and disappointment felt towards the ANC. Zuma's political support faced a sharper decline with Malema's growing rebellion against him with the support of the ANCYL. Malema's strong nationalistic penchant led him to a course of challenging Zuma's legitimacy, power and interests within the ANC (Hart, 2013:208). Malema's goal was to continue the National Democratic Revolution as a prerequisite step towards political and economic freedom for many South Africans that were being ignored by former President Zuma, whose sentiments were reflected with the development of the Marikana Massacre of 2012 (Hart, 2013:209). It was in this environment of political breakdown and dire economic living standards for the black majority that allowed the EFF's populist alternative to flourish.

These dire economic conditions combined with poor and corrupt governance have made up the Structural indicators that Schedler (2001:80) states causes instability within democratic regimes, and thus weakens democratic consolidation. This has been seen in discontent citizens' search for alternative political representation in the EFF.

### **3.3.3 The Rise of the EFF**

According to Shivambu and Smith (2014:6-7) the ANCYL was crucial for the foundation and development of the EFF. Dating back to leaders that represented more radical and transformative preferences within the ANC, such as leaders like Nelson Mandela, Mxolisi

Majombozi, Walter Sisulu and Robert Sobukwe, the ANCYL remains a voice within the ANCY that promotes a style of politics that is militant and progressive in a radical sense. Under the leadership and guidance of Malema, the ANCYL embarked on a journey that aimed at continuing a struggle for economic freedom and access to quality education as outlined in the Freedom Charter, which previous ANC leaders had fought for (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:10).

It was already in these early stages within the ANCYL under Malema, that discussions for nationalisation of mines were seen as initial steps towards these economic, transformation goals. However senior ANC members in meetings and conferences such as the ANC National General Council (NGC) that took place in 2011, rejected these economic proposals in attempts to keep private, overseas investors assured of their financial relationships with South Africa. Despite the various efforts undertaken by Malema: proposals, programs and conferences such as the State Involvement in the Minerals Industry proposal, the Twenty-Fourth National Congress of the ANCYL conference in 2011 and the Economic Transformation Commission, Malema and a few of his “die hard” ANC supporters’ dreams of economic and political transformation were ignored, and he with a few others were expelled from the ANC (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:15-20). Malema’s expulsion however did not waver his conviction, and thus the Economic Freedom Fighters were formed on the 26th July 2013.

The EFF’s participation in the 2014 general elections, proved them to be a growing opposition party in the provinces of Limpopo and North West. The EFF presented itself as a threat to the ANC with its successful media coverage and fluid branch structuring (Robinson, 2014:73). While many people believed Julius Malema’s role in South African politics had reached its end, to the disbelief of many he rose from the ashes of his ANCYL expulsion, and won the hearts of many young, striving black citizens learning from past ANC mistakes and bringing about a new wave of change. This was first done by absorbing many left ANC party leaders that felt that the current government was not adhering to and fulfilling the outlines of the Freedom Charter and Constitution. It provided an alternative for ANC members when internal party conflict resolution was not viable (Robinson, 2014:73-75).

The EFF presented itself as the party that could deliver the promises that the ANC could not, introducing itself as the “underdog” (Robinson, 2014:73) that comprised of leaders from various backgrounds from struggle activists and smaller parties. Some of these parties included the Members of Socialist Party of Azania as well as the Black Consciousness Party. It also received much support from the National Congress of Trade Unions, and with this, the EFF enforced its image and message of fighting and representing the struggling, economic needs of

many South Africans. (Robinson, 2014:76). The EFF is a party based in explicit leftist ideology, formed by Julius Malema with the help of former African National Congress members such as Floyd Shivambu, who served as the ANC's spokesperson. Events such as the Marikana Massacre however proved to be a real starting point for the Malema as a leader, when he gained the trust and admiration of many of the victims and their families (Nieftagodien, 2015:446).

The party has established itself as strong advocates of Marxist, Leninist and Fanonian ideologies, gaining the loyal support of many South African citizens with policies of nationalisation of mines, nationalisation of land without compensation and promises of development programs in areas of industrialisation (Nieftagodien, 2015:447). The party was able to gain a considerable amount of followers of young, poor unemployed individuals across the country with its Pan-Africanist attitudes, support for LGBTI rights, and its revisionist policies on land and economic reform (Nieftagodien, 2015:447). According to Mkandawire (2011:31-32) it is within challenging socio-economic and political conditions, where sentiments of "missed opportunities" are prevalent, that Pan-Africanist ideals develop amongst individuals as a response to their everyday obstacles and acts as a method to preserve their sovereignty and identity and promote economic (Mkandawire, 2011:32-45). These Pan-Africanist ideals within many South African individuals experienced a wave of renewal under the leadership and influence of Julius Malema and the EFF.

According to Nieftagodien (2011:448) while the EFF have become a source of much debate and spectacle, creating an uneasiness for what may take place in the future among speculators, it is forgotten that the EFF are but a by-product of South Africa's political and economic current environment. Malema's involvement after the Marikana Massacre, the separation of NUMSA (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa) and the ANC, along with the ever-present socio-economic challenges of those in poverty within the country, have shaped the party as we know it today (Nieftagodien, 2015:448). The EFF ultimately symbolises the many socio-economic struggles that a large population of young South African citizens are facing with these events and similar ones that have occurred across the country. The party has in a way made use of these events, to shape its identity and appeal to those whose ideologies it embodies. The EFF have given a voice to many young black people who feel disenchanting and disappointed by the neoliberal, democratic society in which they live, and unified them to stand behind a leader who promises them a future of change.

According to Mbete's analysis (2014:38) the EFF has been created out of threatening



circumstances and crises. This refers to the deepening feelings of dissatisfaction towards South Africa's political elite and socio-economic environment, with particular reference to youth protests and crises events such as the Marikana Massacre as discussed earlier. The EFF's populist style comes into play through its tactics and methods of simplifying and radicalising political debates and discourse in society.

### **3. 4 The EFF's populist characteristics**

Mbete's (2016:598) analysis of the EFF interprets and classifies the EFF as a populist party. Three key features that Mbete mentions is firstly their appeal to the people. This will be elaborated on further in this chapter. Secondly, their "use of crises and breakdown" (Mbete, 2016:598) which was evident in the EFF's use of the Marikana massacre and the Nkandla scandal to gain support against former President Zuma. According to Mbete (2016:598) these government "breakdowns" allows the EFF promote their own populist, radical solutions and simplify the complexities of the political debate. The third feature that Mbete (2016:598) uses to classify the EFF as a populist party are their "bad manners" which refers to their dismissal of behaving within the realms of democratic norms, institutions and rules. Mbete's (2016:598) observations are by no means inaccurate, however this evaluation is not extensive enough in fully unpacking the details of this phenomenon. Using literature from Chapter Two, this next section of the chapter will discuss the various elements and characteristics of the EFF that are arguably populist in nature.

The main characteristics that were discussed in Chapter Two looked at: populism as politics; populism as ideology; populism as style; populism as "the people" and populism as political movement. These core conceptualisations and characteristics of populism will be used and applied to analyse the EFF's political discourse to see what characteristics display themes of populism. This shall be done by looking at the EFF's Founding Manifesto (2013), the Election Manifesto (2016), their Constitution (2013), their National People's Assembly Document (2014) and a book written by the party's Deputy President, Floyd Shivambu (2014).



### **3.4.1 Political Entrepreneurs and Defenders of “The people”**

According to Panizza (2005:28) populists gain support by siding with dissatisfied and discontent individuals (or “the people”) by using antagonism as a foundation to rally up people. They establish themselves as grass-root parties claiming to support the needs and interests of the people. The EFF demonstrate these characteristics by presenting themselves a vanguard workers party, that fights for the marginalised and economically challenged young individuals. Mngxitama (2011: 5-6) writes that Malema understands the resentment, anger and discontent of the majority of black citizens, and steps into the political “vacuum” that exists in society and creates himself into a “warrior” for all the people, fending for their political needs. This is reiterated in their Economic Freedom Fighters Central Command Press Statement of 2013: “*The EFF will be the vanguard of community and worker’s struggles and will always be on the side of the people* (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:61). In this quote the EFF refer to common socialist terms seen in their use of the “worker’s struggles”. The EFF are stating that they represent the proletariat or working class, that are the foundation of a socialist revolution. They are presenting themselves as a “vanguard” party; serving as a political, socialist alternative for “the people”. This quote demonstrates how the party aligns itself with the people who do not form part of the elite. They represent the workers and aim to address their “struggles” and challenges.

In another example referring to a statement made during the “Great March for Economic Freedom” in 2011, a march according to Shivambu and Smith (2014:33) inspired the formation of the EFF and the “revolution”: “*We come here as Economic Freedom Fighters carrying the burden of the millions of the economically excluded, subjugated, oppressed, exploited and depressed South Africans in the Economic Freedom Mass Action under the leadership of the ANCYL ....*”. Here the EFF are pinpointing exactly who the masses are that the party supports and fights for. They are all the citizens facing dire economic circumstances and who as a result have become the “depressed” South Africans of the population. Their emotional awareness and sympathy to these individuals is what allows them to identify themselves with this group of people and claim to be the ones listening to their grievances and acting as their voice in a political society that has become deaf to their pleas.

Furthermore, the EFF have built their identity as being the next generation of fighters that follow the paths carried out by former struggle leaders of the past: “*The first generation are those that resisted colonial occupation, followed by those that fought against colonial*

*expansion, followed by those that fought against dispossession, followed by those who fought for inclusion, and we, the EFF, are a generation that is fighting for the return of the land, the wealth and all it brings to the rightful owners.”* (What are the EFF, 2013).

The EFF have gained the support of masses of marginalised and discontent youths by presenting themselves as their defenders. They understand the sentiments of frustration and betrayal that many individuals are facing, (feelings that span generations and derive from injustices from many years of South African history) and place themselves a political organisation that shares their grievances and work on behalf of their interests. These examples demonstrate how the EFF align themselves as part of “the people”.

### **3.4.2 Against the status quo: opposing ideologies and policies of the current regime**

According to Jensen (2011:82) a characteristic of populists is identifiable in their presentation of an alternative form of politics. Populists do not follow a specific ideology; however, their alternative political objectives and rhetoric are largely influenced by their unique historical context. As a result, their ideologies and policies can be found on either side of the political spectrum. The EFF reflect this populist characteristic which is seen in their rejection of democratic norms established in South Africa, and their promotion of far-Left policies. They are therefore characterised as an alternative to the current political status quo. These characteristics will look at their rejection of democratic norms (political status quo) and their promotion of socialism.

#### *Rejection of the Status quo*

The EFF successfully won 6.3 percent of the votes in the national elections, taking twenty-five seats in the National Assembly and establishing itself as an official opposition party in the North West and Limpopo (2016:596). The party’s success steadily improved in the municipal elections of 2016 where they won 8.2 percent. Their political conduct during this early period was largely characterised by unwavering activism against the ANC government and its leadership under former President Jacob Zuma. The EFF were constantly protesting against Zuma with reference to his felonious affairs such as the Nkandla scandal, the Gupta scandal

and the “state capture” predicament of the government (Mbete, 2016:597). Their political tactics and strategies were habitually disruptive and undisciplined which was evident in their disorderly behaviour in parliament, when they were forcibly removed from the National Assembly on numerous occasions as a result (Mbete, 2016:597). Booyesen (2015:222) similarly writes that a large part of the EFF’s early political behaviour have evolved around displaying itself as stark opposition of Jacob Zuma, prioritising the attack on all of the former President and the ANC governments weaknesses. The EFF’s open defiance and continuous attack of the former President Zuma is a populist trait of going against the status quo and displaying strong anarchic sentiments associated with populist parties seen in the literature from the previous chapter.

The EFF also presents itself as a party with alternative political and economic solutions to that of the current regime, which is observable in their strong support of socialism and anti-capitalist sentiments. This is apparent throughout all their official party documents. An example of this is seen in their Founding Constitution:

*“The EFF is a **radical, Left, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement** with an internationalist outlook... The EFF subscribes to the **Marxist-Leninist and Fanonian schools of thought** on its analysis of the State, imperialism, class and race contradictions in every society. Through organic engagement and constant relationship with the masses, **Economic Freedom Fighters provide clear and cogent alternatives to the post-colonial economic systems**, which in many countries kept the oppressed people under colonial domination and suppression.”* (Founding Manifesto, 2014).

The EFF are explicitly stating that they are “cogent alternatives” to the current economic and political systems. Their promotion of socialist practices and ideology is not coherent and consistent with the current liberal, capitalist and democratic (political and economic) practises that are prevalent in South Africa today. The party’s stark opposition to capitalism is rooted in a resentment that dates back to previous ANC resistance of capitalism (ANC leaders equated capitalism with the NP government as discussed earlier with reference to Gumede [2006]). This is a core characteristic of the populist party which attempts to address very real challenges by manipulating current market trends and economic policies as the enemy of “the people, which the EFF describes as keeping people “oppressed” under “*colonial domination and suppression*” (Founding Manifesto, 2014). Current economic challenges however, have larger more complex factors to consider. This is a populist tactic employed by the EFF to simplify a complex issue

(unemployment or poverty), while simultaneously creating an “enemy” of capitalism to resist and attack. They are therefore arguably a political and economic alternative party that opposes the current regime within South Africa.

### *Socialism*

The EFF builds its policies on leftist principles inspired by Marxist and Leninist thought. This is evident in the party’s socialist policies and radical militant rhetoric and character. This has been outlined within their 2014 Constitution by a seven-point plan otherwise known as their Seven Non-Negotiable Cardinal Pillars. This includes expropriation of South Africa’s land without compensation for equal distribution; the nationalisation of mines; banks and other strategic sectors of the economy; the building of the State and government capacity and abolishment of Tenders; the provision of free quality education, healthcare, houses and sanitation; large scale development of protected industrialisation to create millions of sustainable jobs; the creation of an open and accountable government and society, and massive development in the economy that promotes a shift from reconciliation to justice practices (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:84). These cardinal pillars seem to be a genuine appeal to improve the country’s socio-economic challenges and a method to spread the party’s political beliefs without force.

The EFF is not mistaken in recognising genuine problems and obstacles that the South African government is failing to address, however their plan in doing so lacks to grasp the complexity of the nature of the challenges that the country faces. The nationalisation of South Africa’s resources was a plan envisioned by previous radical, leftist ANC leaders during apartheid. The government however as abandoned those policies to integrate with the rest of the worlds’ economies which predominantly follow capitalist, neo-liberal models. The EFF’s advocacy for socialist policies such as nationalisation is a simplification of a more complex economic problem that needs to be addressed. A crucial feature of the EFF’s socialist path is that it discourages pluralism and political tolerance. Socialist policies and principles followed by the EFF are not conducive to democratic consolidation either as they are radical, intolerant, militant in nature. This is evident in the quotes below:

*“Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) as a revolutionary movement engaged in the struggle for economic liberation has its roots in the struggle of the working class, those who do not own the means of production, inclusive of the unemployed, underemployed and the poor in South Africa. Any political formation or individual who believed that they hold the copyright to the*

*struggle for economic emancipation is disingenuous, disrespectful and misleading, and also misreads the dynamic and dialectical nature and character of political struggles.* (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:1).

Within this text the EFF are dismissive of any political alternative that strives towards “economic emancipation” or similar efforts. This is arguably anti-pluralist as the party is intolerable of alternative political ideas and organisations. Anyone or any other group is branded as “misleading” or “disingenuous”, suggesting that the only “true” and “effective” organisation is the EFF. Socialism in the past has proven to be intolerant and dogmatic in nature, and while the EFF claim that they do not impose on the freedom of others, other themes within their guiding documents say otherwise: *“The EFF does not subscribe to despotism and will not in the socialist transformation of society cling to a one-party state and cult of personalities, because history has cogently illustrated that this undermines the freedom and rights of the very same people the revolution seeks to liberate”* (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:84). While this seems to be a genuine appeal to spread their political beliefs without force, other times their militancy overrides their ideals:

*“The EFF’s revolutionary programme will always be rooted in mass organisation and activism, **superior logic** and taking the people along. The EFF will never forcefully impose its programme on the majority against their will, and will practically and physically resist any political party, movement and individual who imposes their narrow wishes on the majority the imposition of narrow wishes can happen through closing of the democratic space, suppression of mass protests, and rigging of elections. **Anyone who engages in these undemocratic and immoral activities will face the wrath of the masses under the political leadership and guidance of the EFF.**”* (Manifesto, 2016: 1).

And

*“The EFF’s contestation of political power through elections should however not be mistaken with our **revolutionary determination to remove the current government by any other revolutionary means.** The Constitution of the EFF, which is our base document says the primary aim of the EFF is to. **“To capture political and state power through whatever revolutionary means possible to transform the economy for the benefit of all, in particular Africans”.** That this is number 1 aim and objective of the EFF is important, and reflects the*

*organisation's commitment to revolutionary change."*

(Manifesto, 2016:1).

In addition, during an Al Jazeera interview, Malema said he would remove the government with the barrel of a gun (Al Jazeera, 2016). This specific incident will be discussed in Chapter Four, however it is arguably populist in nature as it is characteristically violent and radical in nature (Schedler, 2001), but it is also undemocratic as it does not foster political tolerance and competition needed within a balanced pluralistic society.

In an address to the ANCYL in 2008 Malema (advocated nationalisation inspired by the Freedom Charter) made a statement that years later the EFF still uphold discussed in Shivambu and Smith's (2014:34) book: "*We should particularly emphasise and remind ourselves that "no government [and we add, no leadership of a liberation movement] can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people"*". The EFF continue to believe that they are the true voice for "the people". The texts that have been presented reflect a narrow, unwavering and intolerant political attitude of the EFF. These are indeed populist traits evident in the EFF's discourse.

This contradictory rhetoric is a recurring theme that characterises the EFF's discourse and behaviour which will be discussed in Chapter Four as well. On one hand the EFF seem genuine that they do not want to force or impose their views on any individual, yet on the other they are resolute that the only way to achieve economic emancipation as they put it, is to use any revolutionary means it takes to be rid of the current government, in order to implement their socialist policies, and anyone who does not agree with this is immoral, disingenuous.

### **3.4.3 Political symbolism and nostalgia**

Another popular tactic that populist groups use is seen in their tactics to moralise politics. According to Moffit and Tormey (2014:384) populist groups gain support using moralising tactics to divide society into "good" and "bad" sides. Populists claim to represent and defend the interests of the "innocent", "moral" and "good" public, against the "evils" of elites. They unite people together by playing on people's emotional sentiments and shared experiences of injustice and dissatisfaction. This is a tactic often used by the EFF in their attempt to stir crowds, which is seen in his emotive rhetoric and use of political symbolism and nostalgia

### *Political Symbolism*

Another popular tactic that populist groups use is seen in their tactics to moralise politics. According to Moffit and Tormey (2014:384) populist groups gain support using moralising tactics to divide society into “good” and “bad” sides. Populists claim to represent and defend the interests of the “innocent”, “moral” and “good” public, against the “evils” of elites. They unite people together by playing on people’s emotional sentiments and shared experiences of injustice and dissatisfaction. This is a tactic often used by the EFF in their attempt to stir crowds, which is seen in his emotive rhetoric and use of political symbolism and nostalgia.

A large part of Malema’s political charisma, and the EFF’s appeal to the people lies in his reinvigoration and revival of a resistance and struggle spirit that mimics those of anti-apartheid activists from a previous generation. South Africa is indeed still facing many challenges such as inequality (both economic and racial), unemployment and poverty, the EFF draws their support by tapping into a “nationalist nerve” of many marginalised and disadvantaged, young South Africans. Despite calling out the ANC for gaining support by using the legacy of apartheid activists, the EFF makes use of this very same tactic: “*The ANC has become a vehicle of self-enrichment. At 102 years old, the ANC has gone as far as it can, and sentimental attachment to the name and its history will not emancipate the people of South Africa*”. (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:52). Malema and the EFF’s use of South Africa’s struggle legacy is a tactic that evokes nostalgia amongst the poor and disadvantaged of South Africa. Mbete (2016:59) also observes this by referring to the EFF’s launch of their party Manifesto in Soweto, on the 30 April 2016, which highlights a recurring theme that is woven into their political identity:

*“He (Malema) reinforced the EFF as a party of black South Africans by explaining the choice of hosting the launch in Soweto with the words “the umbilical cord of the EFF is buried here in Soweto”, evoking the practice used in all African cultures to introduce a child to the ancestors and establish its home”* (Mbete, 2016:599).

The EFF’s choice of launching their Manifesto in Soweto, a place full of apartheid history, is a tactic of aligning themselves with the activists that fought during apartheid. This location is full of symbolism, carrying a history of pain, suffering and struggle. This was an intentional way for the EFF to present itself as the next political revolutionaries of the day. This attempt to revive past ideologies is not progressive nor conducive to current democratic norms. South Africa is still facing obstacles left behind from apartheid and thus needs to be recognised and



to be learnt from in order to progress towards a new future, however an attempt to implement past ideologies and objectives is not going to drive South Africa forward. The EFF's socialist and nationalist solutions are not forward thinking, but merely reflections of the past. These tactics tap into a shared, emotional history and experience for many struggling black citizens today. Forde (2011:15) shares similar observations in her book:

*“For just as the past was beginning to recede into history, Malema was bringing it back to life again as he began to cast the minds of millions back to the struggle era, reminding them of what they fought for, who they had fought against and why the battle is still far from over. He situated his argument and his outlook in the 1940s and 1950s and the Freedom Charter and from there he began to march... And with that, he became the epitome of millions of South Africans, young and old who battle to lay the ghost of the past to rest as the country struggles to forge a lasting identity seventeen years into the new democracy”.*

Furthermore, much of the EFF's ideologies and policies share similar characteristics of radical and militant branches of the ANC during apartheid: *“EFF takes socialism as the theoretical basis guiding its thinking and development of its political line and in this respect identifies itself as a MARXIST, LENINIST, and FANONIAN organisation.”* (Election Constitution, 2016). This is another example of their political identity tied to the past.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the ANC initially adopted socialist ideologies in their strategies and various social and economic policies during apartheid, however they later embraced more neo-liberal policies closer towards South Africa's transition to democracy (Gumede, 2006:70). More than two decades later, South Africa along with the majority of the globe have continued to adopt more democratic and liberal market policies, however the EFF have returned to bygone socialist and Fanonian ideologies.

The EFF's inspiration drawn from Fanonian principles is also very much a reference to previous ANC thinking that was influenced by the Soviet Union during the Cold War period which is evident in their Founding Constitution (2014). Fanonian ideology is rooted in the belief that liberation movements within Africa did not have a strong guiding ideology and needed a “blue print” which included specific goals, doctrine and plans that would lead individuals to become politically and socially independent (Martin, 2012). Fanonian ideals stressed that African thought should be independent from Western strands of thinking and



needed to avoid mimicking European ideologies. As a result, Fanonian ideology was as explicit rejection of imperialism, capitalism and economic and cultural neo-colonialism. According to Martin (2012:108) Fanonian thinking had elements of populist rhetoric as “the people” were the central focus and source of new ideas and were free to contribute to political ideas. The people were the focal actors and beneficiaries within a society and the government should be ruled by them, working for their interests.

*“The EFF reflect these Fanonian ideas and characteristics in their following of Pan-Africanist ideas: “Though there are contending views on both side of whether to retain a Pan-Africanist character or not, the view that argues for the retention, highlighted that it would be regrettable to discard an Africanist character as that we will be tantamount to validating a Eurocentric perception against **the ability of Africans to articulate own narrative which affirms African solutions to African challenges. An Africanist character of the organization denotes a historical and contemporary post-colonial case for black consciousness as a prerequisite for Africa’s right to self-determination. ....In fact, given the history of colonialism in Africa and colonialism of a special type or internalized settler colonialism particularly in South Africa, radical pan-Africanism and nationalism - a proponent of which is black consciousness - is a prerequisite condition for a thorough-going struggle for economic emancipation of the black majority in general and Africans in particular. The place and position of Africans must find dominant expression within the struggle for economic freedom pursued.”** (National Assembly Policy Discussion Document, 2014:26)*

These passages clearly reflect the EFF’s use of Fanonian ideology (tying to that Pan-Africanism) as a means to address current issues of racial inequality and economic advancement for the majority of black marginalised and disadvantaged citizens.

### *Emotive Rhetoric*

As earlier discusses, populists aim to side with the “the people” and claim to represent their interests and needs. Populist leaders are often very charismatic and persuasive as Davila (2000:244) states. Their rhetoric is often full of symbolism inspired to unify and invigorate people (Jensen, 2011:82). The EFF display these characteristics which is seen in their historical connections of previous anti-apartheid activists (discussed above) and an emotionally charged rhetoric.

The EFF regularly employ emotive language to inspire their crowds and supporters, a tactic

many populist groups use as discussed in Chapter 2. This is evident in the way they refer to themselves and other ideas or groups within society. In their “What is to be done” speech of 2013, they refer to the ANC government as a “Kleptocracy” (Shivambu and Smith, 2014:55). In another example taken from their National Assembly Policy Documents (2014), the EFF sympathise with disadvantaged masses by employing emotive and persuasive rhetoric:

“To conceal **the great sin committed against the African** a massive machine of lies by erasure was invented by the **West**. The African, was then **placed outside of history and humanity and blackened. White was life as black was death**. The self-imagine of the Africa, was destroyed. The west impose itself by the **sword and the gun**. In essence land dispossession led to cultural dispossession too, therefore, ipso facto, the demand for land is the demand **for cultural liberation of our people**. The outcomes of these inter linked dispossessions present themselves graphically today as the life of blacks in poverty and squalor on the one hand and the life of whites as characterised by privilege and security on the other: **township and suburbs! Employer and employee, baas and boy, miesies and maid, Sandton and Alexander, metro rail and Gautrain, private hospital and public hospital, mansion and RDP house**. When we close our eyes and imagine these categories and the races that occupy them, we can see, **that the black has been forced into both a material and spiritual wasteland.**” (Policy Discussion Document, 2014:87).

The EFF highlights the contrasting worlds that many South Africans live in. The very rich against the very poor. This rhetoric alone reflects a tactic used by the EFF regularly to divide society in the moral and immoral: the impoverished, black majority against the sinful, privileged and wealthy West. The party uses this divide to moralise politics and creates an enemy of “the people”.

The EFF are largely influenced by previous ANC generations that followed socialist and militant ideals during apartheid. Not only have these ideas inspired their various social and economic policies, but this legacy of activism and struggle have been used as a symbolical tactic of the EFF in an attempt to gain support from the young, black masses of the population, and to tap into an emotional-political tie to South Africa’s past. Many of South Africa’s current challenges have been as a result of the history of apartheid, and the EFF play on these grievances to gain support and evoke a rebellious political group. Their socialist and militant

policies go against the current political structures and policies of South Africa today, and reject all things that the current related to the current ANC government, especially capitalist and neo-liberalism. The EFF claim to represent the true needs of the people and actively stand up against the ANC (Nkandla, Gupta saga) who are perceived as corrupt, evil and the enemy of the people. They often employ emotive language to gain support of large crowds. This analysis has concluded that the EFF has many populist traits.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has looked at a brief history of populist developments on the African continent, and more specifically in South Africa with the rise of the EFF. This has been done by discussing how the development of socialist and nationalist ideals helped shape a conducive context for populism to flourish both in Africa and in South Africa. An investigation of foundational party documents, such as their Founding Manifesto (2013), Election Manifesto (2016), the Constitution (2014), their National Assembly Policy Discussion Documents (2016) and a book written by the party's Deputy President, Floyd Shivambu (2014), have shown that the EFF can be argued to be a populist party. These various documents have been used to find elements and characteristics that are associated with populism and populist groups that were earlier discussed in Chapter Two. These populist characteristics have been used as a guideline to discuss and analyse the official party documents of the EFF. To conclude, the EFF does have populist characteristics. The EFF formed in the backdrop of social unrest in South Africa. Many young, black citizens felt betrayed and angered at the ANC government. South Africa is still facing economic obstacles of unemployment, economic inequality and poverty, which affects the majority of young black individuals. The government's recent political crises of corruption and poor governance has also contributed to its decline in support over the years. Out of these political and economic circumstances, the EFF formed in 2013 and began their political journey to "emancipate" the people of South Africa. The subsequent Chapter shall provide an analysis of the EFF's political attitudes and preferences, as well as their behaviour, to see whether the party holds a threat to the consolidation of South Africa.

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to present data collected and analyse it in order to answer the research questions that were discussed in Chapter One. The research question and sub-questions will guide this process, and is therefore important to revisit them through the investigation and analysis:

- Does the EFF's rise to power hold a threat for South Africa's democratic consolidation?
- Are the EFF's political preferences consistent with democratic norms?
- Is their behaviour tolerant of other groups: are their policies inclusive within a pluralistic society?

In order to investigate whether the EFF's rise to power is a threat for South Africa's democratic consolidation, this chapter will be looking at two main indicators of democratic consolidation: political behaviour, and political attitudes and preferences. This analysis shall be done by using the framework of Schedler (2001) and Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013) as discussed in Chapter Two. Within this framework, this chapter will also look at the various populist tactics and characteristics (provided by literature, discussed in Chapter Two) that are harmful to democracy. This chapter will therefore be divided into two sections: The first will look at Indicators of democratic consolidation: political preferences and attitudes, and behaviour. The second section shall look at populist tactics and characteristics identified as dangerous to democracy.

## 4.2 Structure of data analysis

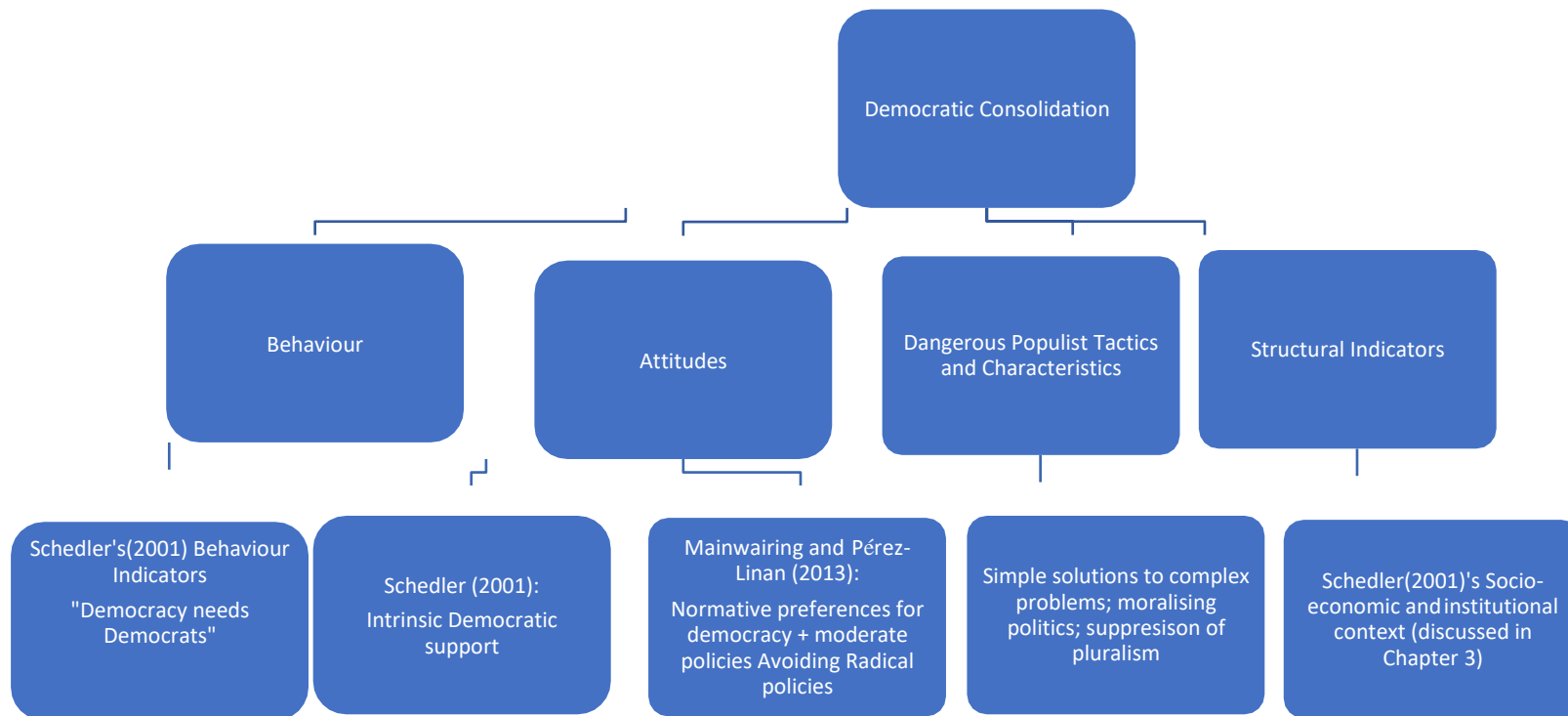


Figure 1 Diagram showing how data will be analysed

Above is a diagram that displays how the data of this chapter shall be analysed. This chapter shall be divided into two parts: the first shall look at the EFF's attitudes and political preferences and behaviour. While Schedler (2001) acknowledges a third indicator of democratic consolidation, which consists of Structural factors such as socio-economic indicators and institutional indicators (economic growth, inequality etc.)-this was briefly discussed in Chapter Three. Chapter Three argued that the socio-economic context of high unemployment, high inequality and poverty, as well as poor governance created fertile ground for the rise of populism in South Africa. These sections within this chapter will be using the analytical framework discussed in Chapter Two to investigate and analyse the collected data that has been collected. The second section of this chapter will look at the various populist characteristics and tactics the EFF use that are arguably dangerous for democracy. This will be done by referring to literature discussed in Chapter Two as well. While the previous chapter primarily focused on examples that reflect elements of populism within the EFF, these themes will continue to be discussed as they aid in the understanding of whether the party's attitudes and actions are conducive to democracy. These include elements such as their ability to unite or divide society; their simple solutions to complex problems etc.

#### **4.2.1 Atlas ti:**

Atlas ti software was used to assist research for both sections of this chapter. For section one (attitudes and political preferences) the official documents were downloaded from the EFF's official website (publicly available) and saved. These documents were then imported into the software. The news articles were also publicly available online, however the text needed to be copied into word documents and then imported. This made the documents a disarranged and needed to be "tidied up" by removing the adverts and comments from the website that were also copied.

The coding for both sections were initially deductive as they were largely based on themes from the theory derived from the theoretical framework from Chapter Two. Initial codes that were made included examples such as:

### Behavioural Indicators

Use of violence

Disobeying the law

Rejection of elections

Transgressing authority

### Attitudes and Preferences

Intrinsic and normative support for democracy

Moderate preferences

Radical policy preferences

These codes were imported into Atlas ti, however as I analysed the documents, more themes appeared, and I therefore needed to create new codes as I reviewed the data. Some codes also became less relevant (e.g. Intimidation during elections (Schedler, 2001) as there were no examples found within the data that demonstrated this behaviour of the EFF. The coding for this analysis was both inductive and deductive in nature

### **4.2.2 Data used**

The data used for this section consists of the EFF's official party documents (that are publicly available on their website), and include their Founding Manifesto (2013), their Declaration (2013), their Constitution (2014), their Election Manifesto (2016), three newsletters of the Radical Voice (there were only three provided) (2016) and a document called "What are the EFF: Back to Basics" (2018) which was seemingly created to clarify ideological misconceptions that certain groups of the public held over the party. These documents proved to be very rich in presenting the party's ideological influences and their policy stances, however were also very repetitive and themes lapped over each other greatly

## 4.3 Analysis

### 4.3.1 Attitudes and Policy Preferences

In order to find out whether the EFF's rise to power holds a threat for South Africa's democratic consolidation, it is significant to study and analyse their official party documents, to see whether their political attitudes and policy preferences are supportive of democratic ideals, and thus will aid in strengthening democracy. A table (see below) is provided below comparing supportive, intrinsic democratic values, to radical, anti-democratic values and attitudes. The table presents a comprehensible guide that will assist in establishing into which characteristics and traits the EFF's attitudes and policy preferences can be categorised.

Table Categorising Attitudinal indicators of Normative and Intrinsic Support for democracy, and Anti-democratic Attitudes and Radical Policy Preferences

<b>Normative and Intrinsic Democratic Attitudes and Policy preferences</b>	<b>Radical, anti-democratic attitudes and policy preferences</b>
Supportive of moderate liberal democratic ideology (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:128)	Policy preferences on far Left or Right on political ideological spectrum (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:128)
Intrinsic support for democracy: acceptance of democratic ideals, preserves status democratic quo (Schedler, 2001:76)	"non" Normative preferences: Rejection of democratic ideals, wants to change democratic status quo (Schedler, 2001:76)
Willing to defend democratic principles at all costs policies (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126)	Committed to policy outcomes and support more than supporting democratic ideals (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126)
Elections: Accepting electoral defeats without manipulating or overriding institutional behaviour (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126)	Rejection of Elections; refusing to participate in elections; denying others of participation; controlling election outcomes (Schedler, 2001:71-72)



Committed to sustaining democratic ideals, rules and regulations without undermining institutional structures to gain their own interests; behaving within the bounds of the law (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:126)	Transgressing the law: disobeying the law and constitution; ignoring Judicial and Congressional hearings (Schedler, 2001:73)
	Urgency in achieving their alternative policies (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:125).
	Use of Violence (riots, intimidation of voters and candidates, expressive destruction of property, assassination of political actors, attempts to violently overthrow elected officials etc.) (Schedler, 2001:71-72)

According to Laver (2001:4) analysing party manifestos, constitutions and similar documents, provides scholars with insight into how political parties and politicians view the world. It allows scholars to understand what ideals drive a party's behaviour and objectives, which also helps in positioning parties along the ideological spectrum. These political texts "communicate" what a political party believes in, what ideological foundations it is rooted in and what it aims to achieve. It is therefore beneficial to look at what kind of ideas are expressed within the documents through specific terms, words and phrases. An analysis of the EFF's political documents will aid in understanding what ideals, attitudes and objectives the EFF hold.

Below is a table reflecting the frequency of the most used or most occurring words within the political documents of the EFF. It is important to note that looking at word frequencies alone do not provide a thorough analysis of the texts, it can however indicate what main thoughts, ideals and terms are expressed. According to Krippendorf (2018:83) running word frequencies on texts can help us understand what the texts are about and what they are communicating. The more often a word or term occurs, the more likely the text will be about that reoccurring word. Words are also however used within a specific context when they are communicated. Thus, one weakness to the frequency approach however is that the relationship between words, that provides a context of how the words are used, is lost (Dym, 1985:67) A frequency table is

beneficial for this analysis, as it shows the main themes and ideals expressed in the EFF's official party documents.

By using the table above (comparing supportive and anti-democratic attitudes and policies) as a guide to classifying the most frequently occurring words in the documents, we will be able to evaluate what kind of words, and therefore what kinds of ideals, attitudes and political preferences the EFF express. Therefore, frequently occurring words such as “democracy”; “elections”, “constitution”; “parliament” for example, would arguably express intrinsic and normative supportive democratic ideals and procedures within the text. However, words such as “radical”; “militant”; “violence” “overthrow” for example, would indicate anti-democratic ideals, policies and a lack of support for democratic ideals. By looking at what kinds of words are most frequent within the EFF's documents, this will help analyse what kinds of ideals the EFF are expressing and promoting. Below is a table of the frequencies of the most occurring terms found within the political documents of the EFF.

#### Frequency Table

<b><u>Frequency Table of words in EFF documents</u></b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
EFF	478
people	324
economic	238
municipality	213
Africa	167
political	158
state	138
development	133
African	125
government	120
land	112
freedom	110
services	97
EFF's	96

revolutionary	87
economy	85
movement	78
national	63
municipalities	60
organisation	59
jobs	58
members	58
assembly	57
command	56
education	56
fighters	55
public	54
continent	53
workers	52
industrial	52
emancipation	50
struggle	49
class	45

The most frequent words that are expressed within the EFF's official documents include terms such as: "EFF"; "people"; "Municipalities"; "economy"; "freedom"; "land"; "revolutionary"; "fighters"; "struggle"; "workers" and "class". According to Dym (1958) as earlier mentioned, these most frequent occurring words, express the content of the documents analysed. Using this argument, the EFF's official documents mainly express ideas and themes centred around the economy; land; workers' interests; class struggles and "emancipation". These words refer to the radical policies that the EFF promote, which shall also be discussed later in this section. The word frequency thus reflects radical policy stances, seen in the use of words such as "revolutionary", "workers", "struggle" and "class", which reflect far Left policy stances. According to Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:128) radical policies along situated far along the political ideological spectrum does not reveal a normative acceptance and support for democratic norms. These words thus do not reflect moderate policy stance and therefore are



## Ideology

According to Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:126) if actors are not inherently ideologically committed to democratic ideals, they consequently do not hold intrinsic democratic preferences. Schedler (2001:76) similarly states that if actors do not uphold democratic ideals and practices and believe that democracy is the only legitimate type of political ideology, then they do not hold normative democratic values. A lack of intrinsic and normative democratic values weakens democratic consolidation. A thorough analysis of the EFF's political documents reflect that the party does not attitudes supportive of democracy. This is evident in numerous examples within the documents. One example that demonstrates this is seen in the party's Founding Constitution. The EFF's Founding Constitution (2014) shows that the EFF are not supportive of democratic ideals. This is seen in their foundational ideology and ideals:

*“Economic Freedom Fighters is a radical and militant Economic Emancipation Movement which brings together revolutionary, fearless, radical, and militant activists, workers’ movements, non- governmental organisations, community-based organisations, lobby-groups under the need to pursue the struggle for economic emancipation. The EFF is a radical, Left, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement with an internationalist outlook anchored by popular grassroots formations and struggles. EFF will be the vanguard of community and workers’ struggles and will always be on the side of the people. EFF will, with determination and consistency, associate with the protest movement in South Africa, and will also join in struggles that defy unjust laws.... The EFF subscribes to the Marxist-Leninist and Fanonian schools of thought on its analysis of the State, imperialism, class and race contradictions in every society. Through organic engagement and constant relationship with the masses, Economic Freedom Fighters provide clear and cogent alternatives to the post-colonial economic systems, which in many countries kept the oppressed people under colonial domination and suppression”* (Founding Constitution, 2014).

The EFF explicitly state they are a party that is anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and rooted in Leftist ideology that draws on inspiration from Marxist-Leninist and Fanonian thought. The first indicator that reflects a lack of intrinsic and normative democratic attitudes is seen in the EFF's foundational ideology. The EFF's ideals are rooted in socialist ideology that fundamentally aims to disrupt and replace democratic economic and political models, with a class-less society through a revolution of the working-class. Current economic systems in

South Africa follow models of democratic, liberal, open markets that encourage privatisation of resources in businesses and corporations. The rejection of this economic system is not conducive to democratic ideals, as it contests with liberal ideals that allow individuals and businesses the liberty of owning means of production and creating profit. According to Schedler (2001:76) this is an indicator that reflects a lack of normative democratic values, as it does not demonstrate a support for democratic ideology.

Similar attitudes are also seen in their Radical Voice Volume 11 (2016) newsletter. One example that reflects the EFF's radical characteristics in their policies is seen in their C&C (Contradictory and Complimentary) approach towards private businesses. The EFF state that one of their policy objectives for government is to isolate and contradict private corporations and businesses that do not invest in labour absorptive activities under their municipalities. These private corporations and companies will be forced to invest in job creation (Radical Voice, 2016). Businesses that do invest in this sector will however be fully supported or "complimented" in their efforts to work alongside with the EFF's municipalities. This policy stance reveals uncooperative and uncompromising attitudes towards economic practises that are associated with liberal, capitalist democracies. A rejection and suppression of this, is not supportive of democratic ideals of liberty, moderation, consensus and tolerance that Diamond (1993:11) states is necessary in growing a pragmatic culture towards democratic consolidation. This therefore reflects that the party is not supportive of the necessary democratic ideals and practices that Schedler (2001:76) states is needed for democratic consolidation.

*Another example that reflects a lack of normative and intrinsic democratic attitudes is seen in the EFF's Constitution:*

*"The basic programme of the EFF is the complete overthrow of the neo liberal anti-black state as well as the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes; the establishment of the dictatorship of the people in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the triumph of socialism over capitalism."* (Constitution, 2014). The EFF's goal here is to intentionally remove the current government and replace it with "the establishment of the dictatorship of the people" (Constitution, 2014). This reflects that the party does not support the current democratic regime. This is reiterated under the party's aims and objections within their Constitution that aim: *"To capture political and state power through whatever revolutionary means possible to transform the economy for the benefit of all, in particular Africans."* (Constitution, 2014). Both of these examples reflect the EFF's desire to remove the current

democratic government by any “revolutionary means” possible. According to Schedler (2001:76) political actors that aim to alter and remove the current democratic status quo are classified as radical actors. Radical actors do not hold normative democratic attitudes. The EFF are thus radical in their aim to obstruct and displace the current democratic regime. This analysis therefore reflects that the party does not hold normative political attitudes.

## Radicalism

According to Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:124-125) actors that have radical stances on policies are not considered to hold intrinsic democratic attitudes and preferences. Policy preferences are categorised as radical when actors’ goals are found on a far side of the political ideological spectrum (either far Left or far Right policies). Political preferences are not only considered to be radical if actors express an urgency in achieving their political objectives, but also if these policies are not aligned with the current regimes preferences. As discussed above, the EFF’s ideologies are not consistent with the current regime’s democratic policies and ideals. Their socialist policies are therefore also radical in nature as they lie along the far left of the political ideological spectrum.

This is reflected in their Constitution: *“The EFF takes socialism as the theoretical basis guiding its thinking and development of its political line and in this respect identifies itself as a MARXIST, LENINIST, and FANONIAN organisation.”* (Constitution, 2014). This quote shows that the EFF explicitly states that they follow far left socialist ideologies. Another example of their radical policies is demonstrated in their Seven Cardinal Pillars that promotes socialist policies such as: *nationalising state resources such as banks and mines; expropriating land without compensation; terminating all state tenders and providing free education and healthcare*” (Constitution, 2014). (These examples are radical in nature as they follow extreme Left, socialist ideals and practices.

Another indicator that demonstrates whether actors have radical preferences is seen in their urgency to achieve their political objectives (Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan, 2013:125). If actors reflect an intense persistence of this, they are considered radical. The EFF also reflect these characteristics. As earlier discussed, the EFF have displayed an intense desire to remove the



current regime by any “revolutionary means” (Constitution, 2014). This strong desire to remove the government is an example of radical preferences that Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:125) discuss.

The EFF’s rhetoric is full of socialist references which reiterates their image and identity as a radical, socialist party. This will be briefly touched on by presenting some of the many examples that are extensively used throughout their documents. One example is seen in how they draw inspiration from previous significant Socialist revolutions: “*The EFF is guided by revolutionary internationalism and solidarity that defined the politics of the July 26 Movement, which led the Cuban Revolutionary struggles.*” (Founding Manifesto, 2013). Another example is seen when they stress the need for party discipline through socialism: “*Revolutionary discipline for any battalion is important because it makes those in command appreciate and understand their offensive and defensive capacity in a revolution.*” (Radical Voice Volume 13, 2016). The party constantly refers to their members and supporters as either “*Revolutionary Fighters*” or “*Ground Forces*” (Radical Voice Volume 13, 2016). These examples reflect a style of discourse that demonstrates a political identity of militancy and radicalism associated with socialism. These examples discussed have demonstrated that the EFF’s attitudes, policies and rhetoric are radical in nature, and therefore the party does not hold intrinsic support for democracy.

This section of the chapter has discussed that the EFF do not hold normative and intrinsic support for democracy. This has been done by running a word frequency on the official party documents of the EFF, as well as analysing the documents that express the radical attitudes and policies of the EFF. The following section will the EFF’s behaviour.

### **4.3.2 Behaviour**

As discussed in Chapter Two, Schedler (2001:69) states that attitudes are very much linked to behaviour, and that democracy needs democrats. This section of the thesis will investigate whether the EFF’s behaviour is conducive to democratic consolidation. This will explore themes such as whether their behaviour is inclusive and tolerant of other political and minority groups and actors; whether they value and uphold democratic ideals and individual freedom; and whether they follow and obey the democratic regulations and institutions.

One challenge of selecting data for this section of the thesis is that since the EFF’s formation, there have been a multitudinous amount of newspaper articles on incidents evolving the



behaviour of the EFF party and its leaders. To narrow this data collection process down and aid in selecting relevant news pieces, the literature explored in Chapter 2 was used as a guideline. Articles of relevance that have therefore been selected for this section include incidents of: hate speech (to minorities and political actors); violent or physical intimidation to media; illegal land occupation; an example of disruptive protest behaviour; undemocratic behaviour in parliament, as well as an incident reporting the EFF's threat to remove the current government through use of violence. In total seven "incidents" have been selected and explored to analyse and investigate the EFF's behaviour.

As discussed at the start of this chapter, triangulation has been used to assist the validity and reliability of the research being investigated. This specific section of the data analysis is challenging as I personally have not witnessed or observed the behaviour of the EFF and have instead relied on newspaper articles as a source. Relying on one source however can present challenges of bias as newspapers often cater for specific strata within society. For this reason, multiple articles from various newspapers have been used. The main newspaper sources that have been used in this study include: The Mail and Guardian, Eye Witness News, The Sowetan (Sowetan Live), News 24 and The Times (Times Live). These specific newspapers were chosen because the publications mostly used their own sources and they were relatively consistent in covering the same events independently. Other newspaper articles often re-used sources from other leading papers (which did happen to be the case for one or two specific events in the articles selected). This also proved to be a challenge for some selected topics whereby some articles used the same source. In cases where a news article was not available for one of the chosen news sources, another article from a different paper was provided to maintain methods of triangulation within the data. Another challenge within this section was that one incident that was analysed was based on an interview that was done by a specific news source, and triangulation was therefore not applicable to that incident

### **Sona 2017**

The State of the nation address is one of the most highlighted political events of the year for South Africans and political parties. Sona is an annual parliamentary opening whereby the president of the Republic of South Africa addresses the nation in a joint sitting of both the NA (National Assembly) and the NCOP (National Council of Provinces). The address includes

and centres around the current political and socio-economic conditions of the country (State of the Nation Address, 2018). This is therefore one of the most cardinal and fundamental political events that various politicians can partake in. The behaviour of the EFF in the context of such an important political event will therefore be crucial in the analysis of this section of the data. The EFF have attended the Sona annually since 2014, however their conduct of the previous year's Sona (2017) is arguably the most significant as their behaviour in that year was the most disruptive example recorded.

The State of the nation address of 2017 was one of the most eventful ones yet. According to Dolley (2017) former President Zuma was to have given his address around 19:00pm, however due to hindrances in parliament Zuma was delayed by over an hour. This was largely due to the efforts of opposition parties that prevented Zuma from delivering his speech, raising various points of order to hinder the annual address (Henderson et al, 2017). The EFF member Goodrich Gardee raised a point of order to the former President, stating that he was unfit to make the address as he was unaccountable to Parliament with regards to formalities stemming around the Nkandla scandal, and his address was therefore "unconstitutional" (Henderson et al., 2017). The EFF and DA members then began raising security concerns. Shivambu (the EFF Chief Whip) was the first to raise this point by inquiring over the twenty-one SAPS (South African Police Service) officers that were present at the address, armed with "cable ties and biological weapons" (Henderson et al., 2017). During this hour EFF members accused Zuma of being a "constitutional delinquent" (Davis, 2017).

### *Analysis*

The EFF have shown an inability to respect other political actors. This was first seen in their intentional interruption of the former President's speech, the disrespectful mocking and of calling names to the former President, as well as the dismissal of the Speaker Mbete when reprimanded and asked to leave Parliament. The EFF (along with other members of parliament) were intentionally being disruptive and aimed to impede the process of the address, which reflects a disrespect for the procedures of the Sona. Their refusal to leave after Mbete ordered them to vacate, also displays their dismissal of these procedures of Parliament and reflect a transgression of political authority. According to Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:126)

actors, such as the EFF in this incident, that do not uphold democratic procedures and regulations are considered to demonstrate a lack of democratic behaviour.

The EFF's disorderly behaviour escalated to the point where EFF members had to be forcibly removed from Parliament whilst kicking and throwing punches, injuring the security officers who escorted them out, which eventually led to their suspension. This behaviour is physically violent, aggressive and obstinate in nature, which is therefore not conducive to democratic consolidation. Their recalcitrant behaviour shows that they view themselves above the standard democratic rules and procedures and that they are uncooperative towards authorities of the state. Schedler (2001:72-73) states that the use of violence and transgression of authority is a clear indicator of anti-democratic behaviour, which the EFF have proved to display. The EFF are therefore not able to sustain democratic ideals, rules and regulations that Manwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:126) discuss, and their use of violence reflects undemocratic behaviour.

### **Intimidation of Media representatives**

According to Nombembe (2018) Parliament has referred Floyd Shivambu, the EFF's Deputy President to the Committee of Ethics and Member's Interests after a video emerged of Shivambu physically confronting a journalist. The Journalist was Adrian de Kock, who worked for News 24. De Kock was present at Parliament to report on Patricia de Lille's disciplinary hearing earlier this year. According to Nicolaides (2018) de Kock apparently asked Shivambu to comment on the hearing and took pictures of him. Shivambu is seen in a video to move closer towards de Kock and intimidating him whilst the journalist shouted at the EFF member to leave his things alone. A reporter of the Sowetan (2018) writes that Shivambu demanded that de Kock delete the pictures on his camera that were taken of him. He is reported to then have physically confronted de Kock by grabbing him by the neck. Shivambu was then seen walking away whilst his body guard continued to attack the journalist. Shivambu later issued a statement where he apologised for the incident quoted in the Sowetan:

“The scuffle happened and was never an assault on the Journalist or media freedom. I regret the incident and believe it should have been handled differently. I take full responsibility and apologise for engaging in a scuffle with a person I discovered after the incident is a Journalist.

I will write and email an official apology on the scuffle because I believe it was not supposed to happen.” (Sowetan, 2018).

And

*“The EFF, which I represent in Parliament and deputy president of, upholds media freedom, and freedom of association. As a loyal member of the EFF, I fully uphold media freedom and freedom of association, and the scuffle was not meant to suppress these constitutional principles,”* quoted in Bosman (2018).

### *Analysis*

According to Schedler (2001:76) political actors that make use of violence do not display normative democratic behaviour. The EFF’s Deputy President and Chief Whip’s physical intimidation towards a journalist reflects a use of violence that is therefore not democratic in nature. While Shivambu did apologise for this incident, it is questionable whether the EFF genuinely value the importance of independent media. In Shivambu’s apology, he claims that EFF uphold media and freedom of association, and that his actions were wrong, however it leads one to question the authenticity of such a statement- if an organisation or individual genuinely held the media in high regard, why would they intimidate a media representative in the first place? Is this apology merely a formality and an attempt to direct attention away from the episode, as similar incidents have occurred in the past?

According to Bornman (2018) Shivambu’s intimidation of de Kock is a repetition of previous incidents where Shivambu called a journalist a “Gupta agent” in 2017 and called another journalist a “white b\*\*\*\*\*” in 2012 when he was still part of the ANCYL. This behaviour seems to be a repetitious characteristic of Shivambu. His position as Deputy President of the EFF raises the question to whether the EFF at large are characteristically similar in their view and treatment of the media. His high position in the political organisation holds much influence over the party, and this kind of behaviour can encourage similar undemocratic behaviour amongst supporters and other party members.

Shivambu’s aggressive behaviour towards this journalist is not conducive to democratic consolidation. The media and its representatives are an important feature of democracy. Under

the Bill of Rights included within the Constitution of 1996, the media has the right (with certain limitations) to access information and has freedom of expression. They are intended to serve and distribute information to the public and have the right to publish critical journalism (Wasserman and de Beer, 2005:36). The media's role has become a paramount in playing a "watchdog" of the government and its institutions, especially after apartheid where journalism that was critical of the government then, was banned or censored. In South Africa's democratic transformation, the media took the responsibility of maintaining self-regulation to ensure its independence from political institutions and elites in order to inform citizens with reliable information. These ideas have been evident in the ethical codes for important media regulatory institutions such as the BCCSA (Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa) and the Press Ombudsman (Wasserman and de Beer, 2005:39-40).

It is for this reason, Shivambu's physical attack on a journalist is significant as it reflects his and the, EFF whom he represents, disregard for the importance of the role of independent media and journalists. His attempt to prevent de Kock from taking pictures and his physical intimidation reflects his disregard for suppressing or preventing the media from doing their job. Shivambu's behaviour expresses the anti-democratic behaviour of actors that disobey the law and is thus undemocratic in Schedler (2001:71). This is inappropriate behaviour within the regulations and rule of democracy.

### **Protest Behaviour: H&M**

The EFF's behaviour with regards to the H&M retail store's alleged racist clothing piece for children has reflected its undisciplined political behaviour. According to Pijoo (2018) the H&M store received much backlash for advertising a young black child wearing a green hoodie with the printed words on it reading: "The coolest monkey in the jungle". EFF leader Julius Malema stated that the H&M stores were closed because black children were called baboons. He continued stating:

*"We are teaching them [H&M] a lesson, we are not going to allow anyone to use the colour of our skin to humiliate us, or to exclude us. We are black and we are proud. We are black and we are beautiful. We are black and we are not ashamed of being black."* quoted in Pijoo (2018).

Malema's statement reflects intolerance towards racism and discrimination, however the

manner of the EFF's protests are questionable. EFF supporters have responded toward the advert by trashing and protesting within H&M stores across the country. Police in Gauteng stated that the officers had to make use of rubber bullets to intervene the crowds of EFF protestors that were entering stores. While no injuries were reported, some items were stolen from the store in the East Rand Mall. The Sowetan (2018) reported that protestors at the Menlyn shopping centre broke windows of that H&M store, which resulted in the whole floor being shut down. Police in the Western Cape Town however said that a peaceful demonstration was held by an estimate of a hundred and fifty members at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town. These protests at different stores contrast greatly; some have chosen peaceful methods whilst others in Gauteng have followed a more destructive route.

After the protests H&M apologised for the hoodie and advertisement and decided to meet with the HRC (Human Rights Commission) with plans to amend and correct the incident, as well as implement diversity training (Times, 2018). Despite the stores intentions to remedy the situation, the EFF failed to meet with the store and the HRC. The EFF however were dismissive of the store's apology and its efforts, stating that their efforts were not enough. According to Kekana (2018) protestors said they wanted to burn the Sandton store in an attempt to communicate that racism was not tolerated. In another article by Eye Witness News, reported that Malema defended the protests at the H&M stores:

*“No one should make jokes about the dignity of black people and is left unattended to. We make no apology about what the fighters did today against that store called H&M.”* quoted in Motau (2018). This reflects Malema's dismissal of the violent and destructive protests that EFF members partook in.

### *Analysis*

The EFF members that trashed and vandalised the stores reflect undemocratic behaviour. According to Schedler (2001:70-71) the use of violence such as expressive destruction of property and vandalism is a symptom of undemocratic behaviour. While not all of the EFF members that protested were guilty of this conduct, the behaviour of those that did, reflect a disregard for appropriate methods of political protests within the party. Malema however stated in the Mail and Guardian (2018): “They went because they wanted to go. To say people

were sent, it means you are undermining black people that they cannot think on their own. Malema would never put a gun on anyone to go to H&M”.

Malema’s statement reveals his dismissal of the destructive protests, taking no responsibility for the actions of the EFF protestors nor his care for the party’s discipline. His disassociation with this behaviour, claiming these protestors acted independently reflects his lack of concern for their actions and therefore his acceptance and toleration for the undisciplined and violent behaviour that some of the EFF protestors displayed. He later stated: “*Sometimes you don’t have to be in front to be called a leader, you can lead from behind with your ideas.*” (Mail and Guardian, 2018). Does this quote not reflect then that his very ideas are thus inspiring the disruptive behaviour he previously claimed his supporters were acting independently? Malema’s rhetoric reflects contradictions.

It is important to note that there is nothing wrong with the EFF’s intention of protesting against an incident that appeared to be racist. Their methods however demonstrated undemocratic behaviour. The protestors that held peaceful demonstrations in Cape Town were an exception, however the party at large, did not behave within the boundaries of democratic behaviour, and the party’s leader tolerated this. Schedler (2001:79) states that behaviour, such as the EFF’s destructive protests, that is characteristically violent does not reflect a political party that upholds democratic norms. The EFF could have met with official institutions such as the HRC to address their disapproval of the advert and the shirt in the first place, however even when the opportunity later presented itself, they failed to be present. Their failure to respond to this issue within the democratic regulations and channels reiterates their undemocratic behaviour.

### **Encouraging Illegal Land Occupation**

In a rally at Thembaletu Stadium in George, the EFF leader Malema addressed a crowd, making statements on occupying land within the country (Saal, 2018). His statements outlined the party’s strategies and attitudes towards Land reformation-a much debated topic in current South African politics. Malema argued that land occupation and ownership was necessary for the all the dispossessed people of South Africa so that they may gain dignity they lacked, quoted in the Times:

*“No one respects a person who is property-less. It doesn’t matter if the person is white or black. When you’ve got property, your confidence comes back. You are not people in the eyes of people who own property, they see you as sub human. They can kill you anytime and say you*



*look like a baboon, why? Because you are property-less. All those who are fed to lions and mistaken for baboons are those who are property-less,*” (Saal, 2018).

*His address to the crowd was one of persuasive discourse and emotionally charged, using racial and historical references in an attempt to justify his plans, quoted in the Times:*

*“...we are here not because we raped, killed or stole anything. But because we recited the Freedom Charter that people will have the right to occupy land wherever they choose.”* (Saal, 2018).

Many South Africans are still resentful and discontent with the economic challenges left behind from the apartheid government, and Malema uses this resentment as fuel to incite individuals to partake in his illegal plans. This is not the first time these kinds of statements were made. In 2016 Malema expressed similar exclamations when addressing crowds outside the Newcastle Magistrates Court. Malema was also encouraging crowds to take unoccupied land by any means necessary, quoted in Madia (2016): *“We will take our land no matter how. It’s becoming unavoidable, it’s becoming inevitable”*. Again, this reflects an aggressive stance on achieving the EFF’s objectives through undemocratic and unlawful means.

### *Analysis*

According to Schedler (2001:71-72) political actors that undermine the law are considered to display a lack of normative and undemocratic behaviour. Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:26) similarly state that actors that undermine democratic rules and procedures display a lack of intrinsic democratic behaviour. Malema’s encouragement of occupying land illegally therefore undermines the law, and South Africa’s democratic procedures and rules, and is thus argued to be a demonstration of undemocratic behaviour. Malema has encouraged members to occupy land (which is supposedly unoccupied) in an attempt place pressure onto the government. Malema claims that this is not an illegal method, however inhabiting land without going through the proper legislative procedures, is indeed illegal. This is not behaviour that is



conducive to democratic consolidation as he is encouraging individuals to act outside the boundaries of the law:

*“It is your land. How do you say we are wrong by asking people to go and occupy what is rightfully theirs?”* Malema quoted in Makena (2018). Malema is justifying illicit behaviour, despite giving evidence that his actions contradict his very argument that this occupation is “legal” when he told the members at the stadium that he led land seizures in Polokwane, where over three-thousand people settled on land, whose owner resided in Canada (EWN, 2018). The EFF’s illegal land occupation reflects undemocratic behaviour.

His belief that taking unoccupied land for families by merely inhabiting them is a populist tactic that is attempting to solve an extremely convoluted and sensitive procedure that involves many parties. This kind of political “strategy” is not a consistent method of dealing with land reform issues; and alludes to political dangers if these types of “solutions” were to made national policies if the party should ever come into power.

### **Hate Speech towards Minority groups**

According to multiple newspaper sources the EFF leader, Julius Malema made racial comments about members of the Indian community at an EFF Youth Day. According to Isaacs (2018) Malema stated that Indian people are racists. The South African IRR (Institute of Race Relations) has said that this kind of remark is “damaging and unnecessary” (Isaacs, 2018). Michael Morris who works for the IRR also commented on Malema’s statement, saying his remark was used to gain attention. While that might be the case, Malema’s comment is not only hurtful towards members of the Indian community, it creates disunity amongst members of society, it is illegal, discriminatory behaviour and it portrays this particular minority group in a negative light, implying an inferiority. Smit (2018) reports that Malema stated that during apartheid, people of various racial groups were treated differently, and that Indian people were hateful towards black people since then:

*“We were not all oppressed the same. Indians had all sorts of resources Africans didn’t have, coloureds as well. The majority of Indians are racist. I’m not saying all, I’m saying [a] majority,”* quoted in (Smit, 2018).

Malema's rhetoric in this quote is a tactic that employs "politics of the past". Malema constantly makes references to the past in speeches, most of the party's founding principles are rooted in ideals that were adopted by ANC activists of the past (as discussed in Chapter 3). By claiming that Indian people have been fostering hatred towards black individuals is raking up embittered and resentful feelings of a history of people that faced injustices of apartheid. This kind of political rhetoric is neither unifying, nor is its forward thinking.

According to de Villiers (2018) the Samrem (South African Minority Rights Equality Movement) had opened a case of hate speech against the EFF after hearing Malema's statement. Their case included charges of hate and incitement to violence against Malema.

In another article by Gous (2018) the SAHRC (South African Human Rights Commission) also received a complaint that was issued by the Democratic Alliance (DA).

### *Analysis*

Malema's statement of hate speech reveals many red flags. An indicator of a "sick" democracy as Schedler (2001:71) states is seen when political actors disobey the law and ignore the Constitution. Malema's comment is a form of hate speech. According to Act 109 of the South African Constitution of 1996, the right of the Freedom of Expression does not extend to the "Advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion and that constitutes incitement to cause harm" (Constitution, 1996). Malema's statement is directed to Indian community members and thus becomes a racial or ethnical based prejudice. Hate speech is not behaviour that upholds the ideals enshrined in the South African Constitution which reflects the EFF's disregard for upholding democratic values. This behaviour is anarchic and an offense not only to a specific ethnic and racial group, but also an offense to the government's rules and regulations. This behaviour is therefore undemocratic in nature.

### **Hate Speech to Political Parties**

The EFF were also charged with hate speech when the party leader Julius Malema responded to the Democratic Alliances refusal of supporting the EFF's land reformation policies. According to Whittles (2018) the EFF ended its support for Nelson Mandela Bay Mayor Athol Trollip, when the DA voted against a motion of the National Assembly that would revise the

Constitutions to allow for land to expropriate without compensation. The DA have been in a coalition with the UDM (United Democratic Movement), the Patriotic Alliance, the African Christian Democratic Party and the Congress of the People -who the EFF supported.

This alliance helped the DA gain control over the Nelson Mandela Bay areas.

The EFF expressed a “warning” to the DA at crowds at a march to the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital earlier this year, quoted in the Times (2018): “*We are going to remove a mayor of PE. Not because he stole the money or anything, because we want to teach these white people that we mean business when we say expropriation of land without compensation,*” (Times, 2018).

### Analysis

This is another example of hate speech and racial politics that the EFF have been held guilty of and as a result have been reported to the Equality Court by the DA (SABC, 2018). Malema’s quote reflects the uncompromising attitude the EFF holds when dealing with other political parties. This statement shows that if other parties do not help them reach their objectives, they consequently become enemies of the EFF. If no one conforms to their will, they are attacked. This political culture is not one of compromise which ensures a healthy balance of power within a democracy. Malema again employs populist tactics by dividing his supporters against others by bringing in racial elements, quoted in Pitt (2018):

*“We are going to remove a mayor of Port Elizabeth ... we are going for your white man. We are going to cut the throat”.*

Malema’s statement not only reflects elements of racial politics and populist tactics, it also displays behaviour that does not promote democratic consolidation. Malema’s reference to “cutting whiteness” is an expression of violence and an attack on the liberty of political parties (Schedler, 2001:71). This rhetoric incites violence and the encouragement of political intolerance, which is not beneficial to a pluralistic society.

## **Removal of Government by force**

In an interview conducted by Jonah Hull from Aljazeera Television, EFF leader, Julius Malema was quoted saying that the party would make use of violence if the ANC government continued to hinder their political objectives by responding with violence to their protests, and standing in the party's way of removing white monopoly capital:

*“Part of the revolutionary duty is to fight, and we are not ashamed if the need arises for us to take up arms and fight. We will fight.... We are a very peaceful organisation and we fight our battles through peaceful means, through the courts, through parliament, through mass mobilisation.... We do that peacefully. But at times, government gets tempted to respond to such with violence. They beat us up in parliament and they send soldiers to places like Alexandra where people are protesting. We will run out of patience very soon and we will remove this government through the barrel of a gun.”* Malema quoted in Aljazeera (2016).

### *Analysis*

Malema's quote reveals two indicators that can be analysed as undemocratic behaviour. The first indicator that is evident here is Malema and the EFF's threat to use violence to forcibly remove the government which is classified as undemocratic behaviour. According to Schedler (2001:71-72) a use of violence, such as violently overthrowing a government, reflects undemocratic behaviour. This quote also reveals that the EFF (if “pushed”) are willing to undermine democratic procedures (instead of partaking in elections to contest political power), and instead use unlawful methods to contest political authority. Again, this reveals undemocratic behaviour. Schedler (2001:76) states that actors that undermine democratic procedures (such as elections) and disobey the law, reflect behaviour that is not normative and democratic in nature. Malema's statement to violently remove the government thus reflects undemocratic behaviour and speech.

This section of the chapter has demonstrated that the EFF do not display normative and intrinsic democratic behaviour. This has been done by discussing how the EFF disobey the law and the South African Constitution; how they transgress political authority; how they fail to follow democratic procedures in Parliament; their encouragement of illegal activity; their disruptive protests; their physical intimidation of people (media) and their threat to violently

overthrow the current ANC government. These examples do not reflect that the EFF display behaviour that is considered democratic in nature.

## **4.4 EFF's use of Populist Tactics**

This section of the chapter will briefly look at tactics used by the EFF that are characteristically populist in nature, and that are also a danger to democracy. This will be done by referring to literature discussed in Chapter Two in the analysis. This section will analyse populist characteristics that were evident in both the EFF's official documents, as well as behavioural incidents that were discussed in the previous section. The two main populist tactics that the EFF use are tactics of dividing society, and tactics to gain support by presenting simple solutions to complex problems.

### **4.4.1 Populist tactics of dividing society**

As discussed in Chapter Two, Torodov (2012:142) states that populists often address complex, genuine problems that individuals face by providing simple solutions that are not always sustainable for long term development. The EFF often use this tactic by simplifying complex socio-economic issues and providing socialist solutions. This shall be discussed below.

The EFF 's documents are full of example of racial politics. South Africa is still grappling with many challenges that the institutionalised racism and segregation practices of apartheid have left behind. Malema constantly refers to this history in an attempt to justify the EFF's socialist objectives and attitudes. This is seen in the *Radical Voice Vol 12* (2016) where Malema discusses current land reformation issues that were a result of a genocide of the African people that, as he states, is still being inhabited by the "descendants of Colonial murders, Barterers and Robbers." (*Radical Voice Vol 12:2016*). Malema also refers to the EFF's enemy to be "white supremacy" (*What are the EFF, 2018*) and "white capitalism" (*Radical Voice Vol 13, 2016*). While it is important to acknowledge South Africa's past and the consequences it left behind for many people today, the EFF's constant racialisation of economic issues and directing the party's opposition towards a racial group is a tactic that separates groups in society and prevents the fostering of societal cohesiveness and unity.

The EFF also asserts itself as the morally superior party through its attempt to give back land to people, and according to Malema, that they will not buy it as they it was illegally bought, and thus buying it would be a criminal offence (Radical Voice Vol 12, 2016). This tactic according to Mouffe (2005:57) is dangerous to democratic societies because by moralising politics, political actors create sides of “us” and “them”. The “us” who are supposedly the morally good and the “them” who are supposedly bad. This is dangerous for democratic societies because as soon as political enemies are created, these groups condemn the actions of others instead of attempting to cooperate with each other. For populist groups like the EFF, moralising themselves and creating “them” groups turns healthy political opponents and competition into enemies whom they become intolerant of.

The EFF moralises current politics by suggesting that they are a party that is committed in assisting the landless people of South Africa by what they consider “legal” means. This tactic of asserting themselves as a party that is unashamed in helping the people through “legal” means implies a morality of the party as they do not partake in criminal behaviour that other parties are involved in. They claim to be “the only significant movement” that advocates land policies that will help bring “equity” to the people (Radical Voice Vol 12, 2016). This a persuasive technique that the party uses to proclaim itself as the only party interested in helping landless people, and thus make them better and superior over other parties.

The EFF also claim that they do not take the law into their own hands because they are led by the “spirit of revolutionary discipline” (Radical Voice Vol 13, 2016). This “spirit of revolutionary discipline suggest that the party is led by some internal revolutionary calling or an ideal that leads the party toward behaving in a more moral, orderly and disciplined manner. This is also moralising in a sense as the party claims these revolutionary ideals make it a party guided by a superior ideal, and those whom are not led by this spirit are seen as inferior.

Similar examples have also been demonstrated in the EFF’s behaviour. Malema’s political rhetoric has many racial and populist elements, which is seen when he refers to members of the white community in his discussion around land occupation and reformation. Policies that were implemented in apartheid forcibly removed many South Africans from their land illegally. This has led to many genuine socio-economic challenges for black citizens that politicians are left to grapple with today. Malema’s statements referring to racial groups however is a method of gaining support and dividing society, quoted in the Times:

*"In 1994, people thought white people were going to leave South Africa. They are still here. Where will they go? White people with money in South Africa are poor people in Europe. They are so used to being fed and looked after, they can't clean after themselves."* Saal (2018).

An address given in 2016 reflects similar sentiments quoted in Madia (2016): *"They have been swimming in a pool of privilege; they have been enjoying themselves because they always owned our land. We the rightful owners, our peace was disturbed by the white man's arrival here.... We are not calling for the slaughtering of white people at least for now."*

Malema addresses current land reformation issues by using a racialised and moralising politics to gain support. This is a very genuine issue that South Africans are dealing with and needs to be dealt with. However, his tactics divide society along racial lines and therefore does not enforce a cohesive democratic society. Moralising politics is very dangerous for democratic societies as it creates enemies and opponents (Mouffe, 2005:57). This is dangerous for South Africa's democratic society and prevents groups from building a cohesive and tolerant democratic culture need for democratic consolidation (Diamond, 1993:13).

Another example that reflects similar tactics is seen in Malema's hate speech statement towards the Indian community that was discussed in the previous section (Smit, 2018). Malema's hate speech toward Indian people ostracises them as a minority group. This kind of statement reflects Malema and the EFF's views of other ethnic or racial groups within society to be immoral or inferior to the EFF party. According to Malema (Smit, 2018) Indian individuals carry hatred towards black citizens. This evinces themes of Mouffe's (2005) article of populists that moralise and divides groups within society. By stating that Indians are "racist" Malema is dividing society into moral groups (the EFF) and the immoral (Indians). This threatens the cohesiveness and unity of the diverse cultures present in South Africa's democracy

This is again seen in the incident of hate speech to a member of the DA party that was earlier discussed. Malema warned the opposition party that they would remove the Mayor of PE if they did not comply with the EFF's land policies: "We are going to remove a mayor of PE. Not because he stole the money or anything, because we want to teach these white people that we mean business when we say expropriation of land without compensation," quoted in the Times (2018).

This quote reiterates the racial politics that Malema employs to stir crowds. In this quote Malema speaks of “removing” the DA mayor and then continues on to say the party will cut the throat of the “white man”. Malema seems to equate the DA with the white community. This is dangerous as Malema does not view the party in terms of political competition- instead his “political competitor” has become a race (“white man”). This behaviour and thinking is dangerous as it boxes political parties along racial lines, overlooking diversity, and creates a divide within society. This is arguably populist as it creates an “us” and “them”, a (Mouffe, 2005) and this is not conducive to creating a cohesiveness and unity needed for such a diverse South African society.

A second danger reflected in the above quote, is seen in the party’s intolerance to political opposition. According to Plattner (2010:86) political tolerance is needed to sustain democracy. If populist majority groups or minorities gain too much power this will lead to an imbalance of political power in society. Malema’s statement however reflects a lack of tolerance for political parties that do not hold similar objectives to the EFF. Malema’s strategy is thus to “remove” them. According to Diamond (1993:11) political tolerance and pragmatism is needed for a healthy democratic culture. The EFF’s intolerance to other political and minority groups is thus dangerous to South Africa’s democracy.

#### **4.4.2 Populist tactics of oversimplifying complex issues**

Another populist tactic that the EFF uses that is dangerous to democratic stability is seen in their oversimplification of complex issues and claiming to address these issues with overly simple solutions. Torodov (2012:144) states that populists often try to solve complex issues that societies face with very simple solutions that produce quick results. This is dangerous as populists fail to grasp the complexities and difficulties that a challenge might have and thus will fail to implement the necessary methods to address this. This evident in the EFF’s approach to challenges present in South Africa.

The EFF claim that neo-liberal policies that were adopted by the ANC from post 1994 have compounded the issues of structural unemployment, inequalities that were left behind from the previous apartheid regime (Founding Manifesto, 2013). The EFF’s understanding of these prevailing problems is concerning as the issues are more complex in nature and have more than



one contributing factor that have resulted in the economic challenges that South Africans face today. For example, Bisseker (2017:178) mentions that a contributing factor to levels of high un-employment today is due to inflexible labour-markets of the South African economy which are limited in progressing soon due to a shortage of skills- which is largely affected by education levels and access. This alone illustrates that unemployment is one aspect of the country's economic issues that is complex in nature. The EFF's claim that neo-liberal capitalism is the root cause of economic problems reflects their lack of understanding or the dismissal of the multifaceted nature of these issues. The EFF also claim that these problems can be solved by implementing their socialist policies.

The EFF attempt to address these economic challenges through socialist policies including the Nationalisation of strategic sectors of the economy such as mining (Founding Manifesto, 2013). The party claims these challenges can be solved in a short period of five years (Radical Voice Vol 11, 2016). The EFF's simplification of complex problems with their simple solutions is dangerous in building stable political and economic democratic society.

Another example of this was seen in the analysis of their behaviour and was demonstrated in the EFF's encouragement of illegal land occupation. According to Saal (2018) Malema stated that it was lawful for its supporters to inhabit unoccupied land. This reflects the EFF's tactic to acquire land for marginalised people through unlawful means, instead of going through the proper political regulations, procedures and institutions. According to Zakaria (1997) this is a common tactic used by populists to dismiss regulations and boundaries established within Constitutions, in order to reach their political objectives. This is dangerous for democracy as it undermines the law, the institutions and regulations that protect the freedom and liberty of individuals. This is also therefore dangerous to South Africa's democratic society.

This section has discussed some of the populist tactics that the EFF employ in their rhetoric. These included examples that demonstrated the EFF's oversimplification of complex socio-economic issues with simple solutions, and their tactics of dividing society in an attempt to gain support. These tactics are dangerous to democratic stability as they threaten the unity of democratic society and its stability. According to Plattner (2010:86-87) liberal democracies need a balance of minority and majority interests to ensure pluralism. The EFF's racialised politics and intolerance to minority groups and political opposition threatens this balance of pluralism. Their tactics of creating enemies and dividing society, and behaving intolerantly

towards other groups suppresses political competition and pluralism and thus might lead to an imbalance of power within society in the future, which results in political instability and an imbalance of interests. Their tactics of oversimplifying complex issues is also dangerous to democratic stability. This is seen in the EFF's dismissal of the law and democratic procedures and rules in order to achieve their political objectives. This is dangerous according to Gatson (2018), as populists that demonstrate this kind of behaviour are essentially undermining the legal and constitutional structures and rules that protect individuals' freedom. The EFF's promotion of socialist policies to address genuine socio-economic issues is also dangerous to democracy according to Torodov (2012:145), as these simple and hasty solutions fail to grasp the complexity problems and thus their solutions are not suitable for the long term. Populists try to fix problems with quick results to gain support, and do not address the underlying source of a problem (Torodov, 2012:144). The EFF's policies are therefore not sustainable for democratic stability.

#### **4.5 Discussion of findings**

This analysis has reflected that the EFF's political attitudes and preferences, as well as their behaviour does not promote the process of democratic consolidation. Through investigating the EFF's official political documents this chapter concludes that they do not hold normative democratic attitudes and they do not intrinsically value democracy. This is evident in their explicit rejection of the current neo-liberal democratic norms as well as their promotion of radical political ideals and policies.

An analysis of the EFF's official party documents and various secondary media sources has reflected that the party's political attitudes and preferences, radical policy stances and their behaviour does not promote the process of democratic consolidation. A frequency run on the party's official documents have reflected that their documents express content surrounding themes of their radical policy stances. The word frequency reflected a lack of words and content that is arguably not considered to demonstrate normative and intrinsic democratic support. An investigation and analysis of the EFF's official political documents in this chapter concludes that they do not hold normative democratic norms or intrinsically value democracy. This is evident in their explicit rejection of the current neo-liberal democratic regime and its capitalist

policies, as well as their promotion of radical political preferences. The EFF's foundational ideologies are far Left socialist in nature and thus advocate radical policies such as nationalisation of resources.

The EFF do not demonstrate democratic behaviour, and this is reflected in their failure to follow or use democratic procedures and channels when they contest political ideas or legislation, and instead take matters into their own hands. This was discussed by looking at the EFF's encouragement of illegal land occupation. This was also seen in their disruptive and violent behaviour when they hindered the Sona of 2017 and got involved in a brawl with Parliament's security forces. Not only did this reflect the party's inability to follow important democratic procedures, but they also reflected disobedience to political authority when they refused to leave parliament when Speaker Mbete ordered them to leave. They also demonstrated disrespectful behaviour towards political elites which was seen in their name calling of the former President.

The EFFs behaviour reflected that they are an undisciplined political party that demonstrate a use of violence in their behaviour. This was demonstrated in their threat to violently remove the government "through the barrel of a gun" (Al Jazeera, 2018). This was also seen in their behaviour in Sona 2017; as well as their intimidation of a media representative and individuals when EFF Deputy President Shivambu physically attacked a journalist. The EFF's violent and undisciplined behaviour was also evident in their manner of protests with regards to the H&M clothing advert. This specific example reflected violence in the EFF's protests behaviour when they thrashed various H&M stores across the country, broke windows and stole clothing items which resulted in the need for police to disperse crowds with rubber bullets. This destruction of property is violent in nature. These protests showed the lack of party discipline as some protests in Cape Town were reported to be peaceful, however those in other parts of the country, mainly in Gauteng, were violent. The EFF, leader Julius Malema, also failed to take responsibility for the violent protests of EFF members, whilst also refusing to apologise for this behaviour, which demonstrated the party's acceptance of this kind of behaviour.

Sources that analysed the examples of hate speech that some the party's members were guilty of also reflects undemocratic behaviour displayed by the EFF. This was discussed by looking at the hate speech by the party's leaders towards minority groups (which was towards the Indian community in this example) as well as towards political opposition parties (the DA). This

behaviour was not only unconstitutional, but it also displayed the EFF's behaviour and attitude of disregard for minority groups and intolerance towards political competition and other political groups. This behaviour reflected a transgression of the Constitution and intolerance towards other groups within society.

One of the interesting findings of analysing the EFF's behaviour and political attitudes and preferences, is that the party is characteristically inconsistent with what they claim they do and stand for, and what they actually do. This is evident in many examples within the data that has been analysed. One example of this was seen in the EFF's advocacy for unity in the country and the African continent (What are the EFF, 2018) and their claim to support minority groups and rights which is expressed in their Declaration (2013). In both these examples the EFF claim to support ideals of unity and assert themselves as a party concerned with minority interests, however an analysis of the news articles has shown that they are actually intolerant towards other political parties and they have been found guilty of hate speech towards minority groups. This was seen in the party's use of hate speech to the members of the Indian community and opposition parties.

A second example that reflects the party's inconsistency in their behaviour and their statements is seen in their undisciplined protests. The EFF claim that they are a party who refrain from the destruction and burning of schools and infrastructure to impose their own will (Radical Voice Vol 13, 2016), however an analysis of their behaviour has shown that EFF members have been guilty of the destruction of stores seen in their protests against the H&M advert. In this particular incident, Malema, party's leader dismissed this behaviour and was unapologetic for the destructive protests.

Another section within in their Election Manifesto (2016) also reflects contradictory behaviour of the party. The EFF claim that its leaders or "revolutionary councillors" of the party lead by example and democratic behaviour of integrity, however leaders have been found to display behaviour that contrasts these statements. Malema was found guilty of hate speech to minorities and Shivambu was guilty of intimidating an individual who represented independent media. Their behaviour shown that their leaders do not always behave with integrity. This again is shows that the party's behaviour contradicts their ideals in their founding documents.

In another example, the EFF claim to use democratic channels and procedures in dealing them strive towards Economic Emancipation (Radical Voice Vol 35, 2016). This again is questionable as an analysis of their behaviour has shown that they do not adhere to democratic procedures (seen in their behaviour during the 2017 Sona, as well as their illegal occupation of land).

## **4.6 Conclusion**

An analysis of the EFF's party documents and secondary media sources have reflected that the party does not reflect intrinsic and normative political preferences, moderate policy stances or behaviour supportive of democratic ideals and procedures. This has been discussed by running a word frequency on the EFF's party documents, which reflected that the content of their documents mainly expressed radical policies and a lack of content that arguably does not show intrinsic and normative democratic support. A thorough analysis of the documents also demonstrated that the party's attitudes and political policy preferences are not supportive of democracy or moderate policies. This has been discussed by the EFF's rejection of democratic norms and practices, as well as their promotion of radical, socialist policies. An analysis of the EFF's behaviour reflected that the party makes use of and incites violence; disregards the Constitution and law; transgresses political actors' authority; does not uphold democratic procedures and is intolerant of other political and minority groups. This behaviour is arguably not reflective of support for democratic procedures, ideals and norms. The third section of this chapter also discussed the EFF's use of populist tactics that are harmful to democracy. This discussed the party's tactics of oversimplifying genuine, complex socio-economic problems as well as their tactics of separating society into moral groups to create support.

The EFF's lack of intrinsic and normative democratic support demonstrated in their attitudes and behaviour is dangerous for South Africa's democratic consolidation. According to Diamond (2016:126) in order for countries to reach democratic consolidation there needs to be support for democracy and its legitimacy. If citizens and political actors do not view democracy to be legitimate, then it is likely to break down. It is therefore imperative for society to build a resilient democratic culture. A democratic culture that promotes democratic pragmatism and develops a unity and cohesiveness within their "public spirit" will strengthen support for a democratic regime and will promote political competition and egalitarianism within society.

The EFF's anti-democratic attitudes, policy preferences and behaviour however do not demonstrate support for democracy to be legitimate. The party thus presents a challenge in developing a pragmatic democratic culture and public spirit of unity. Their attitudes and behaviour are therefore not conducive to South Africa's democratic consolidation. The following chapter will conclude this thesis.

## **Chapter Five**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This final chapter will provide an overview of how the populist party, the EFF's rise to power holds a threat for South African democratic consolidation. This will be done by discussing how the EFF's attitudes, political preferences and policies are inconsistent and incongruent with democratic norms and intrinsic values needed to strengthen democratic consolidation. It will also discuss how the party's radical policies and undemocratic behaviour and dangerous populist tactics pose a threat towards building a strong democratic culture that is necessary for democratic consolidation. This final chapter will start with a concise chapter overview, as well as a summary and discussion of the main findings. The last two sections will look at the limitations of this study and present future research recommendations.

### **5.2 Overview of Chapters**

Chapter one noted the worldwide trend of declining support for neo-liberal democratic ideas and a revival of populist politics, as has been discussed by Hadiz and Chryssogelos (2017), and Norris and Inglehart (2016), amongst others. This has been present in South Africa too, seen with the rise of the populist party, the EFF. For some South Africans, democracy has not satisfied their expectations, which has been evident in the social unrest among many young, marginalised and economically disadvantaged citizens across the country. The current political and economic climate (where poor governance and corruption is rife, and unemployment and poverty are prevalent) has left many young citizens angered, discontent, and resentful towards the current ANC Government (Malala, 2015). As a result, many young South Africans have attempted to channel their frustrations through violent protests and have sought out political alternatives to address their interests (Dawson, 2014; Hart, 2013; Nieftagodien, 2015). These challenges have created ripe conditions for populism to flourish, which has consequently led to the rise of the EFF party according to Forde (2014) and Nieftagodien (2015).

A study of the literature has shown that while some scholars acknowledge the EFF as a populist party in South Africa, the political party and its policies and behaviour remains understudied. One possible reason for this, as discussed in Chapter One, is that the party was only formed in 2013 (Shivambu and Smith, 2014). As the third largest party in South Africa, in terms of social support, an in-depth analysis of the EFF's political attitudes, policies and behaviour is imperative. This thesis thus aimed to answer the question of whether the EFF's rise to power

holds a threat for South Africa's democratic consolidation, by analysing the party's attitudes and behaviour. Further sub-questions looked specifically at whether the political preferences of the EFF were consistent with democratic norms, whether their behaviour was tolerant of other groups, and whether their policies are inclusive within a pluralistic democratic society.

Chapter Two explored literature that looked specifically at the various conceptualisations of populism by different authors as well as the various sources from which populism derives. The main conceptualisations of populism included: populism as ideology (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013); populism as movements (Jansen, 2011); populism as "the people" (Arditi, 2006; Jansen, 2011; Davila, 2000); populism as style (Moffit and Tormey, 2014) and populism as politics (Laclau, 2005). The two key sources of populism that were discussed were classified into two main groups of thought: the first being *Domestic Structural and Social Ruptures*, and the second being *Global Social and Structural ruptures*. Domestic sources focused largely on various sources of populism that originated within a state, such as poor governance (Jou, 2012); 'fractious conflict' (Moyo and Yeros, 2011); self-serving elitism (Pabst, 2016); the development of MIT (Middle Income Trap) countries Luiz (2015) and structural state development (Laclau, 1978). Global sources of populism focused on cultural and economic changes within societies that were caused by the globalisation process as discussed by authors such as, Hadiz and Chryssogelos (2017) and Inglehart and Norris (2016). This chapter also looked at some of the dangerous political tactics that many populist groups employ to acquire support; discussing the works of Canovan (1999), Arditi (2005), Mouffe (2005), Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013), Thompson (2018), Plattner (2010) and Zakaria (1997). The third and final part of this chapter presented the Analytical Framework that would be used to analyse the implications of the EFF's political attitudes and behaviour on South Africa's prospect for democratic consolidation. Schedler's (2001) Behavioural, Attitudinal and Structural indicators of democratic consolidation were identified as the analytical framework. Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan's (2013) article was also used to look at political attitudes and radical and moderate policy preferences that were applied to the analysis of the EFF later in Chapter Four.

This thesis focused on the Behavioural and Attitudinal indicators in the analysis of the EFF, while the Structural Indicators, namely the socio-economic and institutional context were noted in Chapter Three. In this contextual chapter, it was highlighted that South Africa's socio-economic context provided fertile conditions for the rise and flourishing of populism in South Africa, and as a result, the rise of the EFF.



Chapter Three therefore looked at the rise of populism within the African continent and specifically at the conditions that led to the rise of populism in South Africa. The ideas of socialism and nationalism were identified as having provided social conducive contexts for the rise of populism in Africa (Sklar, 1988; Thomson, 2000; and Ottaway, 2010). These socialist influences similarly and greatly influenced anti-apartheid political movements such as the ANC liberation movements (among others) in South Africa (Gumede, 2006). Today, similar ideologies have been adopted by the populist party the EFF. The rise of the EFF is explained by a ‘fertile’ structural context- great expectation of the state as imbued by socialist ideologies, the reality of unemployment, poverty and inequality, combined with poor and corrupt governance, leaving many young citizens marginalised and resentful towards the current ANC government. Thus, high levels of unemployment and poverty, and poor government management of resources, has led to a rise of anti-democratic behaviour and attitudes among political actors and citizens. These grave socio-economic challenges have provided rich conditions for populism to flourish within South Africa, leaving many young, financially disadvantaged and politically dissatisfied citizens to turn to alternative forms of representation (Hart, 2013; Dawson, 2014; Gumede,2013; Bisseker, 2017).

Chapter Three has further discussed elements and characteristics that classify the EFF party as distinctly populist. This has been done by noting that the EFF presents itself as being the voice and representative of “the people” (Mngxitama,2011; Shivambu and Smith, 2014); the party’s rejection of liberal democratic norms and practices (Mbete (2014) and Booysen (2015); the party’s use of political symbolism and drawing inspiration from previous anti-apartheid struggle movements (Shivambu and Smith, 2014; Mbete, 2016; Forde, 2014; and Martin, 2012); the party’s socialist ideology (Shivambu and Smith, 2014) and lastly, the party’s use of emotive rhetoric that has been discussed with reference to various official party documents.

The Fourth identified and analysed the EFF’s political preferences, attitudes, policies, behaviour and populist tactics. This has been done by using the Analytical framework in Chapter Two. The data collected was analysed with computer software-assistance calledAtlas ti. The data collected consisted of the EFF’s official party documents (that are publicly available online) and newspaper articles that have reported on the party’s behaviour and significant incidents. The discussion of these findings will be provided in the following section.

### **5.3 Discussion and Summary of Findings**

The aim of this thesis was to determine whether the EFF's rise to power holds a threat to South Africa's democratic consolidation. It was therefore necessary to look at whether the party's political attitudes, policies and behaviour are consistent in developing a supportive democratic culture, which according to Diamond (1993:12) is necessary to strengthen democratic consolidation. An analysis of the data has concluded that the EFF does not have an intrinsic understanding of democracy (thus it sees democracy as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself) and it does not support moderate policies that are consistent with the democratic ideals and principles, and their behaviour is also an expression of this.

The first part of this analysis dealt specifically with analysing what political attitudes and ideologies drive the EFF. Their policy stances were also discussed. A frequency of the words and terms expressed in the party's official documents have shown the ideas communicated in the data are not centred around themes or ideals of democracy. While running term frequencies can be limiting, as the meaning and relationship between words may be lost (which conveys the context), they are useful in communicating the main ideas and values expressed within a text (Dym, 1985:67). A frequency analysis has reflected that the EFF's official documents have shown that the main ideas expressed are around themes such as: socialism; the economy; a class struggle; jobs; revolution; militancy; municipalities and land. These themes do not reflect any attitudinal indicators around democratic values, policies or practices such as the importance of free elections; upholding democratic procedures and rules etc.

An analysis of the official party documents has also reflected that the EFF's policies are radical in nature, and their political attitudes and preferences are not in line with democratic norms. This is seen in: their rejection of the current democratic status quo; their ideological foundation derived from Marxist-Leninist and Fanonian thought; their radical, socialist policy stances; their desire to take over government through "revolutionary means", even a willingness to do so "with the barrel of a gun" and in their urgency to do so. These indicators according to Schedler (2001) and Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013) reflect a lack of intrinsic and normative democratic attitudes and behaviour, and also reflects radical policies that are not conducive towards strengthening democratic consolidation.

The second part of the analysis looked closely at incidents and behaviour of the EFF that reflected undemocratic behaviour. This was done by analysing various media articles that reported on the behaviour of the EFF. In order to ensure a reliable and more accurate analysis,

methods of triangulation were applied to this section of the analysis by using numerous newspaper articles that reported on one specific event. The number of media articles and reports on the EFF were plentiful, and for this reason, Schedler's (2001) Behavioural Indicators were used as a "sieve" to extract media pieces that reflected these indicators. An analysis has shown that the EFF have displayed evidence that can be argued to reflect undemocratic behaviour. This has been evident in their disruptions of the Sona 2017 in parliament; their violent intimidation of media representatives; their violent and disruptive methods of protesting seen in the H&M incident; their disregard for the law by encouraging unlawful land occupation; their hate speech towards minority groups, their hate speech to political opposition party members and their violent threats to physically remove the present government from office.

These incidents have reflected that the EFF makes use of violence in protesting and intimidation of representatives of the press which is classified as undemocratic behaviour according to Schedler (2001:71-72). Their use of hate speech towards minority groups and political opposition party members also reflects their undermining of the South African Constitution, which is a transgression of the law, undermines the principles of pluralism, and thus is also undemocratic (Schedler, 2001:71-72). This is also demonstrated their attitudes of political intolerance, obstinance and their inability to interact with other groups within democratic society in a pragmatic manner. The EFF thus do not promote healthy democratic competition in the political area which is a result of radical political preferences as Mainwaring and Pérez-Linan (2013:125) state. The EFF's behaviour has also shown that they undermine democratic procedures and regulations that are necessary for strengthening democratic consolidation (Schedler, 2001:71-72). This is seen in their disruptions of Parliament in the Sona of 2017, as well as their encouragement of illegal land occupation. Their behaviour is thus argued to show indicators of undemocratic behaviour. A democracy needs democrats, while violence and the willingness to employ and incite violence, outside of the legal means is widely recognised as the anti-thesis of democratic behaviour.

The last section of the analysis looked specifically at whether the EFF employ dangerous populist tactics (that were discussed in Chapter 2) to gain support. This has been discussed by analysing their use of emotive language and symbolism of the anti-apartheid struggle to evoke strong nationalistic sentiments. These tactics are dangerous for democratic social cohesion, as the EFF's rhetoric tends divide society, often along racial and political lines. The EFF build their identity and political objectives on their supposed "revolutionary morality", which is another tactic that divides society along supposed "us versus them" lines of morality.

Another tactic that the party often use is their presentation of simple solutions that aim to address very genuine and complex problems many South Africans are struggling with. This has been discussed by referring to the EFF's socialist policy objectives, and their aim to implement them in a short period of time.

The analysis of the EFF's attitudes, policy preferences, behaviour and populist tactics is significant in understanding how the party's rise is dangerous towards South Africa's democratic consolidation. These findings have demonstrated that the EFF is does not uphold the fundamental norms and ideals that are necessary in promoting a strong democratic culture. According to Diamond (1993:12-13) developing a democratic culture is paramount in establishing harmony, integration and political stability within a country. If political actors do not have intrinsically democratic attitudes and behaviour, then they weaken levels of democratic legitimacy, and thus weaken efforts in consolidating democracy (Diamond, 1993:13). The EFF therefore pose a danger to South Africa's democracy, and if the party should gain more support in the coming elections, this could weaken the country's consolidation.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

One of the limitations of this study is that the analysis has primarily looked at data from the EFF's formation up until today (2013-2018). This limits the analysis to a specific and relatively short period of time.

Further limitations were acknowledged in Chapter Four. The use of secondary sources, such as the media is limiting, as the analysis is based on indirect observations. To overcome the potential bias in media sources, methods of triangulation were implemented. Other limitations that occurred during the data collection was that of the main news sources that were chosen, some did not always have independent reports, and often used sources from a different newspaper, and in some cases, the articles were very similar if not the same. This weakened the implementation of triangulation to the data.

#### **5.5 Future Recommendations for further Research**

The objectives of this thesis have demonstrated the value of analysing actors' political preferences, attitudes, policies and behaviour. The analysis of the EFF's radical policies were only briefly discussed, and for this reason, a possible area of research could investigate the party's policies more closely, with special reference to current land expropriation issues that are important political topics in South Africa with long term-social and economic implications.

The EFF's foundational ideology and policies are rooted in socialist thinking, inspired by Marxist-Leninist and Fanonian thought. For this reason, another possible area for further investigation would be to compare other case studies of Leftist populist groups within other African or South American contexts.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

This thesis has provided an analysis of the EFF's political attitudes, policy preferences, behaviour and their populist tactics. The findings of this analysis argue that EFF's political attitudes and behaviour are not conducive to South Africa's democratic consolidation. This has been demonstrated by discussing the party's rejection of current democratic norms; their adoption of anti-democratic socialist ideology; their promotion of radical policies and various examples of anti-democratic behaviour. This has also been demonstrated by discussing various populist tactics the EFF employ that are dangerous to South Africa's democracy. With the 2019 national and provincial elections looming, the election outcomes, especially whether the EFF's social support will increase or decline, are closely linked to the future prospects for South Africa's burgeoning democracy.

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