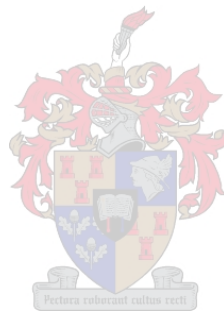


The National Democratic Revolution:
A 'Utopian' Blueprint for South Africa

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Abstract

The topic of utopian thought has seen a resurgence as a field of study, the vision of a perfect society being an alluring prospect for many. Using this ideal to guide one's thoughts in an effort at self-improvement is harmless, but imposing a subjective definition of perfection upon others, however, is dangerous. The ANC's guiding political project, the National Democratic Revolution, is a utopian aspiration. The way in which the party wishes to set about achieving its goals could have dire consequences for South Africa's fragile democracy.

This thesis intended to answer the question: Does the African National Congress (ANC) aim to achieve a totalitarian utopia through the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR)? And as an ancillary question: How has Marxism influenced the ANC and does it remain influential as an ideology in the ANC, and has its form evolved? This investigation was undertaken through a case study design and qualitative research approach. Using Atlas.ti, key terms were coded and the party's language in their strategy and tactics documents from 1969 to 2017 were analysed. The key terms were based on an understanding of the endpoint of utopias being totalitarianism (to answer the main research question) and on one of the three main ideological strands within the ANC, namely Marxism, which was anticipated to have influenced the ANC's policy documents (to answer the secondary research questions).

The findings revealed that although South Africa is not a totalitarian state, the ANC's NDR can be considered a blueprint for a totalitarian utopia because it is aspirational. Significantly, the terms 'societal leader' and 'transformation' were most prevalent throughout the period analysed. These terms, commonly associated with totalitarian and utopian tendencies, imply that the ANC views itself as occupying a position higher than that of an ordinary political party in that it deems itself to possess the ability to transform society towards their definition of perfection. This deeply Marxist aspiration, as will become evident from the analysis, remains influential in the party. This prevalence of a multitude of anti-democratic tendencies does not bode well for the future of South Africa's democracy. Simply because we no longer see rigidly totalitarian regimes does not mean their spirit has faded away completely.

Opsomming

Die onderwerp van utopiese denke het 'n herlewing as 'n studieveld gesien, die visie van 'n perfekte samelewing is 'n aanloklike vooruitsig vir baie. Om hierdie ideaal te gebruik om 'n mens se gedagtes te lei in 'n poging tot selfverbetering is skadeloos, om 'n subjektiewe definisie van perfeksie op ander af te dwing, is egter gevaarlik. Die ANC se leidende politieke projek, die Nasionale Demokratiese Revolusie, is 'n utopiese strewe. Die manier waarop hulle wil aanpak om die doelwitte wat daarin vervat is, te bereik, kan verskriklike gevolge vir Suid-Afrika se brose demokrasie hê.

Hierdie proefskrif was bedoel om te antwoord: Beoog die African National Congress (ANC) om 'n totalitêre utopie te bereik deur die bloudruk van die Nasionale Demokratiese Revolusie (NDR)? En hoe het Marxisme die ANC beïnvloed en bly Marxisme as ideologie invloedryk in die ANC, en het die vorm daarvan ontwikkel? Dit is bereik met 'n gevallestudie-ontwerp en kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering. Gebruik Atlas. ti sleutelsterme is gekodeer en die party se taal binne hul Strategie- en Taktiekdokumente van 1969 tot 2017 is ontleed. Die sleutelsterme is getrek uit die begrip van utopieë eindpunt, naamlik totalitarisme (om die hoofnavorsingsvraag te beantwoord) en een van die drie hoof ideologiese rigtings binne die ANC, Marxisme, wat na verwagting die ANC se beleidsdokumente sou beïnvloed (om die sekondêre antwoord te gee). navorsingsvrae).

Die bevindinge het aan die lig gebring dat alhoewel Suid-Afrika nie 'n totalitêre staat is nie, die ANC se NDR as 'n bloudruk vir 'n totalitêre utopie beskou kan word omdat dit aspirerend is. Van belang was die terme 'Societal Leader' en 'Transformation', wat die meeste voorgekom het deur die tydperk wat ontleed is. Hierdie terme, geassosieer met totalitêre en utopiese neigings, lei af dat die ANC hulself beskou as 'n posisie hoër as dié van 'n gewone politieke party. Verder beskik hulle oor die vermoë om die samelewing te transformeer na hul definisie van perfeksie. Dit is op sy beurt ook diep Marxisties, 'n ideologie wat, soos blyk uit die analise, steeds invloedryk bly. Hierdie voorkoms van 'n menigte anti-demokratiese neigings voorspel niks goeds vir die toekoms van Suid-Afrika se demokrasie nie. Bloot omdat ons nie meer totalitêre regimes sien nie, beteken dit nie dat hul gees heeltemal verdwyn het nie.

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List of Acronyms

AA	Affirmative Action
ANC	African National Congress
BBBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
COSATU	The Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
NP	National Party
S&T	Strategy and Tactics
SACP	South African Communist Party

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Chapter I – Research Plan

1.1 Background and Rationale

Utopias, as a set of ideas for what the “perfect” society might look like, has been a perennial topic of significant interest. However, despite the numerous efforts made by political scientists to formulate a precise definition, there is still much debate regarding the complexity and evolution of this idea as it consistently pushes the limits of political understanding. Utopian thought has on numerous occasions demonstrated its appeal to people worldwide, yet the troubling factor is that following the path towards the “best” version of society has often yielded catastrophic results, characterized by unchecked political power and dystopian nightmares (Arendt, 1973; Magstadt, 2017; Gilison, 1975; Huxley, 2006). Ideas of utopian perfection have been widely documented and critiqued, but have yet to receive due attention in a South African setting. Perhaps this is due to utopian thought not being so plainly visible in the South African political and social landscape. However, upon closer inspection, the African National Congress (ANC) may have been subscribing to utopian thought for decades already.

A point of departure for understanding utopias today must first consider that Western political philosophy already has numerous utopian blueprints which outline how thinkers in the past attempted to construct the ideal society. Magstadt (2017) has described four of the most famous utopias. The first of these was Plato’s *Republic*; the key to his perfect social order was to be found in philosophy. This meant that his society could not exist unless the absolutely wisest philosophers ruled in positions of power. To keep order and ensure the lower class remained in check, an ideology was spread by philosopher kings propounding that all people belonged to one collective family, which was one of the earlier appeals to a nationalism that held the Republic together (Chrostowska and Ingram, 2016). While Plato’s *Republic* was an experiment of political thought, the second utopian blueprint outlined in Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* was deemed possible. Bacon describes an island on which knowledge production is central to the extent that science is used for the benefit of man. According to Magstadt (2017), this technological utopia did not seek to completely revolutionize existing society, but was rather an invitation into a world where science and social progress could flourish together unhindered. The third utopia was envisioned by Karl Marx; unlike his predecessors he offered a critique of the current social order to justify the need for complete revolution (Chrostowska and Ingram, 2016). An end to human misery could only be achieved through radical transformation of

economic relationships, ultimately resulting in a classless society. The final noteworthy utopian blueprint offered in Western political philosophy is B. F. Skinner's (1948) *Walden Two*. The key to this utopia was rooted in behavioural psychology. Skinner was more concerned with how to bring about the envisioned utopia and less with its form or content. These utopias may claim to have offered blueprints for a "perfect" society, but the problem in pursuing each of them is how to change thought into action.

Utopias represent much more than simple dreams; scholars have noted concerning trends particularly in Central Europe surrounding the consequences of using the idea of utopia to pursue a better society. Grey and Garsten (2002) note that the horror and suffering experienced by so many Europeans during the 20th century can be attributed to leaders like Hitler in Germany and Stalin in the Soviet Union actively pursuing utopias. Schapiro (1972) warns that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that utopianism as a mode of political theorization that drives the organization of human society bears an uncanny resemblance to totalitarianism. This comparison is not unfounded; utopian blueprints offer their visionaries a path to their ideal futuristic society. However, these ideals may not be shared by all who form part of this society, hence the principal obstacle to utopian thought is human nature itself (Magstadt, 2017; Grey and Garsten, 2002). To overcome this resistance, forced conformity through coercion is inevitable; the least harmful example of this can be found in Plato's *Republic* as the way to reach a perfect social order was simply to lie to everyone about their place within it. But the opposite can also be true which is most troubling; utopia can be achieved through extreme measures as applied in the likes of Stalin's and Hitler's regimes (Chrostowska and Ingram, 2016). This reveals the inherent problem in utopian thought; there is nothing wrong with using the idea of a "perfect" society to fuel the desire to better oneself. The breakdown occurs when one starts to actively pursue this ideal over everything else; the transition from thought to action hardly ever considers the consequences of getting from here to there, and the result is usually totalitarianism, which entails, according to Magstadt (2017), imposing total control over all spheres of state and society.

Despite the plentiful warning signs throughout history that futuristic utopian blueprints for "perfect" social order do not produce positive results, South Africa – specifically the ruling ANC – still clings to their national project, the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), arguably a utopian blueprint. While there are numerous studies detailing the ANC's long history with their national project, few commentators have applied a holistic approach to the

NDR from the perspective of utopian and totalitarian thought. Hence, the danger utopian blueprints pose to society has not been sufficiently addressed in South Africa. Therefore, this study will derive from the literature on utopias an analytical framework to analyse the intentions behind the ANC's National Democratic Revolution.

1.2 Preliminary Literature Review

South Africa's negotiated transition can be described as nothing short of a "miracle", transitioning from the oppressive apartheid regime to a flourishing democracy which promotes multiracialism justifies this apt description (du Toit and De Jager, 2014). However, it must be noted that many scholars have since outlined the lasting legacies of apartheid still present within the ANC today, these studies have not used the same utopian lens applied in this research but they successfully highlight important factors to consider during the early years of transition as well as in more contemporary times. Unpacking these works makes for an interesting exploration of the ANC's ideological foundations, which have remained unchanged after they came into power in 1994.

Although none of these studies makes use of the utopian lens applied in this research, they nonetheless offer valuable indicators of the threat posed by Marxist ideology and totalitarian utopian thinking. These are not to be taken lightly as they are constitutive of real threats to South African democracy; in this regard the shared consensus in the literature is that democratic consolidation has yet to be achieved, as is evident in the continued salience of the NDR as well as the democratic deconsolidation during the Zuma years (Fredericks, 2019; Kotze and Loubser, 2017).

In analysing the South African case, numerous authors note that the NDR was not the first natural ideological framework that could have been adopted by the ANC as the party consists of Pan-Africanists, liberal constitutionalists, and Marxists. Thus, many of the political issues gripping South Africa were approached by some struggle leaders with a Christian and peaceful resolution in mind (de Jager, 2009; Venter et al., 2019). However, it was understandably difficult to continue along this peaceful ideological path when consistent severe oppression was being imposed on black South Africans, hence the idea of political resistance is only made more appealing through this (Venter et al., 2019; Jeffery and Cronje, 2010). Suttner (2010) seems to echo this sentiment as he argues that tactics of non-violence against an intransigent regime would not have yielded any results but been essentially a fruitless exercise. This claim

is not unfounded, as history has repeatedly demonstrated that revolution can be fomented if people are unjustly oppressed, culminating more often than not in the violent removal of the prevailing government. The NDR was never the first strategic point of call for the ANC; Albert Luthuli famously adopted a Christian standpoint when he proclaimed, “The road to freedom is via the cross”, yet even this stance within the ANC changed over time (Lal, 2014). The literature reveals that the Marxist analysis of revolutions throughout history became dominant in the South African liberation movements, namely the SACP and ANC, which adopted this ideology in a wholesale manner.

In addressing the adoption of the NDR by the South African liberation movements, Filatova (2012) very importantly traces the ideological contents and language of the NDR back to Lenin’s Soviet Russia. She argues this ideology is based upon Lenin’s theorizing on national liberation movements, claiming that imperialism lies at the heart of oppression and all colonial states should join together to fight back (Filatova, 2012; Johnson, 2011). In this way a nation, and specifically colonies led by communists, that had not yet reached the capitalist stage of development could potentially skip it and avoid the supposed detrimental effects. There seems to be consensus in the literature on one of the most defining moments for the NDR in South Africa; the late 1950s saw Karen Brutents put forward the ideas and aspirations of a National Democratic Revolution; if carried out, this could lead to the total restructuring of society as the imperialist and capitalist structures would be torn down alongside any colonialist tendencies (Filatova, 2012; Johnson, 2011; Moore, 2010). The NDR was no longer merely just an ideology positing numerous ideals; it was given physical substance which could be acted upon. Henceforth, the outcome of NDR could not be anything but socialism in one of its most completely realised forms, not merely a mode of non-capitalist development but a deeply entrenched orientation towards socialism. Du Toit and de Jager (2014), alongside Filatova (2012), stress that although this ideology has its genesis in the USSR and should have been abandoned with the downfall of the Soviet Union, its ideas are still deeply ingrained in South Africa’s political sphere, even though Russia itself had retracted it.

Despite South Africa still enjoying democracy after several decades, political studies offer a stern warning to prevent future disillusionment, because the soviet legacy will not simply disappear (Filatova, 2012; Venter et al., 2009). Johnson (2011) asserts that the ANC has yet to exercise its power to work towards implementing the NDR; to build it, despite this it will still occur given its lingering presence. There are very few (if any) positive non-aligned

interpretations of the NDR to be found within the limited literature on the topic and rightfully so. Before the turmoil of the Jacob Zuma era, de Jager (2009) had suggested that the ANC would need to address the conflicting ideologies within its own make-up, as the communist strand still persists. The NDR remains the national project of the ANC in thought and in principle as they consistently reaffirm their commitment to the project, the consequences of acting upon this must be given consideration.

1.3 Problem Statement

Given the limited inquiry into the National Democratic Revolution through the lens of utopian political thought, this study will analyse and assess whether the ANC aims to achieve a Marxist utopia through its national project; consideration will also be given to answering the question of whether there is a continued prevalence of Marxist thinking and whether there has been a shift in its form. The period of the apartheid struggle and the post-1994 election era is of particular interest, as the Marxist elements remain strong regardless of the democratic transition. We have yet to see an ANC completely committed in its totality to deepening and consolidating democracy in South Africa; the party remains fragmented as factions of its internal membership struggle for ideological supremacy. The ever-looming cause for concern is that the NDR was acted upon during the Zuma administration, suggesting that the events associated with state capture revealed a disregard for constitutional rules and values in pursuit of a utopian ideal. The near complete erosion of state bureaucracy demonstrated that this utopian thought holds no regard for what happens during the process of trying to get from here to there. Despite the dissatisfaction with democratic governance amongst South Africans being as high as 56% in 2021 as indicated by Roberts (2022:11), the NDR controversially remains the ANC's national project.

1.4 Research Questions

Given the internal turmoil within the ANC and their continued pursuit of the NDR, the primary objective of this study is to determine, through adopting the theoretical framework of utopian thinking, whether the NDR is envisaged as representing South Africa's future utopia. As such, the central question of this study is:

- 1) Does the ANC aim to achieve a totalitarian utopia through the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution?
- 2) Has Marxist ideology influenced the ANC?
 - a) Does it remain influential?

b) Has its form adapted in any way?

1.5 Research Design and Methodology

Since South Africa is the focus of this study, it will use a qualitative case study research design. This design was chosen as it places the emphasis on a single case, thereby allowing for a focused analysis. A focused analysis allows for a comprehensive understanding and greater depth of insight in trying to answer the research question. As Burnham et al. (2008:63) note, a single case study design provides the researcher with the advantage of “focusing on a single individual, group, community, event, policy or institution by studying it in depth”. Hence this focus allows one to home in on the complex mechanisms at play within the case study, allowing for the potential to produce rich, in-depth analysis of the subject matter. Despite the case study design being considered the most appropriate, the researcher is aware of potential issues related to bias which could filter into the study (Lambrechts, 2014). The researcher also acknowledges that the generalizations derived from the research findings may also be difficult to apply to broader contexts (Yin, 2009:50). However, these disadvantages are addressed through the use of specific indicators identified within the analytical framework. Hence, by making use of a flexible, theoretically sound, and explicit analytical framework, the problem of bias and generalizations can be overcome.

Primary data add a great level of richness and in-depth insight into this specific research field, because the NDR represents the ANC’s national project contained within their Strategies and Tactics documents, which will be the primary sources for the study. The research method will be a systematic desktop content analysis of the documentation from six of the ANC’s national policy conference documents. These documents are produced every five years, which means they are the most complete overview of the ANC’s political thinking and policy directions. The ways in which these documents reveal the ANC’s aspirations are linked to the language and terminology used in them, for example, repetitive indications of a striving towards centralized power and an elevated status over the state reveal the presence of utopian and totalitarian thought.

Although case studies make possible a deeper understanding, Cassim (2021) cautions that data should not be collected in isolation; multiple sets of data should be gathered and consulted. Friese (2012) notes that if researchers need assistance in qualitative data analysis, they make use of Atlas.ti, which is computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). Many

qualitative researchers have used this tool as it increases the validity of data. Its basic function is to create and code text; coding in this instance refers to the process of assigning themes to segments of information, categories, and concepts (Olsen, 2012). The process of coding is vital to this research as a means of data collection. The research method will be a content and document analysis of all six of the ANC's Strategies and tactics (S&T) documents organized systematically. These documents were chosen because they represent the most comprehensive collection of the ANC's political thought. They are also some of the most frequently updated documents as they are reassessed every five years to include the ANC's new goals and aspirations. The concepts of strategy and tactics are defined in the 2002 ANC S&T document as:

“Strategy represents the broad definition of the ultimate objectives of struggle: in brief, what kind of society we seek to create, the forces that are objectively the drivers of the struggle, and the forces arraigned against them. Tactics are the variety of methods used to attain those objectives, including the instruments used to wage the struggle and how to mobilise and organise the motive forces.”

(ANC, 2002:1)

This study will only look at the S&T documents from the national conferences, namely from 1969, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017. Although they represent the aspirations of the ANC, there is a limitation to using these documents as they are written by the ANC hence they describe what the ANC want to be portrayed to the public. Despite this, they are still the most accurate representation of the ANC's aspirations for South Africa's future.

Atlas.ti allows for all six of the ANC's S&T documents to be uploaded and coded with the relevant key terms. Atlas.ti has many benefits with the most significant being its relatively low cost and ability to store large amounts of data. Burnham et al. (2008) state that the researcher should still be mindful of potential drawbacks' interpreting qualitative data can produce a deepening of research findings, but it can also be misleading if the interpretation is not done appropriately. Proper interpretation brings to light recurrent themes within text or speech which can often denote the foundational ideals and values of the writer or speaker. However, the researcher is aware of the limitations as what data is selected and processed can only be done up to a certain degree.

1.6 Analytical Framework

The research design which has been outlined implies that the use of analytical framework will be employed, this is done to focus the analysis and provide clear indicators when assessing the NDR. Hannah Arendt, in her influential work on the origins of totalitarianism which first appeared in 1951 inspired the classic model of totalitarianism by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1956). Guo (1998:279) notes that the pair identified six attributes associated with totalitarianism, namely “an official and exclusive ideology, a single centralized party led by a powerful leader, a system of secret police terror, control over the economy by the state, communications, and coercion”. While these are more than satisfactory, they do assume that if even one of these elements is missing, then a state of totalitarianism is not present. Therefore, there is a need to refine the model in a sense which clearly outlines those characteristics that are completely essential in comparison to ones that are more operational in nature. Guo (1998) offers a redefined totalitarian model which is more specific in its indicators without the need to stretch the concept to the point of risking loss of conceptual rigor. The model suggests four components for analysis:

1. Philosophical absolutism
2. Goals
3. Pillars
4. Methods and Mechanisms.

The core difference between the classical model and this redefined account is that the first three components are seen as absolutely essential while the fourth is simply a way to maintain the first three (Guo, 1998). Although the analytical framework will be unpacked extensively in later chapters, it is worth briefly outlining the core content of each component as related to totalitarianism. ***Philosophical absolutism*** highlights that those in places of political power feel they are possessors of absolute truth, the ability to guide and shape society lies entirely with them. ***Goals*** speaks directly to utopian thinking which usually has Marxist-Leninist connotations; the only goal is that of a human society which is predefined by the leaders and all humans within society are subject to their precepts; the outcome here is generally communism (Guo, 1998). ***Pillars*** defines the strict ideology to which the whole of society is supposed to adhere to; this will form the basis of the new political and social order to be installed as defined by a centralized power. The last component of ***Methods and Mechanisms*** are not essential to the basic character of the totalitarian regime, but they form the protective

operational means which allow the essential components to thrive. Having a set of clearly defined components to apply to the NDR should make conducting the analyses easier; it must be made clear that the researcher is not suggesting South Africa is a totalitarian state, but the framework will act as a lens whereby one can attempt to determine if the ANC's NDR can be considered a blueprint for a utopian (i.e. totalitarian) future.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitation of the Study

The chosen methodology for this study does have some limitations. One of these is the research design, as a desktop analysis relies on the use of secondary sources which may reflect the potential biases of the respective authors (Britz, 2011:9). Furthermore, the primary data for analysis are the ANC's Strategy and Tactics documents; the author of these documents is the ANC itself, hence it would be in their best interest to release documents which reflect themselves in a good light, while ostensibly also being supportive of democratic values. The researcher is the only one collecting and analysing the data, therefore the choice of data can be seen as biased. A way of reducing the impact of this limitation is to keep all the ideological strands of the ANC in mind while systematically searching for key terms. Another limitation of this research is that it is specific to the case study; in other words, the ideological influences and history are unique to the ANC as South Africa's ruling party, hence the findings cannot be generalized to other countries.

To make the thesis manageable and achievable within the allocated amount of time, it was necessary to delimit its scope. The first delimitation was to complete the research for submission by November 2022. The scope of the research was further narrowed down to focus on the ruling party of South Africa, the ANC, rather than on multiple political parties in general. Although the ANC has been influenced by the three major ideologies of Africanism, communism, and liberalism, only communism and specifically Marxism were used as points of reference to collect key terms and relevant data. Lastly, it is acknowledged that there are other ways to analyse the politics of the ANC, for instance, its behaviour in the political sphere. But this study concentrated the contents of the ANC's S&T documents as a means to understand its aspirations for the country. Although there are only six S&T documents to be studied, these cover almost the entire spectrum of the ANC's policies, and hence provide sufficient data relating to the research question.

1.8 Chapter Outline

The first chapter of the thesis will outline the background of the study, namely introducing the literature on utopia and the ANC's NDR. The rationale will also be discussed, the ANC are still committed to the NDR despite South Africa's democratic transition happening nearly three decades ago. The policy is heavily influenced by Marxist ideology which is not compatible with a future South Africa that should be looking to strengthen its democracy. The methodology will also be discussed, specifically the use of qualitative case study research and Atlas. ti.

Chapter 2 provides a contextualization of the ANC, the SACP and the NDR in South Africa. This is done to provide a contextual foundation for examining the different ideological influences present within the ANC and its guiding project, the NDR.

Chapter 3 consists of a literature review of the key concepts namely: utopia, totalitarianism, and Marxism as a type of utopian thinking. Doing so will serve the purpose of constructing an analytical framework to be used in the analyses of the South African case. The analytical framework to be used will be the revised totalitarian model as offered by Guo (1998) which suggests the four categories of Philosophical absolutism, goals, pillars, and methods/mechanisms to be used when analysing both fully totalitarian regimes and any other regime for totalitarian tendencies.

Chapter 4 outlines the research methods used for this thesis namely qualitative research making use of a case study in addition to document and content analysis through the use of Atlas. ti. The rationale for choosing a case study as well as using Atlas.ti will be outlined. The analytical framework will be revisited for the purpose of summarizing it in table format for use in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 applies the analytical framework derived from the literature review in Chapter 3 and summarized in Chapter 4 as it applies to the case of the NDR. The purpose of this chapter is to address the central research question and secondary research questions to provide an assessment of the ANC's national project for indicators of totalitarian utopian thought.

In closing, Chapter 6 summarizes and discusses the findings of this research project. Recommendations for future research on this topic and field of interest will be made to address the gaps and limitations in this study.

Chapter II – South Africa Contextualized

2.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter established an analytical framework for assessing whether the ANC aims to achieve a totalitarian utopia based on the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution. The indicators to be used in this analysis were outlined and explained. However, it is not possible to conduct a focused analysis without establishing the proper contextual basis. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a contextual background for an analysis of the National Democratic Revolution in South Africa. This chapter will consist of two parts: the first contextualizes the history of the ANC and SACP, the second outlines the contents of the ANC's national project in the form of the National Democratic Revolution.

In setting out the contextual framework, the first section of this chapter will discuss many of the major historical links between the ANC and SACP which have led to the continued prevalence of Marxist ideology after the democratic transition. Although many perceived the first election of the ANC in 1994 as the ushering in of a new era, the party's full commitment to democracy was debatable, even at the time. The ideological hooks of Marxism are prevalent not only among many members of the ANC but evinced throughout their policy statements as well. However, since power was not seized in the way they had envisioned, the achievement of the goals stated in the NDR were subject to a much slower process. Despite this, there are few debates on with whether the ideology in the NDR is an acceptable way forward for South Africa, the ANC generally accepts the policy as indisputable truth and is more concerned with its swift implementation. The ANC's national project remains an alluring prospect for many, and the implicit ideology still drives ANC thinking, which suggests there will be a continual striving to implement the NDR.

2.2 The Apartheid Context

Apartheid in South Africa was a policy of racial segregation, and the concomitant economic and political discrimination against non-white South Africans prior to 1994. The National Party (NP) won elections during 1948, they instituted apartheid officially into the country to ensure the country remained dominated by the white minority. The NP's slogan of "apartheid" literally meaning apartness was very appealing to a white population who feared losing their position in society to an ever-increasing black majority. Apartheid as a policy aimed not only to separate

the non-white majority from their white minority counterparts but to separate other non-whites from each other. This was done to reduce the political power of black South African, divided along tribal lines meant significantly less unity against the NP and their apartheid regime.

Shortly after the NP's electoral victory around the 1950's, marriage between people of other races and whites had been banned. Included in this marital ban, any sexual relations between white South Africans and black South Africans were strictly outlawed. Dubow (2014) emphasizes to sow further disunity, the Population Registration act of 1950 provided a framework for classifying all South Africans by race. The basic categories included Coloured, White, Asian (meaning Pakistani and Indian) and black Africans or Bantu. This legislation had no regard for its effect on mixed families as they could be split up based upon their classification. Parents could be taken from children, husbands from wives, there was no concern for people at all.

As the NP's years in power progressed, racial segregation continued to intensify under the apartheid regime. Chief amongst the culprits of this segregation was the Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959. It created homelands or Bantustans in which black South Africans were forced to live. This was a strategic political move by the NP, Bantustans were viewed as separate nations therefore the NP could claim that there was no black majority as they were dispersed across these designated 'nations'. This was once again an attempt to keep black South Africans from unifying under one national organization. No black South African was exempt from being assigned citizenry to one of these Bantustans, the NP marketed them as a place where black South Africans could have full political rights. This was of course meaningless as the NP had effectively and for a time successfully removed black South Africans from the South African body politic (Dubow, 2014). Key to maintaining the NP's grip on political power in South African was the silencing of any dissenting voices. To do so, the NP sowed chaos amongst the black South African populace, one of the NP's most destructive ways of doing so were forced urban and rural removals. The NP government would forcibly remove black South African from areas designated as white only areas. From 1961 to 1994 many South Africans of colour were plunged into hopelessness and poverty. It was these conditions and the growing white supremacy in South Africa which gave rise to the ANC's defining characteristic as a liberation movement.

2.3 History of the ANC and SACP

Founded on 8 January 1912, the ANC has managed to keep its grip on political power in South Africa for 28 years since the transition to democracy in 1994. This section will discuss the party's genesis, development, and growth from liberation movement to South Africa's ruling party. This will account for the development and influence of the three main strands of political ideology found within the party today. In the light of the party's history, the progress and importance of each of these strands will be highlighted, and the way that this has affected the ANC's key policy aspiration, namely the National Democratic Revolution.

2.3.1 Formation of the ANC

Founded in 1912, the ANC was only two years younger than the Union of South Africa, yet it represented the first genuine attempt to overcome inter-ethnic conflict while securing support from the chief nobility (Southall, 2013). However, this outline does not capture the complexity of the ANC party; De Jager (2009:276) asserts that three main ideological strands stand out in the history of the ANC. The first of these three is *Christian liberal democracy*; at its core the ANC is a liberation movement striving for freedom from colonial, segregationist and later apartheid rulers. The party's liberal values were evident from its inception in 1912; prominent African men and women created the South African Native National Congress (Lodge, 1983:2). Its leadership and party base drew from aspiring members of the African middle class who tended to be Christian converts. Thus, the ANC's founding members were similarly products of Christian missionaries, as no formal state education was provided to black Africans by the government; this was only offered by the missionary schools who usually adopted Western liberal traditions (De Jager 2009:276, Thompson 2001:156). The Christian liberal teachings informed the early ideology of the ANC; the intention was to be properly included in South Africa's body politic through a deep commitment to constitutionalism which promoted a responsible citizenship.

The second strand in the formation of the ANC emerged as a resentful response to the presence of Western ideals in Africa; *Pan-Africanism* suggests that Africa is a continent for Africans. There was little to suggest that these two strands could co-exist, as African political culture was vastly different from Western political culture. Thus, Africanism stems from the idea that if democracy is government by the people, then there is no reason that African democracy should be determined by outsiders and not Africans themselves (Osabu-Kle, 2000:13). De Jager (2009) notes that there was a clear rise in Pan-African consciousness in the 1940s, which

was clearly present in the ANC's *African Claims* document. The contents of this document pushed the ANC in a different direction than before, as a more interventionist state was advocated for, while the more radical ANC Youth League formed. The Youth League's members held different views from the ANC's older members, as they advocated for a turn towards more racial exclusivism and revolutionary militancy (De Jager, 2009: 277). This ideology eventually permeated throughout the ANC to the point that they were more in line with a radical mass nationalist movement.

The third strand contributing to the ANC's formation sits at the polar opposite end of the Africanist view; *Communism* would come to be a dominant ideology within the party. Similar to the response of the Africanists to Western ideals, communism was seen as an alternative to colonial capitalist practices (Osabu-Kle, 2000:23). The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) was founded in 1921 but only took up relations with the ANC in 1928. Dubow (2000) suggests that this could have been a result of the CPSA pushing the agenda of an independent native republic as its key objective. Naturally, this prospect must have been very alluring to the ANC and, combined with the CPSA being the only party to recruit members regardless of race, a lasting partnership was inevitable. Later rebranded as the South African Communist Party (SACP), they were a pertinent factor in shifting the ANC's outlook away from purely Africanist ideals towards non-racialism (Lodge, 1983: 7). Although the SACP were smaller in number, their highly organized and centralized structure influenced by Marxism would become one of the most dominant ideological strands within the ANC.

The complexity of the ANC's history undoubtedly sheds some light on why South Africa still faces numerous challenges to its democracy long after transition in 1994. Turok (2010) admits that the three ideological strands of the ANC have created massive contradictions between what the purpose of the party is and how it should run the country. These inconsistencies are a matter of great concern, specifically the strength of the communist-oriented strand at present.

2.3.2 Influence of the SACP

It would not be unfounded to suggest that, of the three ideological strands, communism as manifested in the SACP played a significant role in the ANC's success, hence its continued influence since the democratic transition. Filatova (2011) suggests that a key factor contributing to this relationship was the influence of the Soviet Union, which at the time represented the pinnacle of humanity's potential future. The USSR was, of course, unable to

provide these two South African political parties with protection from the victims of struggle and exile; however, what it did offer was far more valuable to the SACP and ANC. Backed by the Soviet Union, the SACP was instrumental in influencing two core areas within the ANC, its mode of resistance and its ideology.

South Africa's history has featured many liberation movements, with one of the most widely recognized being the Congress Alliance's armed resistance against the apartheid government from 1961 with the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). The narrative which gets repeated consistently is that both the ANC and the SACP shifted towards armed struggle in parallel as expressed by MK's founder and first leader Nelson Mandela. Filatova (2011) argues that this was not necessarily the case as the SACP was the first to officially adopt a policy of armed struggle, as before 1960 the ANC was adamant in its stance of seeking a peaceful resolution. However, this changed significantly after the banning of the ANC in 1960 after the Sharpeville massacre, as being a mass resistance movement made conducting underground activity very challenging (De Jager, 2009:277). This created a reliance on the SACP; its small size in combination with highly organized and centralized leadership of the ANC made it easier for them to operate in exile. Thus, as Ellis and Sechaba (1992) point out, the turn towards a more guerrilla-style approach as a declaration of war upon the NP government gave the SACP considerable weight within the ANC. The SACP's position was only further bolstered by its connections with the USSR; because of this the Soviet Union supplied Umkhonto we Sizwe with arms and training for the members of both parties. Through these benefits, the SACP solidified its position; they commanded a dominant role in Umkhonto we Sizwe and through this the ANC as well (De Jager, 2009:277).

It would be a stretch to consider the initial phases of the ANC's armed struggle as effective, the banning of the party in 1960 diminished its voice and presence to such an extent that they were barely heard of for at least two decades. Meanwhile, others like the Black Consciousness Movement were making tremendous strides and sparking incidents such as the 1976 Soweto revolt, which served a dual purpose as it revitalized the ANC as well. Since the Soviets had keen interest in the success of the ANC, they encouraged a senior delegation to meet with recently victorious Vietnamese strategists to discuss a method of fomenting revolution that would become a key factor in the ANC's triumph (Filatova, 2011). What they learned was the elements of a "people's war", a style of engagement which makes use of a political struggle and a military struggle concomitantly to effectively eradicate any form of opposition. This is

by no means conventional warfare, although violence is encouraged through strategies such as guerrilla attacks. This focus of this style of opposition is on communication and organisation, two aspects conspicuously missing from ANC strategies. By placing a particular emphasis on these core principles, the ANC was able to orchestrate the actions of multiple revolutionary structures, while producing crippling propaganda internationally and internally to critically weaken the structures of the apartheid government (Brooks, 2018:2). Unfortunately, there is a caveat to this style as a people's war makes no distinction between combatants and civilians – everyone, no matter their allegiances, is both expendable and a weapon for the machine.

The implementation of a people's war by the ANC was tremendously successful, as it was an all-encompassing approach which led to complete electoral domination merely 20 years after their visit to Vietnam. This did not come without a price that South Africa is still paying for today; the most immediate effect was the hollow political sphere which the ANC inherited. They had reduced the competition to the point that there was no other vote possible, even if other oppositions ideals resonated more with the black populace than those held by the ANC. Furthermore, the negotiation process was merely seen as another element to the people's war, one which saw the ANC view any agreements that were reached as temporary because of their ability to simply change them once the balance of power had shifted in their favour. What was left for the new democratic era was a hollow political sphere without any mechanisms to disperse power, no effective opposition, and a ruling party that at the time, somewhat respected the constitution as the highest law of the land which nobody could ascend beyond. Compounded with this, the people's war rattled society as violence was considered the optimal response, while a sense of respect for authority was non-existent as these ideals had been shattered. The people's war may have allowed the ANC to effectively topple the ANC government, but the cost may simply be irreversible.

Although the ANC owes much of its military success during the apartheid years to the USSR-backed SACP, the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that the flow of assistance came to an abrupt halt in the early 1990s. They provided significant support to the SACP whom were the genesis of the armed struggle in South Africa spurred on by the resources gifted to them by the Soviets allowing the resistance to continue for so long. However, the Soviets were only interested in the African continent as it gave them a chance to further spread their ideology against Western imperialism (Filatova, 2012). The ANC now had very little military or financial backing, perhaps more troubling was that the elites wanted to consider an ideological

shift away from communism because if it had failed the Soviets then there was little hope for its success in South Africa. Yet the SACP did not allow this to materialize, they still managed to instil within the ANC something arguably far more effective than military or financial support, an enduring ideology.

The success of the armed struggle afforded to the ANC by the SACP was only temporary; however the ideological hooks of communism have proved to be far more permanent. The often-competing ideological strands which made up the ANC did not provide a recipe for unity amongst its members. De Jager (2009:277) emphasizes that the SACP offered a solution to this problem by providing “organizational discipline, revolutionary theory and ideological conviction”. The consequence of this was the embedding of Marxist-Leninist thought within the ANC as the party began to adopt more authoritarian practices and principles, euphemistically termed ‘democratic centralism’. Moreover, at the 1969 Morogoro Conference, the SACP introduced what is still the ANC’s national project today: the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). This idea can be traced back to Lenin’s theorizing on national liberation movements; he suggested that the Soviet Union shared a connection with colonial states as they have both been oppressed by the few other powerful nations and so must join together to fight imperialism (Filatova, 2011). The late 1950s saw the USSR’s Karen Brutents introduce the features of a National Democratic Revolution which, if carried out, can lead to the total restructuring of society as the imperialist and capitalist structures would be torn down alongside any colonialist tendencies. According to the SACP (1962:3), “The main thrust of the NDR was the national liberation of the African people and the elimination of every form of racially based discrimination or privilege. The NDR would restore the land and wealth of the country to the people and guarantee democracy, freedom and equality of rights and opportunities to all”. Thus, revolution was the foremost objective placed on the agenda of the ANC, with the eventual outcome being complete socialism.

The SACP may have been small in stature, but they managed to shape the very foundational ideology of the ANC, foundations which have remained unchanged despite numerous new leaders. South Africa may currently operate on the basis of a constitutional democracy, but it is anything but stable; as Fredericks (2019) notes, there was significant democratic deconsolidation during the Zuma years, for example. The Marxist-Leninist-influenced NDR remains the ANC’s national post-transition project.

2.4 The NDR

It would be safe to assume that a transition to democracy would be accompanied by the abandonment of any ideals which are not in accordance with the advancement of the democratic system now in place. But this is not true about the ANC; South Africa's negotiated transition has been deemed a miracle, but the way in which the ANC came to power was not necessarily in line with the liberationist goal of "seizing" power. Johnson (2011) suggests that if the ANC wanted to maintain its new position, a communist re-structuring of society as expressed in the NDR could not have been the immediate point of order after South Africa's first democratic elections. Naturally, the ANC understood this, but instead of replacing their national project with a more democratically orientated one, the NDR remained in place. This is why for almost three decades after the democratic transition, the NDR remains a cause for concern, with the ANC seemingly incapable of abandoning it.

A multitude of ANC documents suggests that the NDR remains firmly on the agenda of the party as its principal objective. The seminal texts used throughout this thesis are the ANC's *Strategies and Tactics* (S&T) documents adopted at the national policy conferences of 1969, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017. Within each of these, the ANC repeatedly outlines the NDR and reaffirms the party's commitment to the policy. Above and beyond this, before the ANC's national policy conference in 2002, the party released a document titled "*A Preface to the Strategies and Tactics of the ANC*". This document served as a synopsis of what was to be covered at the 2002 national conference. It details in brief the ANC's approach to transformation for South Africa, a commitment to the NDR as its motives and characteristics are summarized within. This commitment to the NDR continues as seen in the document released by the ANC (2012) titled "*Organisational Renewal: Building the ANC as a movement for transformation and a strategic centre of power.*" The document focuses on creating an ANC which is the centre of power and transformation for South Africa with the NDR as its guiding policy (ANC, 2012: 23-27). The ANC's S&T documents are the most comprehensive collection of their political thinking and policy approaches hence their importance throughout this research.

The basic aim of the NDR is the pursuit of a more representative and equal society; this national democratic society, according to the ANC (2007:4), "is a conscious construct, dependent on conscious action by politically advanced sections of society". While the transformation of society and state for the better is a good cause, De Jager (2009:279) warns that the ANC has

repeatedly claimed that they alone occupy the leadership position in society as a whole; the ANC (2007) further believes it embodies the pinnacle of morality and sound South African values. The language that has been used by the ANC consistently raises extreme concern, as it is not very democratic in nature and by claiming such immensely high moral ground, it becomes almost impossible to place the ANC and its policies within the realm of politics or genuine debate. This claim of occupying the high moral ground allows them to essentially become identified with South Africa itself; hence any critique especially towards the ideas contained within the NDR will be met with claims of being anti-South African rhetoric. However, censorship has not yet become embedded in South Africa as the liberal democrats especially are not in favour of silencing opposition. They understand the need for alternative voices to create a vibrant democracy, but it is still challenging to critique the NDR in the public sphere as this is regarded as akin to questioning the very nature of the ANC itself.

The logical next step then for South Africans in this context would be to simply exercise their democratic rights and vote a new party into government. Unfortunately, it is not this simple as the ANC has enjoyed electoral dominance since 1994, and playing a part in sustaining this situation is once again the alluring language of the NDR. The ANC's Strategy and Tactics (2007a:4) document notes that "the main content of the NDR is liberation of Africans in particular and Blacks in general from political and economic bondage". This is a promise directly to those who lived under the deprivations of the apartheid regime and whose post-transition quality of life would improve, and so it is extraordinarily difficult to imagine someone in this circumstance not wanting to vote for this. However, as with most utopian promises, the problem resides in the methods those in power adopt to achieve their stated ideals (Magstadt, 2017:63). The NDR seems to take this one step further as there is a more self-serving quality to it, besides merely delivering a better quality of life. How the NDR will be implemented simultaneously ensures the ANC's continued control over society.

In pursuit of the ANC's democratic society, the first step of the NDR is "strengthening the hold of the democratic government on state power, thus transforming the state machinery to serve the cause of social change" (ANC, 1999a:2). Transformation of state entities here seems to be an excuse to further extend the ANC's control over as many sectors as possible. It is clear from this step that the ANC has yet to let go of its liberationist tendencies as the language being used is similar to that of their days in exile (De Jager, 2009: 282). The justification for transformation masks the communist ideological strand from shining through; what is truly being pushed is

the centralization of power by controlling the mechanisms of power, for example, the judiciary and the police. The second means through which the NDR is to be achieved is cadre deployment. In this instance the term ‘cadre’ refers to those party members who were disciplined and trained in the ideology of the party who are “expected to exhibit a high level of political commitment and doctrinal discipline” (Heywood, 2002:249). Hartley (2011) suggests that a rationale for cadre deployment being a mechanism of the NDR was to mitigate sabotage of the new government by opposition parties. This claim is not unfounded and is seemingly echoed by the ANC, who argued that loyalists appointed to positions of power was the only way to ensure policies were implemented correctly across all state spheres (Twala, 2014:161). However, there is a much more hegemonic implication for this, as having ANC loyalists in all spheres of state can mean the entrenchment of their ideology and so the manipulation of state structures as the party sees fit. The final way in which the NDR is to be realized appears to be the culmination of all strategies, the very character of the NDR pushes the ANC to control all spheres of life. The ANC (2007) expressed this at its Polokwane conference, the desire to preside over all state centres of power, the economy, civil society, and society in general as well. Despite numerous changes in leadership, the NDR remains the principal objective of the ANC, regardless of criticism.

There have been moments when the ANC has had the opportunity to change, but De Jager (2009:284) cautions even before the Zuma years the hope for a “New” ANC was unfounded. Quite the opposite is in fact true; there was a refreshed sense of enthusiasm for many of the NDR’s objectives at the ANC’s 52nd national conference in 2007. This remains true into the tenure of Cyril Ramaphosa; although he is generally associated with the liberal strand of the ANC, the NDR is still present as the underlying national project in every speech and set of documentation. Venter and Mosala (2019) suggest that the personal interests of many ANC members have stood in the way of the NDR’s promise of a better life for all; perhaps the desire for ideological supremacy has been replaced with a desire to accumulate the spoils resulting from this project. Regardless, the continued existence of the NDR ideals in the context of contemporary South Africa makes it almost impossible for the ANC to commit wholeheartedly to democracy. The Soviet theory of NDR permeated every aspect of ANC and SACP thinking, and all programmes drew inspiration from the socialist ideas contained in the theory. Although a complete socialist revolution never took occurred, these ideals have never left the ANC as they remain embedded in their way of thinking.

2.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to inform the reader about the South African political context, specifically relating to apartheid, the history of the ANC and SACP, as well as the NDR. Against the backdrop of the increasingly deeply entrenched apartheid regime arose the inevitability of resistance, as the oppression of a black majority by the National Party was universally condemned as morally reprehensible. Hence, at the time the mantle of 'liberation movement' adopted by the ANC was a fitting and ultimately successful response to the oppression of the regime. It was shown that the ANC consists of three different and to various degrees competing ideological strands, namely liberalism, Pan-Africanism, and communism. Of these three, the Marxist-Communist influence remains deeply entrenched within the ANC, in large part because of the efforts of the SACP. This is evident in the ANC's national project, the NDR, a definitive Marxist policy with aspirations that do not reflect democratic principles or values. The next chapter will provide an exploration of the theoretical components which will be drawn upon for the purpose of constructing an analytical framework.

Chapter III – Development of Theoretical Components

3.1 Introduction

The first chapter presented the rationale and research questions for the study. It was shown that, although the ANC's National Democratic Revolution (NDR) has received scholarly attention in the way of description, analysis and postulation about its consequences, there is limited inquiry making use of a holistic approach, which includes analysis through the lenses of political theory. This chapter accordingly outlines the political theories related to utopianism, totalitarianism, and Marxism as type of utopian thinking, while organizing the literature systematically so as to allow it to be utilized in an analysis of the South African case.

The field of political theory has its roots in the humanities and specifically within the political science discipline. While the styles, traditions and approaches may vary, a commitment to critique, diagnosis and theorizing on the nature of political action both present and past unites the various fields (Dryzek, Honig and Phillips, 2013:2). The scholarship on political theory is almost impossible to categorize in a general way, as there is no dominant approach or methodology. While this perceived lack of a core disciplinary identity may trouble some scholars, it is in fact very beneficial as the fluidity of the discipline allows one to not be confined to a particular set of boundaries when assessing political thought and action.

This chapter is divided into three broad sections. The first section provides a conceptualization of utopia and an outline of the key elements associated with it. The second section extends the analytical framework by characterizing the nature of totalitarianism, which will mainly be adopted from the work of Guo (1998), who suggested four components of this regime type – philosophical absolutism, goals, pillars and methods/mechanisms which encompass indicators that could be used to analyse totalitarian tendencies. These four indicators, which serve as the organizational structure of the framework, will be supplemented by other theories which link utopia and totalitarianism, such as those found in Magstadt's (2017) seminal work. The third section will outline the overarching role of Marxism as a type of utopian thinking. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Marxism is still a prolific form of political thought and it is often critiqued as being utopian in nature, yet its influence in terms of informing the NDR has been underexplored. This section will seek to add to this body of work by arguing that Marxism

as a type of utopian thinking is central to understanding the NDR and its links with other components of this chapter.

3.2 A Conceptualization of Utopia

Political theory is concerned with a critique of past and present, while utopian literature is similarly concerned with a critique of the present while addressing the future (Sarakemsky, 2007:2). This concern with the future is generally why the utopian approach receive comparatively little scholarly attention from political scientists; many theorists prefer to understand the present while leaving the likes of poets, philosophers, and artists to write of these ideal harmonious future societies. On the other hand, Sargent (1983:3) suggests the strength of utopian thought ought to be found in its emphasis on the future. It has the ability to transcend a single-minded concern with the present, allowing our imaginations to create these magnificent models of the perfect society which the human psyche tends to long for.

There have been many suggestions made by scholars as to what this ideal society would look like, hence the conceptual and definitional issues abounding in utopian thinking. It is generally agreed that ‘utopia’ can be understood as being a perfect place which does not exist (Levitas, 1984; Davis, 1984; Nozick, 1974; Kolakowski, 1983; Magstadt, 2017). These idealistic but unrealistic visions of the future are pertinent as many political theories contain some form of utopian thinking. Utopian approaches tend to share themes of human agency, harmony and a striving for perfection.

Although there may be shared themes amongst the vast array of scholarship on utopia, the main problem arises in the interpretation of these definitions and conceptualizations. Specifically of concern is the notion of perfection. Sargent (1983:4) questions whether utopias are truly meant to be depictions of absolute perfection, or if the implicit standard is lower and somewhat more achievable in reality. This difference in interpretation is illustrated by Frye (in Manuel, 1965:20):

“The popular view accepted by most utopian writes is that it is an ideal or flawless state. It is considered the definitive social ideal, static in nature with built-in mechanisms to safeguard against any radical alteration of the structure. While enough freedom and happiness are granted to its inhabitants, those who are not fully committed should feel uneasy.”

On the other hand, De Jouvenal (in Manuel, 1965:21) suggests:

“Utopia, a dream while less than reality is much more than a blueprint. A dream allows one to get a “feel” of things while a blueprint does not. However, if you imbue this vision of the future with some resemblance of reality and make your reader aware of this, it is quite a different achievement than simply explaining the principles upon which it should rest. This sense of description and allowing the reader to see is what the likes of Thomas More intended and is a central feature of the utopian genre.”

The questions which must be asked are how can one person’s tentative dream be another’s definitive blueprint and who gets to determine the utopia for others? Oakeshott and Fuller (1996) in *“The politics of faith and the politics of scepticism”* provide an answer to these questions. The notion of Utopianism cannot be relegated to exclusively future-focused theorizing especially in the modern sphere of political thought. Oakeshott and Fuller (1996:21) suggest two poles of modern political thought namely the politics of scepticism and that which links with utopianism, the politics of faith. In the politics of faith, the act of governing is said to be in the service of the perfection of mankind. This assumes that humans are capable of achieving perfection, which is in accordance with utopianism’s future theorizing facets, but the government is the primary agent of human betterment and progression (Oakeshott and Fuller, 1996:23-26; Gray, 2008). Therefore, under such a regime, all human activity is subject to the supervision and scrutiny of the government and its notion of the perfect society. An important note for this understanding of the pursuit for utopia is the activity of governing, it is not merely an auxiliary agent which seeks constant improvement eventually culminating in perfection. It is the sole director and chief motivator in the pursuit of perfection. Thus, utopianism seems to share strong links with human control and organization, this will be explored later in the chapter. It is imperative to first outline utopia and its relationship with critical thought, before continuing onto the relationship utopia shares with totalitarianism.

3.2.1 Utopia and Critical Thought

Much of the scholarship on the topic of utopias tends first to adopt a definite anti-utopian stance by outlining its relationship with totalitarianism. While there is nothing wrong with that approach, this research will benefit from doing the inverse as it is imperative to also recognise the usefulness of utopian thought when it is confined within its proper parameters. Sargent

(1983:12) is sceptical, however, as he suggests many of the arguments made in favour of utopian thought are grandiose in nature and lack considerable empirical evidence in support of their effectiveness. Even so, he still affirms there are some compelling arguments to be made in favour of utopian thinking more specifically surrounding the notion of it being a guiding tool for positive social change. A more recent study conducted by Fernando et al. (2018) supports this by giving great weight to the propensity of utopian thought to invoke positive societal engagement resulting in some form of change in society itself.

This highlights the idea that utopian thought forces one to think critically about the present, however the resulting action is confined to this present period and can only cause incremental change (Lindblom, 1972:5). This weakness is not shared by utopian thought as it is not bound by the barriers of any present period; utopianism has the ability to encapsulate all the desires and needs of people which have not been satisfied in the present and thus offer a vision of these being fulfilled. This idea of utopia not being confined or hindered by barriers is further shared by Bauman (1976), as he does not accept that utopian thought should be viewed simply as a blueprint for achieving some future perfection. He argues that since all political theories contain at least some form of utopian ideal, what utopian thought succeeds in doing is splitting up reality into different competing political projects. In this way the major divisions of interest which prevail in society are made apparent as one person's utopia may be another's dystopia (Bauman, 1976:16). Goodwin and Taylor (1982) similarly believe that utopian thought is not merely a blueprint; they believe it to be solid political theorising, although of a different form not akin to the regular dispassionate discourse sometimes offered by political scientists. Instead, utopianism offers political theory through a narrative and poetic form concerned with the creation of human happiness.

This trend of using the idea of utopian thought as a prism to refract the problems of the present and the subsequent imagining of a better future continues throughout the scholarship advocating for the use of this mode of thinking. Utopian thought gains its critical and academic rigor through its inherent paradox; utopias are what should be but never is. The critiques they offer alongside the solutions exist only in the realm of ideas, essentially acting as a means of inspiration to ensure that present inadequacies in society are never accepted as immutable truths. Simecka (1984:174) challenges us to try and imagine a world without the influence of utopian thought. All dreams and aspirations would need to be erased, the desire to constantly improve the ordering of society and pursue a greater sense of human freedom would need to

be eliminated. It is clear that utopias, to those who view them positively, do not constitute a perfect society, nor a blueprint for how to achieve this, as they recognize this to be impossible. However, this is only true to those who are willing to accept the interpretation of utopia as being a standard for society which is less than perfect but still achievable in reality. Unfortunately, the concern is when utopian ideas and aspirations in pursuit of absolute perfection are implemented in practice as if they are achievable and agreed upon by all in society. This is the core concern for many scholars, who observe the linkages between utopian thought and totalitarian outcomes.

3.2.2 Utopia and Totalitarianism

But the concept of utopia has on the whole still not shed its negative reputation; the links it shares with violence, force and totalitarianism are well substantiated. There is a great deal of complexity within the arguments as many alternative positions exist, yet the most basic starting proposition when discussing utopia is its core concept of perfection. Earlier in the chapter it was outlined that Frye and De Jouvenal in Manuel (1965) have opposing interpretations of utopia within the same body of work, with Frye leaning towards the blueprint definition. Advocates of this definition suggest that utopias should function as a blueprint for the perfect society and its subsequent construction without any significant deviations from the plan. This implies that any change to the blueprint would result in a society of lower quality (Sargent, 1983:5). The immediate issue arises with the idea of perfection: it does not exist empirically and for the suggested perfect society to be created would require perfect people, which do not exist either.

This has seemingly not deterred convinced utopians in the past as they were unable to let go of their view of perfection. Coercion and force then became necessary to achieve their goal. Dahrendorf (1958) provides insight into utopian thought by suggesting the foundational aspect of these utopian constructions include universal agreement on present values and institutional arrangements forcibly imposed on all in society. Any changes to this would upset the very foundations of what this perfect society is built upon. The mere presence of the idea of universal consensus suggests that utopians would want to eliminate any form of conflict as this could generate and allow for critique of the society. The paradox of this is the approach as utopians argue that life will be better for imperfect people in a perfect society and they should understand it in this way or be forced to comply (Magstadt, 2017: 63). Utopians seem to balance their perfect society on a very fine line; people cannot be perfect hence they will never be able to

fully realize the perfect blueprint. The anomaly and questionable appeal of trying to reach something unobtainable means, of necessity, that the ideal will have to be achieved by force.

Proponents of utopian thought are quick to point out that enforced compliance is a small price to pay for living in the ideal society. While this may be acceptable for some, Sarakemsky (2007) and Magstadt (2017) make the point that compliance goes beyond consensus on values and institutional arrangements to include a shared definition of truth. The perfection and endurance of the utopian blueprint depends on all its citizen subscribing to a set of indisputable truths given to them by those in power. Therefore, there does not appear to be any space for a sense of individuality, as it is argued that this might compromise the cohesion and functioning of society itself – and jeopardise the greater good. The individual is suppressed so that the greater priorities of the society may be fully realized in accordance with its utopian blueprint (Sargent, 1983:6). The outcome of this forced compliance with values, institutional arrangements and imposed “truth” is the disappearance of any form of disagreement or debate, for if society is perfect then there is no need for contestation. This would mean the end of politics itself, as its purpose is to critique society with the hope of moving it towards a better future through means people do not find oppressive. Anyone who is acting ‘politically’ would thus be considered non-compliant with the utopian ideal and hence seen as a hindrance to be removed.

One could not be blamed for suspecting that this progression of society which is supposedly based upon a perfect blueprint is anything but perfect. In one of the most famous critiques of utopian thinking, Karl Popper (2013: 5-12) suggests the reason for why this is the case centres around three assumptions utopia fails to succeed in meeting. The *first* is similar to arguments already made by other scholars, namely that in a viable utopia there needs to be a belief in one ultimate and unchanging ideal. The *second* assumption which posits there must be rational methods to arrive at a conclusion of what this ideal looks like, and the *third* assumption denotes a method which is agreed upon by all in society on how to achieve the utopian vision. Popper (2013) argues that even if you can meet the first assumption by getting everyone to agree to one ultimate ideal, the second and third assumptions are simply impossible to achieve. This is because of the subjective nature of utopias; each individual’s utopia may be different from another’s. Thus, it is challenging to reach an agreement on how best to theorize and arrive at (never mind enact) the utopian vision. Although Popper has been critiqued for this stance, his arguments are generally supported in the literature. Most utopian critics take issue with the ability to define and characterize perfection; it seems even more of an impossible task in the

light of what we know about humans in society trying to define the ways in which to go about achieving the ideal (Magstadt, 2017; Sargent, 1983; Sarakemsky, 2007). Hence, to achieve this comprehensive blueprint for society it seems as if a strong, centralized government to enforce the institutional arrangements and universal values towards achieving and sustaining the perfect society is the only way.

This is where the strength of the critique of utopian thought by scholars such as Popper (2013) can truly shine. He highlights that those who subscribe to the blueprint definition and interpretation of utopian thought seem to have no problem imposing their beliefs upon others. Beauchamp (1974) concurs by suggesting that utopians' intentions may be benevolent, but ultimately the techniques they employ are totalitarian. It is difficult to disagree with this as there are far too many examples throughout history which corroborate this view. Hierarchical order, obedience, compliance with a set of values and the suppression of freedom dominate utopias from Plato's *Republic* to Marx's *classless society* (Magstadt, 2017: 63). Finally, there are two additional problematic elements that utopias could potentially never adequately resolve: time and human nature.

The very definition of utopian thought attempts to imply that humans are capable of being influenced to such an extent that they will never question or deviate from what is being told to them. Magstadt (2017:64) takes serious issue with this: human faults like greed and malice are far more abundant than kindness or virtue, for example. This presents a serious challenge to the blueprint dimension of utopian thought as most people, because of their individual traits, are very unlikely to follow one set of values forcibly imposed on them. Olssen (2003) and Gray(2008) argues the response to this is for utopias to rewire the way people think; social engineering will steer them away from previously held beliefs towards those desired by the blueprint for perfection. This is not uncommon as in the past programmes such as eugenics have sought to reconfigure the minds of humans, to reorientate them by breaking down what is known and convincing them that the replacement is more valuable. Sargent (1983) and Magstadt (2017) show that this usually takes the form of replacing all institutions and private means of life in favour of a lifestyle focused on communal activities, and cooperation above competition. Lastly, time does not seem to be accounted for in utopian thinkers' blueprint of perfection. Morrison (1965) suggests the reasoning for this is simple: a utopian's ideal society is perfect and so change will be resisted at all costs. This is unfortunately not at all how the world works; societies cannot remain static, no matter how hard those in in control attempt to

ensure this, as the world around them is constantly changing. The inhabitants of a utopian society will undoubtedly call for a shift over time, but this is in direct conflict with the idea that the current society is already perfect. Thus, it seems that utopian blueprints are destined to fail because of their own inherent paradoxes.

The evidence for utopias leading to totalitarianism is more compelling and convincing than utopias offering a tool for critical thinking. However, this does not mean that the latter view is not without its merits. Dryzek et al. (2013) argue that there is an element of utopian thought in most forms of scholarship, especially in political theory, as the concern is with a critique of the present in the hope of achieving a better future. This is where the strength of utopian thought lies, in its ability to provide hope, guidance and critical reflection. However, the danger starts when that thought moves beyond the realm of ideas and tries to impose itself by force as if it is a viable reality. This is when utopian thought as a blueprint for perfection begins to slide down the road towards totalitarianism.

3.3 Totalitarianism

While the regime style of totalitarianism was highly evident during the twentieth century but not quite plainly anymore in the twenty first century, research surrounding this regime type should not stop as its effects and legacy are still being felt today. According to Hannah Arendt (2005), one of the seminal political philosophers of totalitarianism, this regime type concerns itself with the complete domination of society and its members. This is done generally through the means of a tyrannical leader who imposes a set of beliefs upon the populace. Control is central to most oppressive regimes, yet totalitarianism goes beyond the public realm by intentionally invading the private sphere as well. Because of this, there is no escape to be found in any aspect of life, as entities such as sport and religion are also turned into political tools (Baehr, 2010; Magstadt, 2017). This exposes a paradox within totalitarian regimes: everything is political, but political discourse is not possible as the vision of the leader is regarded as absolute and final.

It is no surprise then that this oppressive regime does not take kindly to any form of dissent. Totalitarian regimes throughout history such as Stalin's Soviet Russia or Hitler's Nazi Germany make very effective use of categorization as a tool to eliminate opposition. Generally, these regimes will identify a group of people who in their personally defined manner somehow represent everything that is wrong with the current state of society (King, 2007). For Hitler the

Jews and the Gypsies represented this and so needed to be exterminated as they were the supposed roadblock on the path to perfection. This desire to transform society is uniquely totalitarian and should not be confused with an authoritarian regime, as its leaders typically desire to keep political power without necessarily transforming society. Guo (1998:276) suggests for the purpose of increasing rigour in analysing totalitarianism and identifying some of its core characteristics, distinctions from authoritarianism can be made as follows:

- Authoritarian regimes, unlike totalitarianism, leave many if not all aspects of private life untouched as they depend more on social forces like the army and church.
- In contrast to totalitarianism, authoritarian regimes are rarely motivated by a meaningful ideology or utopian ideal.
- In authoritarian regimes there is generally no attempt to fully control thoughts and beliefs, nor to transform human nature itself.
- The totalitarian state is concerned with its leaders' political beliefs, aspirations, and ideology. Society will thus be directed along these lines exclusively and forcibly if necessary.
- In line with most other systems, totalitarian states are made up of a complex set of characteristics. No authoritarian regime exhibits all of these same features at the same time but could have one or two traits.

The above outline represents at a base level some of the distinguishing characteristics of totalitarianism. It also makes clear that a totalitarian regime can be authoritarian at the same time, but an authoritarian regime is not necessarily totalitarian as well (Guo, 1998:277). This outline also lays out the groundwork for the totalitarian model which will be developed in this section by unpacking totalitarianism's characteristics as posited by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) in their widely acclaimed book *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*. Although it is acknowledged that the original model of totalitarianism had its faults namely that all characteristics needed to be present for the regime to be deemed totalitarian, it still managed to focus on the unique and central features of the system. Furthermore, these characteristics have empirical backing, i.e. definitive ideas, institutions, and processes that can be explicitly identified as present or absent (Odom, 1992:97). However, these faults will be accounted for by using an adapted model which retains the theoretical and analytical rigor of this original but with greater flexibility.

3.3.1 Characteristics of Totalitarianism

The core set of characteristics to follow were derived from some of the most widely acclaimed totalitarian regimes throughout history. This is only one aspect within the scholarship on totalitarianism, others such as Magstadt (2017) choose to focus more on the different developmental stages of totalitarian regimes. An exploration of the characteristics was preferred because South Africa is not a totalitarian state but this does not mean that it is incapable of exhibiting some of the characteristics akin to this system or that there is not an aspiration for a utopian vision. The six characteristics to be discussed as identified by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) are *an official ideology, a singular hierarchical party, secret police, monopoly of armed forces, monopoly of the media and control over the economy.*

The first of these and arguably one of the most important characteristics is the presence of an elaborate and oppressive *ideology*. Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) suggest this ideology should contain a doctrine which addresses all vital aspects of man's existence to which all should adhere, even if passively. The purpose of the doctrine is to detail the perfect, final state which humans should be achieving within this society. It includes a rejection of the present as imperfect, providing the rationale to alter human nature in pursuit of the desired goal, this is in accordance with the blueprint definition of utopia. Hitler attempted this with his construction of the "Aryan" race, and Lenin followed by Stalin tried constructing a classless society (Magstadt, 2017; Baehr, 2007). This appears to be where most totalitarian leaders gain their legitimacy, through a claim that they hold all the answers to enhancing human existence towards achieving the goal of perfection.

The second characteristic, *a singular hierarchical party*, acting as an impetus for the masses. The people of society possess the ability to incite change, but will generally not do so as they lack initiative and direction (Friedrich and Brzezinski, 1965:22). This is usually capitalized on by the charismatic leaders of the singular party as they have the ability and resources to win hearts and minds, thereby mobilizing the masses into a movement which yields only increased and unwavering support for the ideology propagated by this leader. Thus, the more people who are willing to assist in the promotion of this ideology above and beyond the leaders' efforts, the easier it becomes to maintain the system. The description offered here does go against one of Arendt's (1958) characterizations of totalitarianism in that these movements have no shape. She suggests as soon as a singular entity assumes control, the movement crystalizes and becomes more akin to a dictatorship. While this point has some validity, many historical

totalitarian regimes had some form of a singular hierarchical party with a charismatic leader, thus the characterization offered by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) will remain.

The third and fourth traits of a *secret police* and *monopoly of armed forces* can be grouped together because they form a system of terror used by those in power to effectively maintain control through coercion. The purpose here is twofold: the armed forces cannot be used against the state, and the fact that they own this branch of society means control over the monopoly of violence (Arendt, 2005). This places those in power in an even more unassailable position; they can exert violence upon others, but there is little chance of retaliation or defence as any resistance will struggle to compete with the superior firepower possessed by a nation's army. It is then the job of the secret police not only to use physical force against ideologically defined "enemies" of the state, but psychological force as well to keep members of society who have yet to fully comply to the utopian ideal under control (Magstadt, 2017:139). With this kind of social pressure, it is not difficult to maintain control, although it can be argued this behaviour is self-destructive as control by means of fear has its limitations even for those most dedicated ideologically.

The final two characteristics, *monopoly of the media* and *control over the economy*, can be outlined simultaneously as they both strive towards the same purpose simply through different branches of society – total control. Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) are adamant that to control the populace, totalitarian regimes need to control what people see and hear. This mainly takes the form of propaganda – ideological causes being advanced through the spreading of falsehoods and fabrications – which becomes a widely used political weapon by totalitarian leaders. The media are generally supposed to be independent and report accurately on events in society, yet when used in a more sinister manner, as by Hitler, who managed to convince Germans that it was necessary to exterminate the Jews, for example, they become a tool to shape the thinking and perceptions of the masses.

Likewise, in totalitarian systems, the economy cannot be allowed to operate independently. Magstadt (2017) stresses that the system requires organizational uniformity, with every aspect of the totalitarian regime serving to advance the ideological ideal. In free market systems the economy is generally free from governmental interference and those participating in it are expressing a form of individualism and independence from the state and its influences. The totalitarian state cannot abide this, as the individual should always be suppressed for the

furthering of the supposed greater ideal. Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) suggest the economy in a totalitarian state just like the individual, should be controlled as its control by the totalitarian state can be used to its benefit. Previously independent corporations now belong to the state and serve to further its predetermined direction.

Together these six characteristics make up the features of totalitarian regimes. The aim of these characteristics is to completely transform society into a totalitarian system. This is not to say that these characteristics are the only ones to exist, there may be more but these have been the most consistent to appear throughout histories totalitarian states. Now we can draw upon these six characteristics to construct an analytical model to be used as part of this research.

3.3.2 Redefining the Totalitarian Model

The classical model suggested by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) consisting of the six characteristics outlined above has been used to judge whether or not regimes are totalitarian, and to what extent according to how many of these features were present. Odom (1992) has reviewed this model extensively and found little fault in it, and adding that no other models are capable of capturing the dynamics and realities of totalitarian regimes. However, this does assume that a regime can only truly be classified as totalitarian if *all* six features are present. This would mean that only Stalin's Russia and Mao's China could be classified as totalitarian, even then the model would need to be conceptually stretched to achieve this. Therefore, Guo (1998) suggests a redefining of the model to include first and secondary categories. The purpose of adding the secondary categories is to increase the model's analytical capacity without stretching the concept of totalitarianism so far as to risk distorting it.

The first three categories include components deemed as essential; these include the most fundamental or major characteristics which must appear at minimum to sustain the system's identity. The fourth category includes operative components, those related to the functioning of the regime but not necessarily required to maintain its totalitarian identity. A redefined totalitarian model as provided by Guo (1998) could be outlined in terms of the following categories:

1. Philosophical absolutism
2. Goals
3. Pillars

4. Methods and Mechanisms

The core difference between the classical model and the redefined offering is that the first three components are seen as absolutely essential while the fourth is simply a way to maintain the first three (Guo, 1998). Moreover, this model has the ability to assess any regime type for totalitarian tendencies, its application is not exclusive to already set in stone totalitarian regimes. This model retains all of the analytical strength of the previous one, yet places the model into more well-defined categories that are worth describing briefly once again. *Philosophical absolutism* highlights the point that those in places of political power feel they are possessors of absolute truth; the ability to guide and shape society lies entirely with them. *Goals* speak directly to utopian thought which usually has Marxist-Leninist connotations; the only goal is that of human society which is predefined by the leaders and all humans within society are subject to this; the outcome here is generally communism (Guo, 1998). *Pillars* defines the strict ideology to which all in society are supposed to adhere; this ideology will form the basis of the new regime to be installed; this new regime's political and social order is defined by a centralized power. The last component of *Methods and Mechanisms* is not essential to the basic character of the totalitarian regime, but they form the protective exterior which allows the essential components (philosophical absolutism, goals, and pillars) to thrive. According to Guo (1998), building upon Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965), these essential components encompass entities such as control over the state, ownership of media and communication, mass violence.

The analytical capabilities of this model will undoubtedly prove useful to this research, even though South Africa is not a totalitarian state. However, because of the separation of essential and operative components, this model will still allow for the assessment of totalitarian tendencies implicit within the aspirations of the ANC's National Democratic Revolution. The final section of this chapter briefly explores the last theoretical component - ideology as a critical component of totalitarianism and utopian thinking.

3.4 Marxist Ideology as a Type of Utopian Thinking

The concept of ideology is inseparable from politics in general; although a full exploration of all its nuances is not the focus of this research, it is still useful to briefly outline them as it amplifies the understanding of utopias and the identification of totalitarianism. Heywood (2012:29) suggests that the durability of political ideology can be attributed to the fact that it

provides an intellectual framework allowing political actors and politicians to better understand the world around them. Despite the clear understanding that most people absorb an ideology because it gives them a frame of reference, it is still a difficult term to define precisely. If this must be done, according to Heywood (2012), then ideology can be described as a mostly coherent set of ideas upon which organized political action is based, resulting in three potential outcomes: preserving, overthrowing, or modifying the existing system of power.

Therefore, the following three features, similar to those found in utopian thinking, can be discerned from this definition:

- The existing order is accounted for.
- A model of the future which is ‘better’ than the present is suggested.
- Political change shows how one can get from the existing order to the future, i.e. how we get from “here” to “there”

These characteristics are quite revealing about the relationship between utopia and ideology. Sargent (2008:270) places this into an important perspective: there appears to be at the heart of every ideology a utopian ideal, while the process described earlier in the chapter of thought to action can turn utopia into an ideology. Thus, although the two concepts can be theoretically distinguished, it may be helpful to allow them to intertwine in this analysis.

The last idea to be addressed is the ideology of Marxism, specifically in its demonstration of utopian thinking. Given the limited scope of this research, it would be impossible to fully outline all the elements of the theory of Marxism. However, it may be useful to highlight the utopian aspects of Marxism in accordance with the definitional features of ideology outlined above. Heywood (2012:117) and Kilminster (2014) suggests that Marx and Engels – the fathers of Marxism – were decisively anti-utopian as they rejected many of the structures offered by utopian socialists of the time. Marx put forward an ideal society – classless. His was not an empirical study of what was, but of what should be.

Starting from a critique of the existing social order, Marx was decisively of the view that capitalism was doomed to fail. He argued that it is a system of exploitation in which the the

means of production are not owned by the workers and therefore are regarded as not entitled to the fruits of their labour (Heywood, 2012:119). Commodities were to be sold for profit and the ruling class kept most of this, while giving the working class only a fraction of the yield. This idea of class conflict came to define Marxism, a separation between the “haves” and “have nots”, where economic exploitation under the capitalist system was considered to be inevitable and the core issue with the current order of the world.

To remedy this, Marx’s suggestion for political change can be found in social revolution. Padden (2002) asserts that this will not simply be an overthrow of the ruling class by the working class once they have come to understand their exploitation; it will also include changing the system of ownership and introducing a different mode of production. Marx is not very open in his thinking about the way in which change can be brought about, nor does he offer any other theoretical explanation as to how change can occur if the working class does not become “conscious” of its exploitation (Heywood, 2012:120). However, Marx is decisively clear that this is the *only way* for society to transition away from the capitalist mode of production.

The result of this change or his vision of the future would be a purely communist state. Sargent (2008) and Heywood (2012) describe the features of this society as classless and stateless, while allowing the mode of production to take human needs into account. When considering all these theoretical elements in combination, it is difficult not to see how many of them are utopian in nature. Paden (2002) and Kilminster (2014) suggest that Marx did eventually admit to the presence of utopian thought in his work, but Marx did not see it in a way which prescribes a blueprint for society. This is clearly not the case as Marxism definitively offers a critique of the present and a way to fix all the issues he identifies in the world resulting in a defined end point, thus a blueprint for the progression of society. Marxism can therefore be considered to have been influenced by utopian thinking. Marx’s blueprint for society can generally be broken down into three core elements identified as: philosophy, economics, and politics.

3.4.1 Philosophy of Marxism

The most basic roots of Marxism can be found in production and reproduction, an individual’s consciousness is shaped by experiences which is in turn shaped by the organization of society. Marx (1867) argued for an understanding of history on the basis of materialism, a theory which suggest that economic conditions structure all forms of social existence from law to culture.

For Marx, these external economic conditions determined all other aspects of society including consciousness. He suggests that the most pertinent human activity is a focus on the means of production of subsistence, i.e. water, shelter, food, clothing etc. Therefore, this economic base acts as the foundation of society and allows the legal and political superstructure to exist (Heywood, 2012: 118). From the Marxist perspective, most aspects of life can be explained with reference to economic factors, yet Marx went further and merged this materialism with a theory of change known as historical materialism. This is the Marxist theory which suggests economic or material conditions are solely responsible for the structure of law, culture, politics, and other elements of social existence. Although in other areas Marx was a critic of the famous German philosopher Hegel, they held a shared belief that historical change was driven by a dialectical process. Nersesians (2014:321) outlines the dialectic to be a particular viewing of historical, one in which progress is attributed to internal conflicts resulting in society achieving progress. Marxist ideology imbues this dialectic with a materialist perspective. Historical change is thus explained by Marxism as each mode of production having internal contradictions beginning with capitalism and the ownership of private property. Therefore, the expected conflict generated by capitalism will lead to socialism and ultimately a communist society, the highest of development according to Marx (1867). This dialectical and historical materialism still forms the philosophical basis of Marxist ideology today, as transformation has not unfolded in the way Marx envisioned. His utopian expectations have turned rather into dystopias.

3.4.2 Marxist Economics

Marxist ideology is primarily concerned with a critique of capitalism. Marx (1867) outlined his analysis of capitalism through an investigation of class and exploitation. His definition of class is focused on how much economic power a person has access to, specifically in relation to the means of production (Heywood, 2012: 119). Marxists suggest that the dominant world economic system of capitalism is dividing societies into two classes: proletariat and bourgeoisie. Because of their differences in economic, social, and cultural power, there is consistent friction between the classes. Thus, Marx (1867) believed this class struggle to be a deciding factor in historical change. This is due to the way in which he theorizes value and surplus value to be derived, two key concepts from which he draws many of his conclusions about the world.

The law of value denotes the unequal relationship between employer and labourer prevailing within capitalist societies. The capitalist mode of production begins with the transformation of

raw materials into a commodity through labour: wood is made into a table via a carpenter and his tools. Samir Amin (1978) characterizes this as abstract labour because individuals are only aware of the physical object and cannot see the process which has brought about its use. Thus, a commodity derives its value from the abstract labour that is imbued within it, which in turn allows it to be bought or sold on a market. More importantly, principal commodities which are usually money and another entity such as a table are not the only items able to be exchanged, because crucially labour is a commodity as well hence the term proletariat which denotes someone who has only labour to sell (Amin, 1978: 9). On the labour market a capitalist purchases an individual's ability to work, this labour power is compensated in the form of a wage or salary as remuneration for the transference of value into commodities. However, a capitalist's main drive is always profit which, as Marxists argue, he may struggle to obtain if he pays his labour power for each hour that they work; hence it is the surplus value which provides one with profit.

Capitalists purchase their labour power for the day but have the power to pay the labourer for only a small portion of it, so that profit can be generated. To illustrate this: a carpenter is bought for his labour power over the course of eight hours, but he is only paid the equivalent of four hours; this payment he must then use to support himself and whomever he is responsible for. The other four hours constitutes his surplus labour from which surplus value can be derived, as the capitalist claims any value which is produced outside of the worker's wage (Amin, 2013: 68). Thus, labour power plays a key role in the production of profit as any surplus value is converted into pure profit when products are sold on the market. Moreover, it is clear that the notion of unequal exchange spans numerous levels of the capitalist system, Marx (1867) consistently questions the need for a capitalist to always be chasing after ever higher profits.

Marxist ideology is mostly concerned with this phenomenon, the inherent instability of the capitalist system generated by friction between the classes because of constant exploitation. Marx (1867) cannot view capitalism as anything other than the exploitation of its workforce; the abundance of labour power simply means that a capitalist can continually generate profit at the expense of their workers. This cyclical nature of over-production causes repeated economic crisis in capitalist systems, with the hope that someday this would produce the necessary conditions for a revolution. A revolution according to Marxists would be necessary as they believe the idea of capitalism being transformed into a world system to be true. To them, capitalism knows no boundaries and will venture into every possible space and use it for

production, this rapid worldwide expansion allowed capitalism to become the world system it is today (Hout 1993, p.76). Although the accuracy of Marx's predictions is not being assessed here, it is clear that economic exploitation specifically by the capitalist system is a key target of Marxist ideological critique.

3.4.3 Politics of Marxism

The response to capitalist exploitation and perhaps one of Marx's (1867) most important predictions is that nations would experience an overthrow of capitalism through a social revolution. Beyond an ordinary political revolution which removes a governing elite to overthrow a regime, a Marxist social revolution is all encompassing to include an entirely new mode of production with the goal being communism (Heywood, 2013:120). This would come about through objective and subjective conditions, advanced capitalist societies like Germany and the United Kingdom would eventually succumb to the self-destructive nature of their economic system. The subjective conditions are more utopian in nature, as the social revolution hinges upon the proletariat recognizing their exploitation. Once this revolution has been achieved, Marx (1867) suggests the proletariat will act as a revolutionary force ultimately capable of leading themselves without any need for a bourgeoisie.

Perhaps even more utopian in conception than the conditions which need to be present for social revolution is the aftermath, which Marx (1867) generally understood as the necessity for a state-like figure, just not one which would exploit the working class. Therefore, before full communism can be established, a transitional stage needs to be completed in which the proletariat would act as the state. This dictatorship of the proletariat will supposedly make sure that no counter-revolution can be achieved by a disgruntled bourgeoisie. Heywood (2012:121) notes that the final stage of the social revolution will see the withering away of class conflict entirely. There would no longer be a need for the proletariat dictatorship as a state of full communism would be both classless and stateless. The entirety of Marxist ideology leads to this point, the perfect society in the eyes of many. Karl Marx consistently pushed against critics that labelled his thinking utopian, yet it is difficult to not consider the entirety of this ideology as being so.

3.5 The New Left

The disintegration of the Soviet Union meant the Marxist template for viewing the world no longer fitted so easily. Championing the working class seemed foolish or at least pointless

when capitalist systems provided them with a way to improve their standard of living without the need for revolution. The radical approach of nineteenth-century Marxists advocating for the full abolition of private property no longer has much appeal in the modern world. Scruton (2019:3) notes that this caused a shift in the left's political operations, still heavily influenced by the classical Marxist era; the left started to couch their politics and language in different terms to be more appealing. However, their goal remained the same: the establishment of a new order that would rectify the problems of the oppressed. To achieve this, two attributes stand out as essential: liberation and, most importantly for this thesis, social justice.

3.5.1 'Social Justice'

It would be erroneous to assume that the form of Marxism has not evolved over its existence. While a full review of the left's shifting position is beyond the scope of this thesis, a short inquiry into the changing nature of Marxist language will allow for a comparison in the Findings and Analysis section of this study. Scruton (2019:4) notes that while many elements of classic Marxism as outlined in this chapter are no longer appealing in their current form, yet the end goal remains the same, namely equity or equality of outcome. Marx's (1867) original framing of class conflict is too narrow to fit the conditions of the modern world. Pluckrose and Lindsay (2020) generally note that there has been a definitive shift in specifically the language used by modern Marxists. The catch-all term now being championed by Marxist thinkers is 'social justice'. However, its meaning is vastly different from that of the enlightenment scholars who originally conceptualized the term. Social justice seeks to question the organisation of just distribution in society; the concept denotes "the just state of affairs ... in which each individual has exactly those benefits and burdens which are due to him by virtue of his personal characteristics and circumstances" (Miller, 1976:20), or in another famous statement: "the adequate repartition of benefits and burdens arising from social cooperation" (Rawls, 1999:4). Social justice is no longer defined in Miller's (1976) terms, and while Rawls's (1999) outline is less radical, it contains some of the basic elements of modern conceptions of social justice.

The character of modern social justice is indeed different and far more radical than any of its predecessors. According to Scruton (2019:4), a more accurate definition of social justice would be: "The goal is a comprehensive rearrangement of society, so that privileges, hierarchies, and even the unequal distribution of goods are either overcome or challenged". Thus, any inequality in society regardless of its sphere is seen as unjust until proven otherwise. The goal then of the new left is equality across society by any means necessary. The issue is the way in which they

seek to achieve this; there is absolutely nothing, no custom, tradition, or institution, which can be of greater importance than equality. Hence, the only solution the new left can offer if something should stand in their way towards achieving equality is that it must be torn down and completely rebuilt from the ground up (Scruton; 2019; Pluckrose and Lindsay, 2020). While classic era Marxism aimed for a similar goal, the shift in approach by the new left is evident and more sinister. Marx (1867) advocated revolution through class struggle, but if this was not successful, then the status quo would not change. On the other hand, the new left's striving for social justice seems willing to go as far as warping democratic principles and norms to achieve their desired goal.

The utopian nature of this approach is clearly evident; Marxism is utopian in nature; the new left's direction is even more so. Both tend to prefer narratives of the world which link all its problems to the struggle for social justice (Scruton, 2019: 6). Both have framed the world in terms of a clearly defined vision of the perfect society in which all are equal, what they fail to characterize are the methods they will need to use in order to achieve this goal of all being equal. However, this is not equality but rather equity, a system which can only be achieved by intentionally giving preferential treatment to specific groups of people at the expense of others. This difference in language is a defining characteristic of the new left. They seem keenly intent not only on the transformation of society but the transformation of language as a means to achieve this end. This is entirely intentional, classic Marxist language is even less appealing than its intended outcomes, the new left has recognized this. As a remedy, they capture the language used throughout society.

Now the question must be asked if objectionable language is truly that awful. Language is a powerful tool; it has the ability to describe reality but also wipe it away. Marx's antagonistic capitalist relations, economic and social superstructure and material forces are mystifying technicalities which seek to take ordinary reality and put it beyond the realm of human understanding (Scruton, 2019:275). Our politics will no longer have the reach to grasp the social world. A social world which is out of reach means its problems cannot be solved ordinarily, the new lefts language is an attempt to make us believe that the only resolution to our conflicts is nothing short of total transformation, total revolution, or total destruction.

Language and the labels which come with it were used from the beginning of time, the only thing which mattered was to distinguish between those who dissented from those who shared the vision. Scruton (2019:275) argues that the purpose of language, which is to describe reality,

is being replaced by its rival purpose of asserting power over reality. This places the new left, especially those in places of power, in a unique position; they are capable of defining reality because they have power over it through language. This totalitarian style of using language does not set out to unify people, but only seeks to divide humans into the guilty and the innocent. However, as Pluckrose and Lindsay (2020: 4) note, even though this language of the modern left has expanded beyond its classic Marxist confines, it retains the same goal. Included in the language of the new left are many other oppressed groups, blacks, and women, for example. The outcome is still the same, a total restructuring of society, which now garners more support as the number of those who are defined as ‘innocent’ or ‘oppressed’ has been expanded.

3.6 Concluding Remarks

The three core concepts of this study are utopia, totalitarianism, and Marxism. Utopia refers to an idealistic vision of a future ‘perfect’ society. The understanding of utopian thought as a blueprint is most important for the purposes of this study. The utopian ideal posits a set framework within which society should operate to achieve the desired vision. If utopian thinking remains in the realm of ideas, it can provide hope, direction, and guidance. However, the transition from thought to action in an attempt to impose the ‘perfect’ society as if this is a viable reality is impossible. This is when utopian thought as a blueprint transforms into totalitarianism.

The second section of this chapter looked at the concept of totalitarianism, its characteristics, and the relationship it shares with utopian thinking. There are few historical examples of true totalitarian regimes, most of which no longer exist; however, their legacy and influences have not faded away. Arendt (2005) and Magstadt (2017) defines this regime type as the complete domination of society and its members, propagated by a tyrannical leader who imposes his vision absolutely. There is no escape, everything from sport to religion is turned into a tool for control. The original six characteristics (an official ideology, a singular hierarchical party, secret police, monopoly of armed forces, monopoly of the media and control over the economy) of a totalitarian regime suggested by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965) are seminal, yet all six are required to be present if the regime is to be deemed totalitarian. Since South Africa is not a totalitarian state, the redefined model from Guo (1998) consisting of *Philosophical absolutism, Goals, Pillars, Methods and Mechanisms* was derived from the literature to assess for totalitarian tendencies instead.

The third section of this chapter offered a brief overview of Marxism as a style of utopian thinking as well as outlining the shift towards the language of the new left, specifically related to issues of social justice. Marxism is a utopian ideology where the goal is control over financial resources in order to distribute them equally amongst the citizenries. The Marxist vision for the future ‘perfect’ society is thus stateless and classless; however, the methods used to arrive at this end involve the complete destruction of capitalist society and societies subsequent rebuilding in a communist way. It was shown how this classical approach to Marxism has shifted recently; the language adopted by the new left is more proficient at framing the problems of society. They go beyond the language of class to define and capture more ‘oppressed’ groups such as blacks and females. The purpose has remained the same, the complete restructuring of society towards the Marxist utopian ideal.

This review of the theoretical components sought a more nuanced understanding of the literature and theory around utopias, totalitarianism, and Marxism. This created a basis for understanding the complexities of the ANC’s National Democratic Revolution. Section 3.2 provided a conceptualization of utopia and section 3.3 a conceptualization of totalitarianism. This allowed for their operationalization in section 3.3.2 with the aid of Guo’s (1998) work. During its formation and struggle, the ANC was influenced by different ideological strands (Africanism, communism and liberalism); these still affect the way in which the ANC governs and approaches policy making, specifically the communist strand. The next chapter will detail the methodological approach adopted in this study.

Chapter IV – Methodological Approach

4.1 Introduction

The third chapter developed the theoretical components for the study. It reviewed the literature on utopianism, totalitarianism and specifically Marxism as a type of utopian thinking, while organizing the literature systematically to be utilized in an analysis of the South African case. The chapter showed that while using utopianism as a concept to generate critical thought may be insightful, it is the transition from idea to action which usually results in totalitarianism and human devastation. Presented in this chapter is a description of the research process. It provides information on the method that was used in undertaking this research as well as a justification for the use of this method. Also described in this chapter are the various stages of research, which includes the research design, selection of documentation, the data-collection process, and the process of data analysis.

This research explored a potential future for South Africa if the ANC's guiding document, namely the NDR, is put into effect. The purpose of this research was to highlight the Marxist influences still prevalent in ANC policymaking and how this is disguised using the promise of utopian outcomes. We have yet to see an ANC fully committed to deepening and consolidating democracy in South Africa; instead the party remains fragmented as its internal factions struggle for ideological supremacy. The so-called nine lost years during the Zuma administration provide reason for concern, as the events associated with state capture were justified based on the NDR and its associated cadre deployment (Fredericks and De Jager, 2022). During this period the ANC government largely showed a disregard for constitutional rules and values, hollowing out South Africa's democracy. The near complete erosion of an impartial state bureaucracy, and its replacement with a parallel state machinery acting in partisan interests, demonstrated that this utopian thought holds no regard for what happens during the process of trying to achieve the perfect future society. Despite the obvious dissatisfaction with the failure of democratic governance amongst South Africans, the NDR controversially remains the ANC's national project.

4.2 Research Methodology

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) indicate that a research strategy or methodology is determined by the subject being investigated and the nature of the research question. This thesis is an analysis

of the ANC's NDR and its Marxist ideological underpinnings. The study aims to investigate a particular way of looking at and deriving meaning from the phenomenon under investigation. This thesis was guided by the following research questions:

1. Does the ANC aim to achieve a totalitarian utopia through the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution?
2. Has Marxist-Leninist ideology influenced the ANC?
 - i) Does it remain influential?
 - ii) Has its form adapted in any way?

4.2.1 Justification for using the qualitative research approach – Case study design

The qualitative approach to research helps to address questions which cannot be answered by way of quantification. It is especially useful when little information is known about a topic or issue, and its exploratory nature aids the researcher in acquisition of information. This research made use of a case study design, which is generally used when a particular group, organization, social or political phenomenon is under investigation. Characteristically case studies tend to be both descriptive and exploratory in nature (Yin, 2009:6). This research design enables an in-depth study within a particular context (Yin, 2009:18). The necessity for case studies stems from the desire to understand complex social phenomena. A case study research design provides a great robustness when numerous variables of potential importance are being investigated as well as allowing investigators to maintain a comprehensive view of events in life. Advantageous to the case study method are its applicability to contemporary, real-life situations as it is grounded in them resulting in the ability to provide relevant and in-depth data. The common, everyday experience of the reader is considered and of great importance to case studies as they promote an understanding of complex real-life situations. Derived from a specific context, case studies produce detailed and in-depth results which also help confirm previous research in addition to creating new theories as well.

Traditionally the case study method is considered to have some major limitations despite its numerous advantages. Of greatest concern, sometimes case studies are limited in their generalizability and their rigour. The question of a case study's generalizability has been

debated for some time. Yin (2009:50) defends case studies by arguing that “the objective is not to generalize or summarize the findings to a population”. The goal of the case study is its deep and specific analysis, which risks being undermined if one tries to generalize the findings, thereby hindering the value of the case study itself. The greatest concern about case study research, according to Yin (2009:50), is its lack of rigour. The case study design offers the researcher so much freedom that proper procedures are sometimes not adhered to. Bias and other external factors such as unreliable evidence can then influence the findings and conclusions. He argues that other approaches do not suffer from the same possible weaknesses as they have methodological prescriptions which detail the specific procedures needing to be followed (Yin, 2009:52). Flyvbjerg (2006) maintains that the critique of case studies because of their supposed lack of rigor is unfounded because the study has its own form of rigour. While it may not look the same as a quantitative method, for example, it is no less strict. If the process was not as rigorous, then case studies would not be capable of generating such rich, in-depth results. The overall conclusion that can be drawn is that case studies have higher internal validity because the researcher has no ability to manipulate variables or events at the cost of lower external validity as generalizability is not the goal. This makes the case study particularly useful for analysing the case of the NDR as depth of understanding, not generalizability, is the goal.

The descriptive nature of qualitative research allows the researcher to provide a description of the phenomenon in question which can either confirm or challenge the theoretical assumptions made by the study. Furthermore, this descriptive nature allows the researcher to acquire a deeper understanding of the distinct nature of the problem and its potential impact. Qualitative research was deemed suitable for this research project as the purpose of this study was to explore the ideological influences behind the ANC’s guiding documents. This would be challenging to approach quantitatively as the nature of the topic demands enough time be spent analysing the data to generate rich and in-depth insights which statistics may not be able to offer for this specific research topic. For the purposes of this research, quantitative methods may not offer the same analytical capability of the qualitative approach does. A notable concern when adopting a qualitative approach is the issue of bias, especially when coding and interpreting data. The researcher was actively aware of the potential of personal bias throughout the research and consciously guarded against it. Further steps were taken specifically during the coding of data, as will be further outlined below. Thus, the qualitative approach for this

research is preferred for its ability to generate rich, in-depth data on the complex phenomenon of the policymaking of South Africa's ruling party, the ANC.

4.3 Data collection and content analysis

Qualitative research has traditionally made use of data-collection methods such as participant observation and ethnography; however the prevalence of technology has made other methods viable alternatives. This thesis adopted desktop study as its main method of collecting data. The collected data are derived from texts and documents, making it qualitative data (Saldana, 2011:3). The process behind this data collection is relatively simple as access to the internet made acquiring the documentation easier. The ANC's website is available for public access and includes all official policy documentation relating to the political party. The party's manifesto, excerpts from the NDR throughout the history of the ANC and the most up-to-date strategies and tactics documents were downloaded. Other texts such as speeches and news articles were sourced from numerous media websites.

4.3.1 Data collection

A qualitative approach to the research, specifically a case study design, was chosen as it reinforces the understanding and interpretation of meaning as well as intentions underlying human behaviour. The interaction between researcher and textual documents consisted of a coding process and content analysis, in accordance with the qualitative approach to conducting and reporting on research (Burnham et al., 2008:259). The researcher drew from political theory to inform certain aspects of this study within a broader critical paradigm.

The seminal texts used for analysis are the ANC's *Strategies and Tactics* (S&T) documents adopted at the national policy conferences (1969, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017) and the South African Communist Party's *The Road to South African Freedom* (1963). The ANC's S&T documents are the most comprehensive collection of their political thinking and policy approaches. Laver (2001:6) suggests "policies 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". Another benefit of examining this material is that it allows for an examination of a political party's "inputs" (objectives and policies) and hence an assessment of whether their "output" or performance matches it (Laver, 2001:10). While this approach is mostly used in comparative politics to understand competition within the political arena, this thesis will be focusing only on the ANC. The strategies and

tactics document of the ANC are known for indicating their approach to change in South Africa, so they will prove useful to analyse the “inputs” in relation to the “outputs” as expressed in the strategies and tactics document.

Vital to the data collection of this study is the process of coding. Qualitative data collection programmes are generally required for a qualitative desktop study, this thesis is no different. The chosen programme, Atlas. ti allows for all six of the ANC’s S&T documents to be uploaded and coded along with the key utopian, totalitarian and Marxist terms.

Atlas.ti is computer-aided qualitative data-analysis software (CAQDAS). This has become an invaluable tool for qualitative research as it increases the validity of this type of data. Atlas.ti stores all data in a hermeneutic unit (HU); thus, it acts as a storage unit for texts, allowing the researcher to organize, search, retrieve and integrate captured data. At its core, the basic function of the program is to construct quotations and code text. According to Olsen (2012:9), coding denotes the process of assigning segments of information, concepts and categories to specific coding categories identified by the research. Originally developed by Seidel (1999), this process is drawn from the Noticing, Collecting and Thinking (NCT) method. The first step entails finding interesting features within the data, after which codes are derived inductively or deductively. The second step, collecting things, details of how the data are coded into various themes, while similarities within the text are identified. The coding is informed by the research question. The third step or “thinking” part draws the researcher's attention to what could influence our thinking when designing the codes.

In practice, Atlas.ti creates a platform for research data collection and analysis, allowing for the arrangement, assembly and management of material in a creative way. The documents, in this case the ANC’s S&T documents, are read in detail to gain a broader understanding of each document and its context. Searching the document is done by locating key terms throughout, either as a direct use of the term or on a contextual basis. The data are then grouped into ..., sorting the key terms into relevant categories. From this, the data can be examined to highlight trends and links within the six S&T documents. This will allow for conclusions to be drawn on the nature of the ANC’s NDR and the ideological influences on it for the purpose of answering the central research question.

4.3.2 Document and content analysis

The more complex side of the process is related to the data analysis. As discussed, the texts (data) analysed such as manifestos and speeches include contents of communications, thus the research that will be carried out can be classified as content analysis (Burnham et al., 2008:259). To examine these texts, theory derived from the literature reviewed in Chapter 3 will be used as the analytical lens. This theory will allow for a set of extracted themes and frameworks for use in the analysis of the ANC's S&T documents. The themes will be equally important during the analysis as a set of lenses through which the data will be analysed.

The research method will be a systematic analysis of the relevant documentation mentioned earlier in this chapter. According to Bowen (2009:27), document analysis entails a systematic procedure for evaluating or reviewing documents for the purpose of eliciting meaning and gaining a deeper understanding. As a research method, document analysis aligns well with case studies as immense value can be added to the research through examination of the documents. He suggests a few specific uses of document analysis which may be useful to any research undertaking; two of the most relevant to this research are helping to understand the historical root cause of issues, and documents as providing a way to track development and change (Bowen, 2009: 29-30). Tracking changes is particularly useful in tracing the process of adoption of the NDR by the ANC during the apartheid years in comparison to its continued pursuit after the democratic transition. Burnham et al. (2008:208) acknowledge that document analysis on its own is too simplistic as a research tool for robust statistical analysis; however, they do credit its ability to develop novel accounts and to track significant events.

This research also makes use of content analysis. While document analysis, according to Bowen (2009:32), involves skimming, reading and interpretation, content analysis denotes the process of organizing information into categories informed by the research question. Both quantitative and qualitative data are suitable for content analysis, but this research will make use of the qualitative approach as this will allow for the identification of more pertinent segments of information in the selected documents to be separated from less important ones (Bowen, 2009:32). The content analysis will mainly be done by extracting texts from the documents to be coded and examining them for the themes, language and ideas which are featured most prominently. Coding the texts serves to help identify the characteristics and political values of the ANC as communicated through their documents. This will be further revealed by an interrogation of their rhetoric. The theoretical perspectives developed in Chapter

3 will aid in analysing the extracted themes. This makes the nature of this research evaluative, exploratory, and interpretive. To aid with the process of document and content analysis, the qualitative data software Atlas.ti will be used.

The benefits of using a software program such as Atlas.ti are numerous, but most importantly it is relatively low-cost for the amount of data it allows you to capture and code. Pierce (2008:264) suggests that Atlas.ti allows the researcher to quantify qualitative data making. Qualitative data are by definition open to interpretation; this is both a positive, as it can provide us with a more in-depth understanding of a topic. However, this feature can be negative if the interpretation is undertaken with biased influences present, this can lead to misleading representations. Despite this concern, Pierce (2008:266) argues that if the data are interpreted correctly, coding the data can reveal recurring and important themes within texts. For example, capturing the frequency of certain repeated words in a text act as a coding device which reveals the greatest concern trying to be conveyed. This allows the researcher to analyse the values or ideas of a speaker/writer of the text. But this has limitations, however, as it is not an all-encompassing approach since the researcher controls the selection of data, what will be processed and what will be captured within the software itself.

The analysis will further make use of the analytical framework developed in Chapter 3. As a full outlining of the relevant components has already been done, it is not necessary to do so again here; however a summary of its purpose and components are necessary to confirm the frameworks significance. The researcher has chosen to use an adapted version of Hannah Arendt's (1973) classical totalitarian model outlined by Guo (1998). This classical model, however, draws on all six indicators of totalitarianism being present for the regime to be classified as such; it does not allow for some indicators to be more present than others. Guo's (1998) adapted model, on the other hand, allows for this degree of variation, thereby offering a way to distinguish fully totalitarian regimes from those that display tendencies towards this regime type. Therefore, it is again necessary to reiterate that this research is not suggesting that South Africa is a totalitarian regime, but rather Guo's (1998) framework is being used as an analytical tool to assess whether there are totalitarian tendencies evident in the ANC's documents.

The flexibility of this adapted framework cannot be overstated as it aligns well with both qualitative research and the use of Atlas.ti as a qualitative tool. Guo's (1998) work emphasizes

that just because there have not been full totalitarian states such as the former Soviet Union recently does not mean the ideology has been completely extinguished. This framework offers enough qualitative depth alongside Atlas.ti to be able to reveal any lingering traits which could be influencing the ANC's guiding documents. Not all indicators are required to be present; the first three – Philosophical absolutism, Goals and Pillars – are seen as core to the regime of totalitarianism. The last indicator of Methods and Mechanisms is not essential but provides an enabling environment for the core indicators to thrive. A summary of the analytical framework is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 4.1: Operationalization of the Analytical Framework: The totalitarian model

Components of Totalitarianism	Indicators and Key Terms
<i>Philosophical absolutism</i>	<p>Those in places of political power feel they are possessors of absolute truth, the ability to guide and shape society lies entirely with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral Superiority • Absolute Truth • Societal Leader
<i>Goals</i>	<p>Speaks directly to utopian thought which usually has Marxist-Leninist connotations, the only goal is that of the supposedly 'common good' of human society which is predefined by the leaders and all humans within society are subject to this; the outcome here is generally communism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation • Utopian • Singular outcome • Equity
<i>Pillars</i>	<p>Defines the strict ideology to which all in society- social, political, and economic are supposed to adhere to, this will form the basis of the new political and social order to be installed as defined by a centralized power.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singular Ideology

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized Power • Predetermined Social Order
<i>Methods and Mechanisms</i>	<p>Not essential to the basic character of the totalitarian regime, but they form the enforcement mechanisms to provide an enabling environment for the essential components to thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coercion • Compliance • Conformity • Uniformity

4.4 Concluding remarks

This chapter outlined how the research was conducted, illustrating the process used to collect data as well as the approach that was used in analysing the texts. This research adopts a case study design as it focuses on one political group – the ANC in South Africa. The focused nature of case study research, in this case considering the ANC S&T documents, does not allow for broad generalizations regarding the political phenomenon in question. Countries across the globe have their own unique historical and political practices which should be studied in their specific contexts. But the case study is an important research design to understand the particularities of the ANC and its NDR. Thus, to summarise, this research is a case study, using data collected from the ANC’s S&T documents between 1969 to 2017, and studied using document and content analysis. Atlas.ti provided a platform to store, organize and systematically code the data for use in the analysis.

Chapter Four will present and analyse the data with the purpose of responding to the central and secondary research questions.

Chapter V – Presentation of Data and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the qualitative analysis of the data, including the practical steps utilized to investigate the nature of the ANC's national project - the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). This is done in two sections, the first looking to answer the question of how Marxism as an ideology has influenced the ANC and whether it continues to influence the ANC in its strategies and the NDR. The second section then seeks to determine whether the NDR can be considered a utopian blueprint for South Africa. This is done by coding the tabulated key terms developed in the previous chapters in the Atlas.ti programme. The coding reveals, through the ANC's choice of words and language in their Strategy and Tactics (S&T) documents from 1969 to 2017, how Marxism has influenced (and continues to influence) their politics, policy, and the nature of the NDR, allowing conclusions to be drawn about the nature of Marxism within the ANC.

5.2 Data Presentation and Analysis to Determine Marxist Influence

This section draws together all the data collected from six S&T documents (1969, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017) and the SACP's *A Road to South African Freedom* to ascertain whether Marxism is a recurring and influential ideological trend. Each document was coded using the key Marxist terms identified in Chapter 3 to see if their prominence throughout has been consistent, in which sections they were applied, and whether their influence and form changed over the years. An analysis of the Marxist ideology codes will be done to draw overall conclusions and reveal whether the language and terminology of the ANC's S&T documents remain consistent with classic Marxist terminology. The codes identified are Class struggle, Revolution, Social Justice, Equitable Distribution and Equity. The aim is thus to answer the second research questions: How has Marxism influenced the ANC and does Marxism, as an ideology, remain influential in the ANC, and has its form changed?

5.2.1 Trends in the data

This section will examine the general trends in all six of the ANC S&T documents from 1969 to 2017, with each document individually assessed for Marxist influences. The S&Ts are policy documents of the ANC which encapsulate their strategic approaches to transformation in South Africa as well as characterizing the historical and current form of "the struggle" from the

party's perspective. These documents were chosen above others such as the Freedom Charter because they offer the most comprehensive and consistent account of the ANC's objectives for all areas of society. This will allow for an assessment of the prominence and consistency of Marxist ideology from year to year as expressed in the ANC's documents.

Figure 5.1: Frequency of Marxist Phrases Throughout the S&T Documents (1969 – 2017)

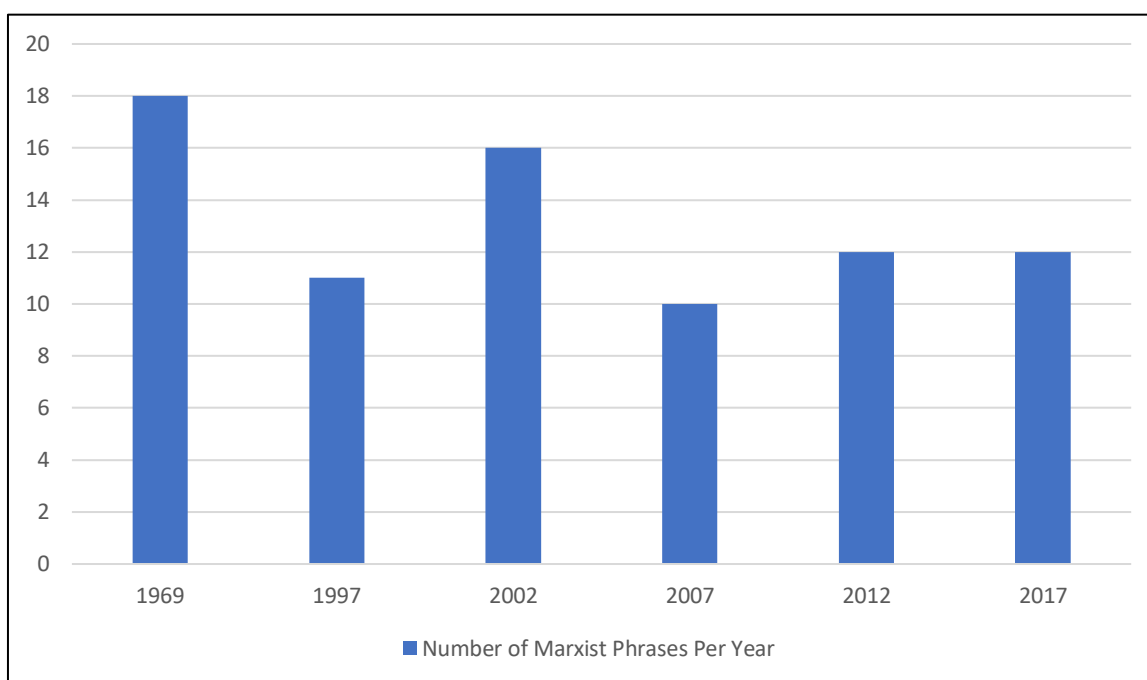


Figure 5.1 was created to get an overall view of how prominent explicit Marxist ideology was in each document comparatively between the years 1969 to 2017.

5.2.1.1 Marxism

The ideology of Marxism has been prominent for decades; at its core Marxism is a call for the demise of capitalism and private ownership of property, striving towards the utopian vision of equality of outcomes. This transformation of society is theorized (see section 3.4) to be brought about by revolution through class struggle; those of the working class will no longer tolerate exploitation by the upper class and thus they seek to overthrow them. However, this classical interpretation of Marxism has shifted in recent history; “Social Justice” is Marxism’s new form (Pluckrose and Lindsay, 2020). This new form still contains the binaries of classical Marxism, the “us” (oppressed) versus “them” (oppressor) mentality. Yet it seeks to broaden the scope of “us” to include other identified oppressed groups, namely blacks and women, amongst others, alongside the working class. The utopian outcome remains evident with the “goal of a

comprehensive rearrangement of society, so that privileges, hierarchies, and even the unequal distribution of goods are either overcome or challenged” (Scruton, 2019:4). As in traditional Marxism there is an ‘egalitarian mentality’ and assumption that all inequality is unjust. The ANC have not limited themselves to 1960s era Marxist ideology, as the analysis will show; they too have evolved towards the rhetoric of social justice opposed to the practice of finding resolutions which benefit all South Africans.

Marxist ideology has had a considerable influence on the ANC, as is evident in the party's S&T documents from 1969 to 2017. The 1969 S&T document was largely drafted by the SACP; this makes it a good yardstick for measuring subsequent S&T documents as it displays Marxist ideology most overtly (Filatova, 2012: 24-28). The S&T document of 1997 is the opposite, as it displays little Marxist influence since at the time the ANC was focused on democratic formation. But this does not continue, as the 2002 S&T document frequently reflects Marxist influences most likely because the ANC has shifted its focus to other issues not relating to democratic formation (Wardle, 2020:91). The 2007, 2012 and 2017 S&T documents denote the shift from classical Marxism and the class struggle to the newer yet still Marxist idea of social justice. These points will now be expanded upon.

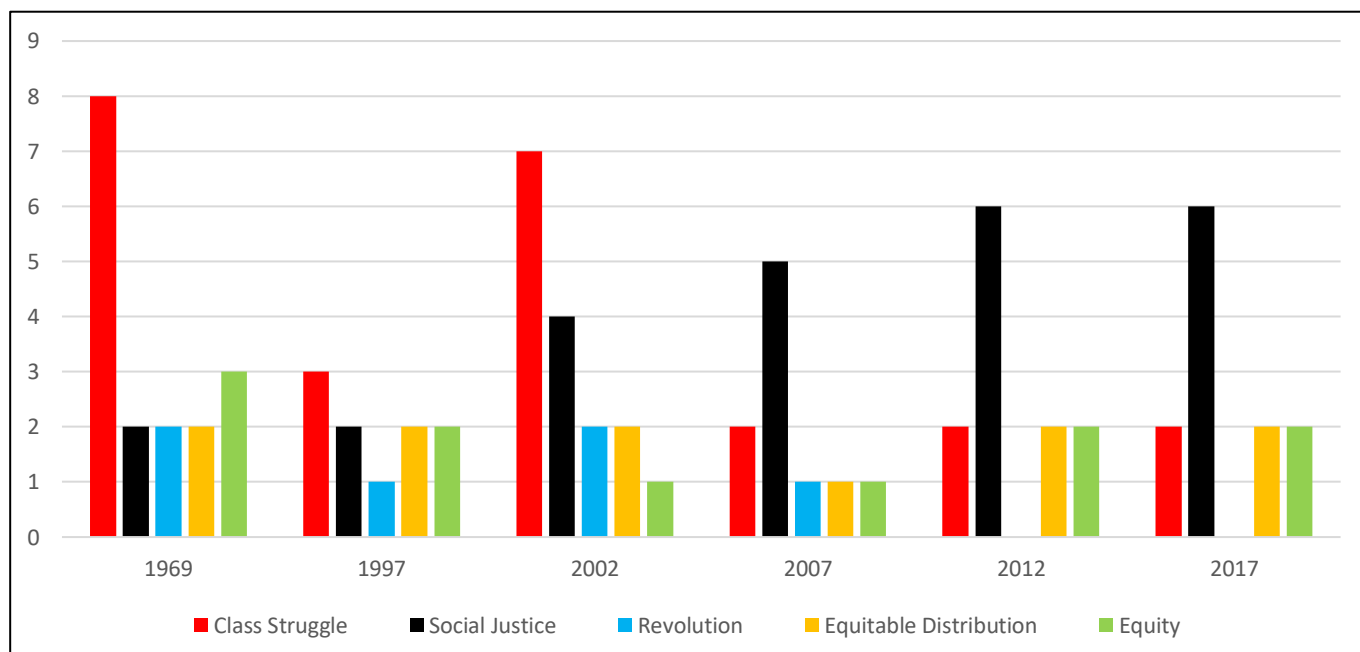


Figure 5.2: Total number of Phrases in the Marxism Code Group

The ANC was formed as a liberation movement (an identity it still holds on to, somewhat anachronistically) in response to institutionalised racial discrimination, but this was combined with the Marxist focus on the working class from early on. The idea of a newly emergent and highly exploited working class is distinctly Marxist in character. The ANC repeatedly reaffirms its commitment to the working class, which they claim emerged from industrialization alongside the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the trade union movement, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Together, “All these organisations coalesced into a national democratic alliance against colonial domination” (ANC, 1997:2). In 1969 the ANC reaffirmed its stance by stating:

“It also saw the evolvement of national organisations reflecting the aspirations of other oppressed non-White groups - the Coloureds and the Indians - and the creation of economic and political organisations - the South African Communist Party and Trade Unions which reflected the special aims and aspirations of the newly developed and doubly exploited working class.”

(ANC, 1969)

The ANC, COSATU and SACP form part of the Tripartite Alliance which aims to collectively govern South Africa, with a focus on benefitting the working class. Their primary role is to supervise and monitor policies to make sure the working class, as well as blacks and women, receive preferential treatment. Although this principle is often stated by the ANC, it is not necessarily acted upon. This is a tactic used to justify the ANC’s attempts to centralize their power as they can apparently aid those in need only once the ANC has all-encompassing power to do so. The SACP makes up one third of the Alliance; they are very influential and play a significant role in making decisions around this topic. They are one of the main sources of explicit Marxist ideological thought which influenced the ANC. The SACP’s views on the working class are clearly displayed in one of their seminal documents *The Road to South African Freedom* (1963), which states:

“Headed by the Marxist-Leninist Party and in alliance with most of the peasants and other working people, the working class must destroy the state of dictatorship of the capitalists and replace it with the dictatorship of the working class, offering the widest democracy to the great majority of the people. Attempts at counterrevolution by the reactionary classes and groups must be suppressed.”

(SACP, 1963:7-8)

The language of the SACP is far more overtly Marxist than that of the ANC; this is no surprise as the SACP was the first party in South Africa to adopt this ideology directly from Soviet Russia. While the Marxist language is not so plainly obvious in the ANC's documents, the core ideas which influence their views on class and social justice were directly transplanted from the SACP. The ANC's S&T documents of 1997 reaffirm that this alliance was not simply intended just to gain support against the apartheid regime. They were more "an organisational expression of the common purpose and unity in action that these forces share and continue jointly to define and redefine in the course of undertaking the tasks of the NDR" (ANC, 1997:15). The SACP is mostly responsible for the character of the NDR; it came hand in hand with Marxist ideology and was transplanted almost verbatim into the policies of the ANC.

The role of the SACP can hardly be overstated; the party strongly shaped how the South African situation was viewed internationally during the apartheid years. The earliest leaders of the ANC were committed to the idea of a non-racial South Africa, but the SACP redefined this vision to one that divided South Africa into inhabitants versus colonizers (Filatova, 2012:19). They identified South Africa as a "colony" of a "special kind" to which the NDR offered the only solution (SACP, 1963). The struggle no longer represented a fight for equality in society regardless of race, but rather a matter of "vanquishing" the "colonisers". Instead of a non-racial and united South Africa, the SACP divided South Africa across racial lines. Although the Soviet Union fell and the NDR in Russia along with it as Soviets admitted the pursuit of this revolution to be a futile one and completely unfeasible, yet the NDR remained in South Africa (Filatova, 2012:29). The ANC's Morogoro conference of 1969 was significant as it enshrined the Marxist ideas of the NDR as follows:

"In the last resort it is only the success of the national democratic revolution which - destroying the existing social and economic relationship - will bring with it a correction of the historical injustices perpetrated against the indigenous majority and thus lay the basis for a new - and deeper internationalist - approach."

(ANC, 1969)

Embedded within the ANC's documents from this point forward is a clear push for a centralized form of government led by the working class, a decisively Marxist philosophy as expressed by Heywood's (2012:120) outlining of the ideology. Equally concerning is that the establishment of democracy for the ANC was simply the foundation for a two step-process with the ultimate outcome being a communist state. There is hardly any evidence to suggest that the Tripartite Alliance was managed on an equal footing – the SACP was clearly the dominate ideological force. It is clear the SACP was participating in democratic initiatives in alliance with the ANC and COSATU, in the hope of gaining power and then changing the regime to a communist one. While they may have not achieved this, the ANC has still not abandoned the Marxist ideological influences implanted within them by the SACP.

Despite the SACP's considerable influence gained through the ANC granting them access to seats of power within the executive and legislature, they are barely mentioned beyond the ANC's S&T documents of 1997. The role of executing the NDR would fall to the ANC. After the democratic transition the ANC did not continually reaffirm the influence of the SACP; the Tripartite Alliance still existed but is not mentioned in relation to the NDR. Yet they did not see a change in language and objective to be necessary; the character of their policies is still largely influenced by Marxist ideology. However, a clear transition from the class struggle of classical Marxism to the new social justice is evident. The code groups of 'social justice' and 'equal distribution' reveal the motives behind the NDR. The programme targets the poor, it is designed to improve their quality of life. The main elements are described here:

“A critical element of the programme for national emancipation should be the elimination of apartheid property relations. This requires: the de-racialisation of ownership and control of wealth, including land; equity and affirmative action in the provision of skills and access to positions of management; consolidation and pooling of the power of state capital and institutional and social capital in the hands of the motive forces; encouragement of the co-operative sector; as well as systematic and intelligent ways of working in partnership with private capital in a relationship that will be defined by both unity and struggle, co-operative engagement and contestation on fundamental issues. It requires the elimination of the legacy of apartheid super-exploitation and inequality, and the redistribution of wealth and income to benefit society, especially the poor.”

(ANC, 2002:2)

The ANC expresses the view that they simply wish to ensure those who were oppressed receive back what was taken from them during the apartheid years of oppression. The issue with this is that it is derived from the SACP, which articulates the character of the NDR within the terms of the Freedom Charter to be “drastic agrarian reform to restore the land to the people; widespread nationalisation of key industries to break the grip of White monopoly capital on the main centres of the country’s economy; radical improvements in the conditions and standards of living for the working people” (SACP, 1963). The ANC continually derives yet euphemizes its Marxist approach to political and social issues. The clear Marxist link to the NDR is the involvement and support of the SACP. The Marxist ideology present in their documents prior to transition can be viewed as a symptom of the times they were formulated. Communist revolutionary ideas were prevalent amongst those who were oppressed, but there is no excuse for a continued presence of this ideology after the democratic transition. The ANC has to this day still not redefined their approaches to be more in line with liberal democracy.

The opposite is in fact true; instead of shedding their Marxist ideological influences, they have developed them. There is a clear shift in the ANC’s use of language from classical Marxism to the new left’s social justice terminology such as ‘equity’ in the above quotation from the 2002 S&T document. The ANC’s desire for equity across all spheres of society is presented nicely in their policy documents; however, equity demands that certain groups are given preferential treatment to raise their quality of life to the detriment of others. This desire has informed many of the ANC’s policy decisions, Affirmative Action (AA), Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) and gender programmes are specifically designed to give blacks, the working class and women a significant advantage over others. These policies are seen as restorative justice for past oppression, yet their distinctly Marxist character has the potential to sow further division in the form of a re-racialisation of South African society. Scruton (2019:6) concurs with this, social justice policies are incapable of creating harmony due to the methods required for their successful implementation. In addition, they call for institutions and the state to be partisan through the provision of special treatment to identified groups.

The main code groups found throughout the S&T documents are ‘social justice’ and ‘class struggle’. The ANC placed a heavy emphasis on the working class and show a desire to correct the injustices done to this class during the years of apartheid oppression; 25 out of the total of

79 Marxist quotations (or 32%) come from the ‘social justice’ code group. Some of the earliest documents of the ANC identify and emphasize the working class specifically and focus on alleviating and elevating this group as shown below:

“It also saw the evolvement of national organisations reflecting the aspirations of other oppressed non-White groups - the Coloureds and the Indians - and the creation of economic and political organisations - the South African Communist Party and Trade Unions which reflected the special aims and aspirations of the newly developed and doubly exploited working class.”

(ANC, 1969)

The most frequently quoted code group ‘social justice’ continues to reveal the most recent S&T documents are still highly influenced by Marxist thought. Similarly, to ‘social justice’ and the working class, the ANC is determined to mobilize all classes that stand to benefit from social change (ANC, 2012:43). The ANC view it as their duty to intervene in class inequality because of democracy’s apparent inability to address class-related issues. They state the following:

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

(ANC, 2017:6)

The above quotation, which is heavily influenced by Marxist conceptions of class and class struggle, and couched in the language of social justice, was extracted from the most recently available 2017 S&T documents. Despite South Africa being a democratic country for nearly

three decades, its ruling party still contradicts itself. South Africa's chosen regime type is democracy, and its Constitution embodies the values of impartiality and a non-partisan state acting in the broader interests of society – and yet the ANC pursues a Marxist ideology with its communist totalitarian and illiberal regime type.

Although there are classical Marxist notions of class struggle still in the 2017 S&T documents, there is a conscious effort by the ANC to use social justice terminology such as gender oppression. Their attempts to uplift the previously exploited black community are accompanied by discussions on gender, specifically emphasizing African women. This can also be seen here: “recognising the reality of unequal gender relations, and the fact that the majority of the poor are African women, the ANC pursues gender equality in all practical respects” (ANC 2012: 44, ANC 2017: 14). The ANC are clearly aware of the need to engage in the use of the new left's terminology to ensure they maintain a firm grip on their voter base. While the idea of class struggle is still highly influential, it no longer entirely encapsulates the South African situation. The serious concern is that the language of social justice is much more appealing than that of classical Marxism as displayed throughout Pluckrose and Lindsay (2020) yet its consequences may be no less devastating.

One can see that communist ideas are strongly linked to those the ANC identify as previously oppressed, namely the black community. There is little to suggest that the ANC is concerned about the effects that elevating one group by taking opportunities from another will have on national unity. However, the group they are supposedly uplifting make up the majority of South Africa's voting base, most of which continue to elect the ANC into government. Hence, these policies, although heavily influenced by Marxist thought, may be appealing to that demographic. The ANC is keenly aware of this and makes use of it, but it appears that this is done less to provide benefits to these communities than to use it as a justification to further deepen their dominance and the legitimacy of their rule.

In conclusion, there are numerous quotations which highlight the Marxist thought prevalent throughout their policy documents and the shift from classical Marxism to social justice, most notably in areas of societal transformation.

5.2.2 Summary of Marxism's influence over the ANC

The aim of the above data analysis was to answer the secondary research question on how Marxist ideology has influenced the ANC, and whether it is still prevalent or whether its form has changed. This was done by analysing the coded quotations from numerous S&T documents ranging from 1969 to 2017 as well as the SACP's *Road to South African Freedom*.

Marxist ideological thought was shown to have a high degree of influence. It is particularly influential around policies which favour the upliftment of the black community, women, and the working class. In terms of the NDR, the policy is continually mentioned throughout all the ANC's S&T documents. This policy informs the ANC's national agenda; its roots can be traced back to the SACP who took the NDR verbatim from Soviet Russia. Despite the Tripartite Alliance no longer being as active as it was, the ANC has never sought to redefine its policies to be more in line with its chosen regime type of democracy. Instead, the ANC has used the classic Marxist language and more recently the language of social justice. Social justice enables them to capture not only the working class but blacks and females as well in their voter base. The language on paper is much more palatable, but it is still a repackaged form of Marxism.

From the above analysis, one can see that the ANC remains influenced by Marxist thought, despite absorbing two other ideological influences, namely liberalism and Africanism (Dubow, 2000:15). There is no indication that they plan to abandon either Marxist ideological influences or the NDR. In fact, the opposite is true; each successive S&T document reaffirms their commitment to the NDR, although it may be in less overtly Marxist language. With this framing in mind, the following section will outline the perhaps more sinister approach followed by the ANC with regards to the NDR.

5.3 Data analysis of Utopian Ideology

The aim of this section is to determine whether the ANC's national project, the NDR, is a type of utopian blueprint. This was done by codifying key statements contained within their S&T documents from 1969 to 2017, using the key terms that represent utopian thinking. These key utopian terms were taken from the literature on utopian thought and totalitarianism (see sections 2.2 and 2.3). The utopian key terms were divided up into four main groups: the philosophical absolutism key terms group, the goals group, the pillars group and lastly the methods/mechanisms group.

5.3.1 Trends in the Data

This section is divided into the four main categories of key terms (philosophical absolutism, goals, pillars, and methods/mechanism) allowing for a systematic analysis of the quotations under each code group. Observations will be made in each subsection with the framing in mind from the responses to the sub-question in the previous section. This will aid in answering the central research question, namely Does the ANC aim to achieve a totalitarian utopia through the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution? The data collected are presented in Table 2 and the total number of phrases is shown in Figure 3.

Table 5.1: The Total Phrases per Utopian Code

Code Group		Total Coded Phrases	Percentage %
Philosophical Absolutism	Societal Leader	16	17
	Absolute Truth	4	4
	Moral Superiority	8	9
Goals - Utopian	Transformation	16	17
	Equality of Outcome	9	10
Pillars	Singular Ideology	8	9
	Centralized Power	10	11
	Predetermined Social Order	8	9
Methods and Mechanism	Coercion	3	3
	Conformity	5	5
	Uniformity	5	5
Total		92	100

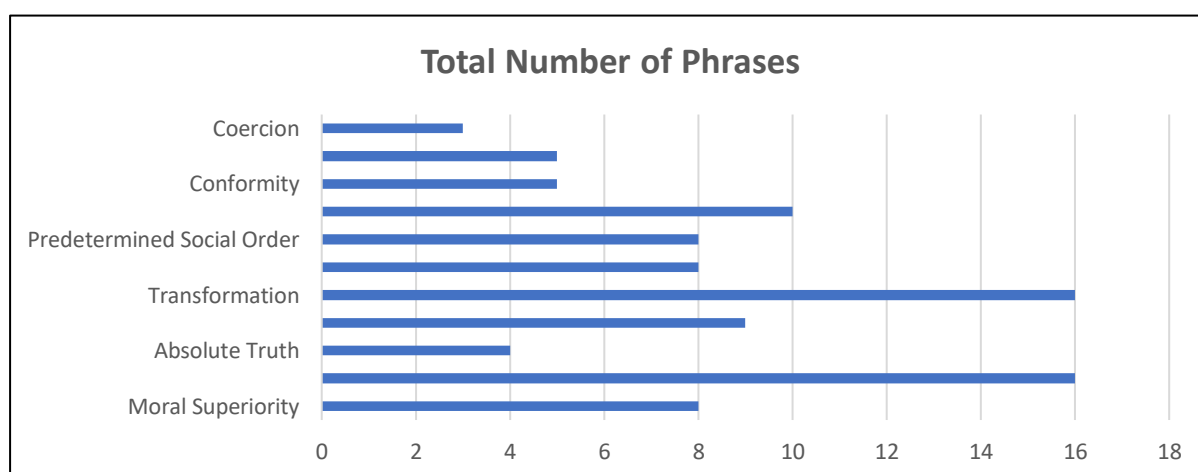


Figure 5.3: Total number of Phrases per Utopian code group

5.3.2 Philosophical Absolutism Code Groups

Firstly, the philosophical absolutism key terms group was derived from the literature to ascertain how the ANC views itself and their role in South Africa's political landscape. These terms include Societal Leader, Absolute truth, and Moral Superiority. Those who have utopian outlooks tend to position themselves as the leaders of society, claiming to possess a superior moral position granted to them by their knowledge of the absolute truth.

5.3.2.1 Societal Leader and Moral Superiority

Despite South Africa's democratic transition, the ANC has yet to fully embrace their chosen regime type of democracy. Rather, they seem to frequently contradict the basic principles of democracy. ANC members are well acquainted with communist ideology, because during the liberation struggle they adopted the position of a vanguard party. This Marxist-Leninist concept of a vanguard party places them at the forefront of the political movement and guarantees that they will be the only legitimate political party if successful. However, holding onto this view after the democratic transition is not necessary, yet the 'Societal Leader' code group accounted for a high number of quotations (15 percent of total quotations) out of all the key terms. It therefore expresses the elevated position the ANC has chosen to occupy.

The ANC has long placed itself in a superior position; being a national liberation movement responsible for the downfall of the apartheid regime is worthy of acknowledgement, but not to such an extreme extent. The ANC views its first electoral win as an 'ascension' and not "merely a change of political parties in office" (ANC, 1997:4). The ANC's entitlement to rule and claim to superior legitimacy stem from its liberation history as highlighted in the 1997 S&T documents:

"While at this stage we define ourselves as a liberation movement, it is trite to counter pose this to being "a party" in the broad sense or as understood by adherents of formal bourgeois democracy. It is our strategic objectives, the motive forces of the revolution and the character of the terrain in which we operate such as mass work, parliament and government as a whole which are central in defining our organisational character, irrespective of the formal label attached to it."

(ANC, 1997:15)

The above quotation was coded as ‘Societal leader’ and ‘Moral Superiority’; the ANC has never moved away from this self-identification which grants them an elevated status. The basic democratic label of ‘political party’ appears to be inadequate for a movement which has experienced and accomplished so much more than that label implies.

This is highly concerning for the future of democracy in South Africa; democracy as a regime type relies on a vibrant and competitive political environment, one which cannot exist if the ANC views itself as having a different status and role to other political parties. This notion is further supported by Wardle (2020:81) who highlighted a similar trend of the ANC elevating themselves above others. The 1997 S&T documents state the ANC “commits itself to the fundamental provisions of the basic law of the land, which accords with its own vision of a democratic and just society” (ANC, 1997: 22). Democracy has an established set of principles and practices, yet this seems to suggest that the ANC is intent on setting its own vision of what a democratic regime should be. In doing so, the ANC is effectively undermining democracy. Interestingly, the ANC hardly ever identifies or speaks about itself in terms of being a political party. They seek to constantly elevate themselves beyond the label of ‘political party’, thereby placing themselves above their competition. The ANC state in the 2012 S&T documents:

“The ANC cannot conduct itself as an ordinary electoral party. It cannot behave like a shapeless jellyfish with a political form that is fashioned hither and thither by the multiple contradictory forces of sea-waves. There should be clear value systems that attach to being a member and a leader of the ANC, informed by the strategic objectives that we pursue.”

(ANC, 2012:46)

The above quotation demonstrates the ANC’s undermining of valued principles of democratic regimes. They label electoral parties as ‘ordinary’ and use a somewhat derogatory simile to further imply the supposed uselessness of electoral parties. In the same set of 2012 documents, the trend of not considering the ANC to be an ordinary political party continues:

“The breakthrough of 1994 marked a decisive break with the history of colonialism. South Africans, led by the ANC elected with an overwhelming majority as the leading ‘party’ in government, had the opportunity to determine their destiny and together realise the ideal of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous society.”

(ANC, 2012:4)

Similarly, to the previous quotation, the word ‘party’ is placed in inverted commas. This implies that the ANC does not make use of the word in the conventional sense or seek to use the term loosely as to lessen its significance. Even in the most recent S&T documents the ANC is reluctant to adopt the label of ‘political party’ as this would give them an equal stature with the country’s other political parties. The ANC has been faced with a choice since their first election in 1994: act within the norms and principles of democracy, or continue to act as a liberation movement which constantly pushes for increased power. This choice is made abundantly clear in the 2012 S&T documents:

“In essence, the ANC is faced with two options: either to act as a party of the present, an electoral machine blinded by short-term interest, satisfied with current social reality, and merely giving stewardship to its sustenance. Or it can become a party of the future, using political power, and harnessing the organisational and intellectual resources of society to attain the vision of a national democratic society.”

(ANC, 2012:47)

The utopian language and ideology are clear in the above quotation. The ANC once again undermine their chosen democratic regime type; instead of viewing their re-election as one more term in power to make change within the confines of democracy, they look to the future before addressing the present. This is congruent with the theory of utopianism being a tool for future theorizing and elements of human control present in Sargent (1983) and Oakeshott and Fuller (1996). The ANC assume their power to be so deeply entrenched in South Africa that the present is no longer capable of encapsulating their aspirations. Instead, they focus on the future, the ANC positions themselves as the only legitimate and politically viable organization capable

of ushering in their vision of the perfect society. It is true the ANC has enjoyed successive political victories since South Africa's democratic transition; however, this has only served to elevate their self-righteousness even further. Not only does the ANC view itself as the only legitimate ruler of South Africa, but it also claims to be:

“The vanguard of all these motive forces of the NDR, the leader of the broad movement for transformation. Its leadership has not been decreed but earned in the crucible of struggle and the battles for social transformation. It should continually strengthen itself as a national political organisation and ensure that it is in touch with the people in their day-to-day life.”

(ANC, 1997:16)

Yet again the ANC suppresses a core democratic principle of being elected to office in favour of viewing its position as one which is deserved merely because of their victorious struggle against apartheid. They place themselves at the forefront of society, the sole organization responsible for social transformation through their National Democratic Revolution. The ANC continually draws from its liberationist history to justify its rule as the only legitimate political organization of South Africa. Their own framing of the South African political landscape is the only one which carries any sort of weight; in the 2007 S&T documents they boast about the status they have achieved:

“Since the advent of democracy, a new polity has emerged, with the liberation movement led by the ANC at its head. This movement has gradually mastered the science and art of electoral politics and grown in experience as the leading force in government.”

(ANC, 2007:10)

The above statement was coded as Societal leader, Moral Superiority and Absolute truth. One of the primary objectives of utopians is to convince society that they have the knowledge and ability to facilitate the path towards realising the perfect vision of existence. The ANC claims to have mastered the field of electoral politics, thereby further cementing its position as the only legitimate organization capable of fulfilling its definition of a perfect South Africa as outlined

in the NDR. This boastfulness shows they have no fear of the democratic process; their politicians believe there is little to no chance of losing power as their position was earned and thus cannot be taken away. The ANC may adopt the regime type of democracy, but they show little regard for any of its practices and principles. They continually diminish the value of democracy while elevating themselves. The position they occupy is exemplified in the 2012 S&T documents:

“In this sense therefore, it is both an honour and a challenge for the ANC to claim the legacy of the liberation struggle, to occupy the high ground of its moral suasion and wield its compass.”

(ANC, 2012:22)

The utopian cannot act in a democratic manner, this would be antithetical to the basic principles of the way they operate. The vision of a perfect society as defined by them must be achieved; this cannot be done if placed within a democratic setting, as there will always be contestation around the idea of perfection. The ANC has a complete understanding of this; it will never be able to fully realize the NDR if the programme is allowed to be contested in a vibrant democratic environment. Therefore, as the above quotation indicates, they need to claim moral superiority and the leadership role of society. This is only further exemplified by the ANC’s characterization of the NDR:

“The strategic objectives of our National Democratic Revolution reflect some of the best values in human civilization.”

(ANC, 2007:13)

Based on the above quotation, the NDR and by extension the ANC claim the moral high ground. This limits the manoeuvrability of the opposition significantly, as it is difficult to question an organization that supposedly represents the best values for society to adhere to. This only serves to further cement its legitimacy as the only rightful ruler of South Africa. The NDR remains the ANC’s national project into 2022; it is highly contested but has never been redefined or completely abandoned as there is no need for this in the eyes of the ANC (Fredericks and De Jager, 2022). The party exists above and beyond South Africa’s democratic regime; it claims to

be the only legitimate political organization capable of leading the country. Elections appear meaningless to them as their position was earned not given; the struggle continues with the ANC at the forefront as the leader of society.

5.3.3 Goals Code Groups

The second key code category is the goals group which consists of the aspirations and direction utopians intend for society to follow. These include ‘Transformation’ and ‘Equality of Outcome’. The codes were drawn from the literature (see sections 3.2 and 3.3) specifically chosen for their importance in highlighting utopian thinking. They speak directly to utopian ideas which usually have Marxist-Leninist connotations; the only goal is that of the supposedly ‘common good’ of human society, which is predefined by the leaders and all humans in society are subject to this; the outcome in this instance is generally communism.

5.3.3.1 Transformation and Equality of Outcome

The ANC are very familiar with the concept of revolution. However, within the context of the NDR, revolution means much more than just the limited definition of the violent overthrow of an existing political system. Modern politics requires a softer approach; change through violence is often objectionable to many in society even if they stand to benefit from the change. The ANC has demonstrated its understanding of this throughout their numerous S&T documents. Despite this constant play of language, the paradigm of their thinking remains the same. Within the framework of the South African application of the NDR and the language of revolution, Marx's classless society is replaced with a non-racial and non-sexist view of society as social and political Utopia. This is clearly outlined in the 2007 S&T documents:

“The National Democratic Revolution (NDR) is defined as a process of struggle that seeks to transfer power to the people and transform society into a non-racial, non-sexist, united, democratic one and changes the manner in which wealth is shared, in order to benefit all the people.”

(ANC, 2007:21)

This outline meets the requirements of a radical, comprehensive, and fundamental change to the political, social and economic systems of South Africa. Interestingly there is no mention of revolution as the method by which the ANC intend to go about arriving at their utopian society.

This is done intentionally; revolution denotes speed and violence, but the opposite is true for evolution, which entails slow and incremental changes in society. Transformation (the current face of the NDR) represents a compromise between the two, namely a mixture of evolution (non-violence) and speed (revolution). As a compromise, transformation is a slower collapse of the old social, political, and economic systems, and the more gradual introduction of incremental changes (Duvenhage, 2009:709). Simultaneously, political visions of the future are constructed, which involves destroying the past so that the future can be redefined. However, this does not change the objectives or the outcomes, as seen in the 2017 S&T documents:

“The National Democratic Revolution is defined as such precisely because it seeks to abolish this combination of sources of social conflict. It has national and democratic tasks, and it should strive to realise shared prosperity, social justice and human solidarity, premised on: a united state based on the will of all the people, without regard to race, sex, belief, language, ethnicity or geographic location; a dignified and improving quality of life among all the people by providing equal rights and opportunities to all citizens; and the restoration of the birth-right of all South Africans regarding access to land and other resources.”

(ANC, 2017:5)

The most up-to-date S&T documents notably move away from using language such as ‘transformation’ or ‘revolution’ regarding the NDR. Yet the objectives remain the same as they have always been. The deliberate obfuscation of Marxist and utopian language is notable, but what is missing, or at least present to a more limited extent, is the emphasis on the violent nature as well as the pace of change normally associated with revolutions. From the perspective of the ANC, its “revolution” is still on-going as it is unfinished and considered incomplete by many of its supporters. Despite the ANC gaining power through democratic means in 1994, this is viewed as preparing:

“an environment that provides a basis for the advancement of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) in our country.”

(ANC, 2007:1)

The above quotation is very indicative of the ANC's attitude towards democracy; they may operate within a democratic regime type, but consolidated democracy is most certainly not their end point. The ANC is not overly concerned with consolidating South Africa's democracy as this is merely a transitional phase for the party; their revolution is aimed at extensive transformation of the state, economy, organizational work (party) and a focus on the ideological struggle (ANC 2007:19, ANC 2017:19). They affirm their commitment accordingly:

“We will undertake these tasks conscious of our responsibility as one of the battalions of the global army for progressive social change, a disciplined force of the left.”

(ANC, 2007:19)

What this implies is the ANC's willingness to fundamentally transform society, it is the means to achieve this end that are problematic and the commitment they have to a particular kind of end which needs reflection. The state and society are to be carved up in accordance with what the ANC deems to be its most perfect version. “Revolution” is the process and utopia the outcome. There is no doubt that this revolution presented as transformation will not leave any area of politics, society, or the economy untouched. The motive is clearly utopian, but as Magstadt (2007:62-67) has similarly indicated, the utopian ideologue will use the premise of redress after an unacceptable past to justify their own vision of a desirable future defined in their terms. In the South African context, this unacceptable past is a long history of segregation and apartheid. The motivation for the implementation of the NDR is repeatedly found in a description of an extremely negative image of South African history and how to proceed:

“Apartheid colonialism visited such devastating consequences on Black communities because it ordered the ownership and control of wealth in such a manner that these communities were deliberately excluded and neglected. Therefore, fundamental to the destruction of apartheid is the eradication of apartheid production relations. This is more than just an issue of social justice. It is also about the fact that these relations had become a brake on the advancement of technology and competitiveness of the economy.”

(ANC 2007:4, ANC 2017:5)

The ANC have consistently used the impetus of the need to dismantle apartheid to justify their sweeping societal changes in policy documents. Not only is apartheid a socially reprehensible phenomenon, but it also accounts for underdevelopment or lack of development. However, the way in which the ANC intends on addressing this unacceptable past does not fit within the confines of a democratic regime. The desire is utopian and the strategy relies on intentionally promoting one racial group, as outlined in the 2017 S&T documents:

“The main content of the NDR is the liberation of Africans in particular and Blacks in general from political and socio-economic bondage. It means uplifting the quality of life of all South Africans, especially the poor, the majority of whom are African and female. At the same time, it has the effect of liberating the white community from the false ideology of racial superiority and the insecurity attached to oppressing others. The hierarchy of disadvantage suffered under apartheid will naturally inform the focus of programmes of change and the attention paid particularly to those who occupied the lowest rungs on the apartheid social ladder.”

(ANC, 2017:5)

The above quotation was coded as ‘Transformation’ and ‘Equality of Outcome’. Promotion of one racial group over another by the ruling party of South Africa does not promote unity. In fact, it creates the precise opposite condition, animosity, as the ANC is clearly aiming to support the black community in all aspects of life. The only outcome of this is African hegemony; this is in accordance with the principle of representativeness dictated by demographics overwhelmingly favouring this community. Furthermore, they will enjoy dominance in terms of control, management, job opportunities and ownership. This thought pattern perpetuated by the ANC is both deeply utopian and Marxist in character. It stems from the idea that equality can only be achieved if all forms of discrimination, colonialism and apartheid are completely eradicated. However, colonialism and apartheid no longer exist in society; the ANC is seeking to transform society based on a matter that has already been resolved. Yet the ANC is reluctant to entertain any criticism of their national project as they have stated long ago:

“The defining character of the public platform of most opposition parties is to entrench the social relations of black poverty and white opulence – however modified – that were engendered by the system of apartheid.”

(ANC, 1997:10)

While the above quotation is specifically addressing how the ANC repudiates opposition critics on the question of transformation, but it can be applied to the wider populace as well. Any attempt to critique the NDR is immediately taken as expressing support for past apartheid inequalities. The ANC is consciously aware of its attempts to uplift the black community exclusively as the real goal instead of improving equality for all in society. This desire to create equality of outcome is clear to see in some of the ANC's most defining policies such as Affirmative Action (AA) and broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) and economic redistribution. This forms part of the party's entire transformation strategy, as most of the population form part of the previously oppressed black community. These policies place the ANC in a favourable light for this voter demographic, further enhancing its domination.

The ANC clearly desires a complete transformation of South Africa. The utopian rationale is evident; the party has constructed a perfect vision of the future justified in terms of a response to apartheid as the unacceptable past. The issue with this is consistently expressed in the literature: a perfect society can never be achieved. Thus, according to the logic of utopianism, a more radical phase is required to realize the vision of the ideal future society. This transition from thought to action has already started occurring in South Africa. The ANC will have to take stronger control of the political situation to achieve the objectives of the revolution in an accelerated manner. According to this perspective, poor transformation successes have nothing to do with the validity of the hard core of thinking about the NDR, but rather with the poor application of existing policy frameworks. Therefore, the application context must be more radical and a more centralized approach to the implementation of revolutionary ideals within this perspective must take place.

5.3.4 Pillars Code Group

Thirdly, the pillars code group was created to capture the strict ideology to which everything – economic, social and political – is supposed to adhere. It is the logical progression from the goals code group, as it highlights the ways in which the utopian's ideal of transformation can be realised. The key terms chosen include: 'Singular Ideology', 'Centralized power' and 'Pre-determined Social Order'. They were derived from the literature (see sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4)

for the purpose of assessing the ANC's approach to leadership and overall ideological outcomes for society.

5.3.4.1 Singular Ideology, Centralized Power and Pre-determined order

As previously noted, the ANC does not view itself as an ordinary political party, rather arguing that its unique history imposes upon it the destiny of being the custodian of South African democracy. A key issue preventing democratic progress is the ANC's own lack of internal democracy. To usher in their vision of utopia, a hierarchal and centralized single dominant party is required. This is outlined in the 2017 S&T documents:

“In other words, from the branch level to the national structures, the ANC should act as the strategic centre of power for its members, learning from, and in turn guiding activities across, society.”

(ANC, 2017:14)

This is both Marxist and utopian in nature. It is clear that the real sovereign ruler in South Africa is not the state, but the ANC party itself. The party of the ANC functions as the hub of the political system, while the state is relegated to serves as an instrument of the party dictatorship. This is in exact accordance with Marx's (1867) view on of the state during the transitionary phase towards communism. The state is further subverted by the ANC, it functions as a bureaucratic and administrative apparatus for the party. The ANC continually appears to be carrying out its politics beyond the framework of the state, going as far to employ the state as a tool to realize its goals. The ANC may have internal party elections, but displays few other elements of internal party democracy. Moreover, their electoral dominance only serves as a justification for their ever-increasing centralization of power. The ANC prefer a top-down approach to internal party politics to further consolidate their power:

“A strategic centre of power should command both legitimacy and authority, deriving from the quality of its collective ideas and the discipline of its members. It should ensure that its mandate is carried out by its members, wherever they are located. It should be able to monitor and evaluate the implementation of its policies. When and where there are weaknesses – whether these are a result of poor policies, weak implementation, or poor leadership – it should be able to act decisively.”

(ANC, 2017:14)

This does not appear only in the newer documents, but the ANC was also aware of its position earlier as well:

“Our approach to all these responsibilities derives from the understanding that a national democratic society has to be systematically constructed. It is not found ready-made at the point of transfer of political power. Nor can it emerge spontaneously through the agency of the ‘hidden hand’ of the market. What this means is that members of the ANC should continually improve their capacity – both political and technical – to act as the most advanced elements of society.”

(ANC, 2012:46)

The ANC is keenly aware of how it wields political power. Its ‘strategic centre of power’ transcends the management of political leadership placed in various state institutions. Modern democracies do not rely on one centre of power, but rather power is dispersed throughout the various state institutions like that of a republic which is predicated on the separation of powers. To combat this, the ANC has deliberately built its own organizational capacity so that its influence can penetrate all aspects of life – political, social and economic. These practices are not in accordance with any democratic norms or principles. This centralized style of leadership is more in line with the Marxist notion of democratic centralism. This combines the two principles of democracy and centralism; Marxists will attempt to balance the two for the purpose of providing proper leadership to the working class. It has already been established in the previous section that the ANC still views the South African situation as a ‘struggle’. Their task regarding unity is outlined as follows:

“Integrating the common aspirations of the motive forces into a common vision, is a challenge that the ANC has continuously to address. This is proceeding from the understanding that the unity of the motive forces is fundamental for success. At the same time, the ultimate objective of a united and prosperous society dictates that the ANC should reach beyond its narrow social base to persuade all South Africans about their common long-term interests. It should continually seek to forge a social

compact – a broad national front – for mutual benefit. This requires deft management of contradictions in broader society and even among the motive forces themselves.”

(ANC, 2017:15)

The above quotation was coded as ‘Centralized Power’, ‘Singular ideology’ and ‘Pre-determined Social Order’. The language may not be direct, but the content is overwhelmingly utopian. The idea of a ‘common vision’ and ‘ultimate objective’ are all defined by the ANC itself. It has been shown how the ANC continually promotes and uplifts the previously oppressed black community as the expense of other South Africans through policies such as BBBEE; this is not conducive for any form of unity and thus cannot be in the common long-term interests of all South Africans. These constant contradictions are indicative of the ANC’s true aim; it is not the unity of citizens, but rather unanimity or unity of thought. This occurs in two areas – firstly in the broader society. The ANC in the above quotation recommends “deft management of contradictions”, there can be no other forms of ideological expression in society that run contrary to the ANC’s vision. Therefore, the ANC take it upon themselves to ensure that the entirety of the South African population should adhere to the unity of thought principle similar to the activity of governing as the sole director and chief motivator presented by Oakeshott and Fuller (1996:23). This extends to the state level, with the ANC again choosing a top-down approach, which only serves to alienate the lower structures of the party in favour of the ruling elite:

“The ANC should implement an intensive programme to restore the integrity of systems of managing membership and leadership. From the processes of joining the movement to the operation of branches and higher structures, there should be mechanisms of sifting quality and of ongoing improvement in the orientation and character of members. The strategic centre of power should exercise collective authority over members and leaders alike. That authority should derive from principles, policies and decisions collectively arrived at. Defiance of these precepts should be sanctioned through processes that are resolute, just, and impartial.”

(ANC, 2017:16)

While this ‘sorting’ programme may be beneficial to the ANC, it is not conducive to the development of South African democracy. The ANC leadership demands unity of thought from

all its members, but this stifles the life of the organization. Dissent towards the leadership's policies is hardly ever expressed as this may invite expulsion from the party or disciplinary action at the least. The Marxist principle of 'democratic centralism' is still strictly adhered to, there is an unalterable need for complete party discipline amongst all party members. Perhaps even more concerning is the dissent by leadership and utter intolerance of debate, these shortcomings by the ANC stifle conversation on important policies and issues.

Thus, the leadership of the ANC is unchecked, bad decisions made by them cannot be checked before becoming public policy. This leads to public policies being deprived of any influence from lower structures or general party membership. It is the combination of total party discipline and democratic centralism which weakens the ability of ANC members spread across numerous state institutions, especially the Parliament, from providing the appropriate checks and balances. Unchecked and completely free to act as they desire, the executive cannot be held accountable as the institutions which are in place for accountability purposes are ANC-dominated. The purpose of this: further centralization of the ANC's power in pursuit of their utopian NDR.

While the ANC is focused on centralizing its power and promoting a singular ideology, they are also striving for a specific social order. They emphasize social cohesion by stating "The identity of being South African, democracy and the macrosocial ideals enshrined in the Constitution are a critical starting point in this regard" (ANC, 2017:24). This seems to be at odds with the NDR as total transformation of South Africa requires unity of thought, and hence in the next breath the ANC also states:

"A social compact should be forged between the state, business, workers, and other social partners. Each of these partners should commit to specific contributions and even sacrifices to attain the common objective. In other words, while attainment of social equity is critical for social cohesion, a minimum level of social cohesion is necessary to pursue social equity."

(ANC, 2017:24)

Equality of outcome have already been shown to be a definitively Marxist concept. There does not seem to be any intention by the ANC to allow South Africans to achieve a clear self-identify;

instead they promote “one common South African identity” and ensure that this will not “reduce South Africa into a melting pot of undifferentiated beings” (ANC, 2017:25). The 2012 S&T documents are slightly clearer on the ANC’s intentions, as it will proceed:

“...from the understanding that comprehensive social transformation entails changing the material conditions of all South Africans for the better; but also ensuring that we forge a nation inspired by values of human solidarity. It is the combination of these factors that describe the civilisation of national democracy that we seek to build.”

(ANC, 2012:62)

The condition posited in the above quotation is simply impossible; the ANC’s desired social order in which all South Africans stand to benefit from their transformation of material conditions can never occur. The ANC is very quick to outline how its policies will uplift the previously oppressed black community, but hardly ever addresses their long-lasting impact on ordinary white South Africans. They will not achieve social cohesion nor social equity; these are ideals to strive for but only as a guiding principle. The ANC has clearly taken the utopian step from thought to action; however, they will have dissenting South Africans to contend with because of the policies contained within the NDR. The way they deal with this, could define the regime going forward.

5.3.5 Methods and Mechanisms Code Group

The final grouping is the Methods and Mechanisms of the utopian. This group contains three key terms: Uniformity, Conformity and Coercion. These are not considered essential to the basic character of the totalitarian regime, but they form the enforcement mechanisms to provide an enabling environment for the essential components to thrive. They were drawn from the literature on totalitarianism (see section 3.3) and will be analysed using the ANC’s S&T documents.

5.3.5.1 Uniformity, Conformity and Coercion

South Africa is not a totalitarian state, hence the key terms in this code group will not be able to highlight conventional methods and mechanisms usually associated with totalitarianism as these do not exist currently. There is no secret police force used to silence dissent and the army

serves its regular function as a defence force; it has not been co-opted by the state to keep enforce the regime's power. This does not mean these key terms group serves no function; in fact, they highlight a practice espoused by the ANC since its birth. It must be noted that the key terms often overlapped in what they highlighted in the policy documents, however this does not diminish their analytical value. To ensure Uniformity and Conformity through practices of Coercion, the ANC openly states its use of the Marxist concept of the 'cadre'. Heywood (2002, 249) defines cadres as "party members trained and disciplined in the ideology of the party, who are further expected to exhibit a high level of political commitment and doctrinal discipline." The ANC states in their 1997 S&T documents:

"A cadre policy ensuring that the ANC plays a leading role in all centres of power, and a proper balance in its day-to-day activities between narrow governmental work and organisational tasks. In all centres of power, particularly in parliament and the executive, ANC representatives must fulfil the mandate of the organisation."

(ANC, 1997:16)

The ANC would reaffirm its reliance on cadres in 2007 and 2012:

"In order for it to exercise its vanguard role, the ANC puts a high premium on the involvement of its cadres in all centres of power. This includes the presence of ANC members and supporters in state institutions. It includes activism in the mass terrain of which structures of civil society are part. It includes the involvement of cadres in the intellectual and ideological terrain to help shape the value systems of society. This requires a cadre policy that encourages creativity in thought and in practice and eschews rigid dogma. In this regard, the ANC has a responsibility to promote progressive traditions within the intellectual community, including institutions such as universities and the media. Playing a vanguard role also means the presence of members and supporters of the ANC in business, the better to reshape production relations in line with the outlook of a national democratic society."

(ANC, 2007:17; ANC, 2012:45)

The ANC makes use of this term very freely fully aware of its communist connotations. The clear aspiration for the ANC as outlined in the previous section is the centralization of power, and cadres serve this purpose by acting as ideological extensions of the ANC elite. If they permeate all sectors of the state, the ANC's ideological influence and push for the NDR is carried with them. This ensures both uniformity and conformity, as there is no alternative option in the eyes of the ANC. This allows the ANC to assign specific tasks of governance to trusted appointees, creating a system in which cadres are the most loyal followers without necessarily being the most suited for the position. The ANC makes this statement in their 2017 S&T documents:

“Special focus should be paid to the quality of cadres at political and administrative levels, from the perspective of their orientation, academic qualifications, and ethical attributes.”

(ANC, 2017:21)

If the above statement were true, the result should be well-performing ANC loyalists in all branches of the state. This is not reflected in the realities of South Africa today; the statement is simply an attempt to draw attention away from the true reality of the impact of cadre deployment. It is well known that under the Zuma administration cadre deployment and the patronage network it created were nearly successful in completely capturing the state of South Africa, Fredericks (2019) and De Jager and Fredericks (2022) both similarly denote the effectiveness and pervasiveness of ANC cadres through government structures. Cadres have no special requirement besides total and unwavering loyalty to the ANC. Their performance in the assigned position does not matter; their only duty is to ensure all aspects of the state conform to the ideological principles of the ANC and the NDR.

The strategy of cadre deployment is as much communist as it is utopian. To realize the vision of a perfect future, the ANC requires uniformity and conformity at all levels of society. Even the slightest dissenting voices need to be dealt with, otherwise the utopian ideal cannot be achieved. Therefore, the strategy of cadre deployment, especially on the state level, provides the ANC with an enabling environment to enact all the key elements described in the previous code groups, allowing the central research question to be answered below.

5.3.6 Summary

The aim of the above analysis is to answer the central research question: Does the ANC aim to achieve a totalitarian utopia through the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution? This was done by analysing the coded phrases from the numerous S&T documents from 1969 to 2017, by looking at each of the key term codes in the four categories of philosophical absolutism, goals, pillars and methods/mechanisms.

The first key terms category, philosophical absolutism is fundamental in addressing this research question. This code group was chosen to highlight crucial concepts and consisted of ‘Societal Leader’, ‘Moral superiority’ and ‘Absolute Truth’. It was clear from this code group that the ANC is reluctant to take on the label of political party, as this is seen to diminish the significance of this liberation movement. This attitude towards the leadership position of South Africa is not in the least conducive to the growth and consolidation of democracy in South Africa. As evidenced by the ANC’s strategy of the National Democratic Revolution, they see themselves as occupying a more elevated position of national leadership. Not only do they claim to be the sole legitimate ruler of South Africa, but also the custodians capable of ushering in their vision of a perfect future based on the moral superiority of their position and policies.

Goals forms the second key terms category. It contains the code groups that represent the utopian desires of the ANC. The key terms in this category are ‘Transformation’ and ‘Equality of Outcome’. It showed that the ANC’s NDR is located between revolution and evolution. This middle ground is transformation, and the NDR is accordingly presented as promoting non-violent but rapid change. However, the NDR strives to transform all spheres of South Africa – social, political, and economic – in line with the principle of equality of outcome. This utopian language is far more sinister than the blatantly Marxist language used in previous S&T documents as it seeks to disguise the true intentions of the NDR. The ANC wishes to transform South Africa according to their utopian vision justified as redressing of an unacceptable past.

The third category of key terms, Pillars, represents the logical progression from the Goals code group. The category consisted of ‘Singular Ideology’, ‘Pre-determined Social Order’ and ‘Centralized Power’. The analysis revealed that the ANC actively seeks to centralize its power over the state. The party itself acts as the hub around which all political life revolves. This absolute power is then used to define the social order the party deems to be most fit for South

Africa according to their utopian vision. The major influence here, as consistently in most of the ANC's policies, is Marxism.

The fourth and final category of key terms selected was Methods and Mechanisms. It consisted of 'Conformity', 'Uniformity' and 'Coercion'. This category is not essential to the model, but these features provide the enabling environment for the other categories to thrive. The model allowed for an analysis of the ANC's constantly adopted system of cadre deployment. ANC loyalists are placed within every branch of the state to ensure that the ANC's ideological supremacy is maintained.

5.3.7 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the qualitative data collected using the Atlas.ti program. To answer the sub-research question – namely How has Marxism influenced the ANC, the consistency of its influence and how its form has evolved – the coded phrases from the Marxism key terms group (Figure 2) were analysed. Overall, this analysis revealed Marxism to be a highly influential ideology for the ANC, especially in the NDR, the focus of this research. It found the SACP and its links with Soviet Russia from its earliest days to be one of the basic reasons for the pervasive presence of Marxist thought in the ANC. The policies of the ANC are frequently concerned with ideas of class struggle and the upliftment of previously oppressed communities, a distinctly Marxist agenda.

The central part of the research question – on the consistency of Marxist influence – sought to understand if the ANC's NDR can be considered a blueprint for ushering in a totalitarian utopia.

The analysis revealed that, if left in its current form and not completely abandoned or redefined, the NDR does act as a blueprint for the ANC's totalitarian utopia. The NDR is a blueprint and therefore aspirational. Yet South Africa is not a totalitarian state. There are still alternative spheres of power; South Africa has an independent and active civil society, as well as a constitution which stresses impartiality and an independent judiciary which upholds it; and the ANC itself has multiple ideological strands, including liberal democracy. It is perhaps the combination of these that constrains the ANC's desire for absolute control. The ANC has defined their vision of a perfect future society justified as redress of the unacceptable past of apartheid. While the pursuit of a better life for all is a noble cause, realizing the contents of the NDR will require the ANC to engage in the transition from utopian thought to action. This, as

the literature has made apparent, will always result in a singular ideology, the centralization of power and the destruction of alternative voices. Totalitarianism is the only outcome every time.

Chapter VI – Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The idea of creating a ‘perfect society’ – a utopia – has been an attractive prospect for both philosophers and idealists throughout the ages. Such philosophical ideas have, however, had devastating outcomes when put into effect. Attempting to perfect the imperfect human world has tended to result in human rights abuses, genocide, and the misuse of state power. This thesis intended to explore whether the ANC’s national policy, the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), could be viewed as a blueprint to achieve a (totalitarian) utopia. This analysis was undertaken by coding and analysing the party’s language in its Strategies and Tactics (S&T) documents from 1969 to 2017. Key terms were identified from the literature on utopias and totalitarianism, as well as terms from one of the main ideological influences on the ANC – Marxism.

This concluding and final chapter provides a synopsis of the findings in this thesis as well as providing future research suggestions. Firstly, the findings from each chapter will be presented and summarized. Secondly, the central conclusions that were reached will be reviewed. Thirdly, the contribution of the thesis to the larger body of literature on the topic will be discussed as well as the study’s significance. Finally, aid will be given to future research into the ANC, utopia, and totalitarianism by providing recommendations into different focus areas.

6.2 Summary of Findings

This section provides a summary of the key findings of the thesis, by referring to the aim and outcomes of each chapter.

Chapter 1 provided the research plan and introduction to the entire study. The study aimed to answer the question: Does the ANC aim to achieve a totalitarian utopia through the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution? The sub-questions were: How has Marxism influenced the ANC and does Marxism, as an ideology, remain influential in the ANC, and has its form evolved? The case study research design was selected for the thesis as it is well suited to a focused study of the ANC’s national policy – the NDR. A desktop study using a qualitative approach with assistance from a data-analysis program, Atlas.ti, was chosen because it provided a platform upon which a coding process could be undertaken with the ability to easily

group and analyse the data produced. The rationale for the study was highlighted by way of Guo's (1998) point that just because we no longer see totalitarian regimes, this does not mean they will never exist again; instead they may evolve to disguise themselves under new forms. Hence the use of totalitarianism and utopia as the conceptual tool of analysis.

Chapter 2 outlined the context of South Africa during the apartheid era, specifically presenting the ANC, the South African Communist Party, and the Soviet theory of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). The chapter first examined the South African situation under the National Party government and the widespread oppression which gave rise to liberation movements such as the ANC. The three main ideologies that feed into the worldview and hence policies of the ANC were derived from the works of Dubow (2000) and De Jager (2009). These ideologies are liberalism, Pan-Africanism, and communism, and have had differing levels of influence on the ANC throughout its history. The chapter provided an insight into each ideological strand as well as the influence of each over the ANC. Furthermore, the influence of the SACP over the ANC during the apartheid era was discussed to establish the historical connection between the two political parties. It was shown that the decision to transition into an armed struggle can be originally traced back to the SACP, a decision which would grant them large degree of influence over the ANC. The character of the Soviet theory of the NDR was then highlighted as the SACP played a significant role in the adoption of the policy by the ANC.

Chapter 3 provided an exploration of three bodies of literature, on utopia, on totalitarianism and on Marxist ideology, respectively. Utopia was defined as referring to the idealistic vision of an unattainable perfect society. It was shown that there are two differing approaches to utopia in the scholarship on the topic, namely thought and action. This research is mainly concerned with the latter, as utopia in thought is mostly harmless – if anything, it can be helpful as most political theory involves some form of normative utopianism. However, the literature indicated that problems tend to arise from the transition of utopian thought to utopia in action, when someone tries to actively pursue their subjectively defined “perfect” society (Sargent, 1983; Lindblom, 1972; Magstadt, 2017). Most importantly, the construction of this “perfect” society cannot have any deviations from the plan – the blueprint is absolute. Naturally there is no such thing as a perfect society, as there will always be voices of dissent who will not quietly follow the transformation of society. Yet the utopians must reach their goal by any means, hence utopias will always tend towards totalitarianism – the total control of all aspects of society.

Totalitarianism was defined by Hannah Arendt (2005) as referring to a regime type concerning itself with the complete domination of society and its members. This is done generally by a tyrannical leader who imposes a set of beliefs upon the populace; control is centralised in most oppressive regimes; and totalitarianism goes beyond the public realm by striving to invade private life as well. Because of this, there is no escape to be found in any aspect of life as entities like sport and religion are made into political tools. The characteristics of this regime type were further outlined with reference to the seminal work by Friedrich and Brzezinski (1965), according to whom a total of six characteristics formed the original totalitarian model. However, the researcher is aware that South Africa is not a totalitarian regime, hence the need for a redefined model capable of gauging totalitarian tendencies in ruling party policies. For this purpose, key terms were drawn and operationalized from the redefined totalitarian model offered by Guo (1998). The key terms of totalitarianism were divided into four categories, namely, Philosophical absolutism, Goals, Pillars and Methods/Mechanisms. The aim of this approach was to analyze the codes from the four categories in order to determine whether the ANC's NDR can be understood as a blueprint for a totalitarian utopia. The ANC's Strategy & Tactics policy documents were then analysed.

The last section of Chapter 3 briefly explored Marxist ideology as a form of utopian thinking. Ideology is defined, according to Heywood (2012), as a mostly coherent set of ideas upon which organized political action is based, resulting in three potential outcomes, namely preserving, overthrowing or modifying the existing system of power. It was shown that this definition is quite revealing about the relationship between utopia and ideology. Thus, the research intertwined the two concepts, as Marxism was shown to be both ideological and utopian. Marx's end goal of a classless and stateless society is very difficult to define as anything other than utopian (Sargent, 2008; Heywood, 2012). Following this, three core elements of Marxist ideology were explored: philosophy, economics and politics. Key terms were drawn from this and operationalized to answer the secondary research questions, namely, how has Marxism influenced the ANC, does Marxism as an ideology remain influential in the ANC, and has its form evolved?

Chapter 4 presented the design and methods to be used in the research study. A qualitative analysis using the case study research design was chosen for its ability to generate rich, in-depth data on the subject matter, instead of seeking generalizability. A case study was specifically chosen for this purpose, as it provides the researcher with a way to understand a

complex social phenomenon. This allowed for a focused analysis to be conducted on the complex, multifaceted situation addressed in the ANC's national policies. The data-analysis program Atlas.ti was used to store, code and analyse the ANC's S&T documents of 1969, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017. These documents were chosen as they represent the ANC's policy objectives, and they serve to describe the direction in which the ANC wants to take South Africa. This makes the S&T documents the most comprehensive collection of the ANC's political thinking, capable of providing rich data when properly analysed. The chapter concluded by summarizing and presenting the analytical framework of totalitarianism derived from Chapter 3.

Chapter Five presented the findings of the data-collection process and the analysis that was undertaken through the use of the qualitative data-processing program, Atlas.ti. The chapter consisted of two main sections that answered the main research question and the sub-questions. The first section began with answering the sub-questions; it aimed to identify the prevalence, influence and form of Marxist ideology within the ANC by coding S&T documents from 1969 to 2017 according to the key terms identified in Chapter Three. The second section aimed to answer the question of whether the ANC aims to achieve a totalitarian utopia through implementing the blueprint of the National Democratic Revolution. This was done by coding all six of the S&T documents according to the key terms identified in Chapter Three and summarized in Chapter Four.

Both sections looked for general trends in the data. When coding for the Marxist influences within the ANC, it was found that 'class struggle' with 18 out of 79 quotes (or 23%), and 'social justice' with 25 out of 79 quotes or (32%), featured most prominently in the documents, although at different periods throughout the ANC's history. 'Class struggle' is more reflective of classical Marxism; the ANC found themselves heavily influenced by this concept during the apartheid struggle. The SACP played a significant role in the ANC's adoption of Marxist ideology, especially in terms of the Soviet theory of the NDR. Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union and their complete abandonment of the NDR as a futile idea, the ANC took it adopted it in totality into their very first policy documents and into the envisaged democratic dispensation. Yet the data have shown a shift in the ANC after the democratic transition. 'Social justice' starts to feature more prominently from 2007, while 'class struggle' fades into almost irrelevant levels. The ANC's 'new left' approach was specifically adopted to capture a larger supporter base as blacks and women are now considered amongst the oppressed. A troubling

observation was that the shift towards social justice language may seem fine on paper, but it is still informed by Marxist ideology. It is specifically designed to look and sound appealing but this merely acts as a façade for its true nature.

It is consequently argued that there is a clear utopian dimension in the ANC's NDR. Drawn from the group of totalitarian key terms, 'Societal Leader' and 'Transformation' together made-up 37 percent of total quotations. It was shown that the ANC clearly does not view itself as an ordinary political party; members hardly ever refer to themselves as such and when they do, it is done very loosely. They place themselves at the forefront of South Africa, the self-declared, sole legitimate leaders of the country – a position they feel earned through the struggle against apartheid. This, coupled with the NDR's transformative drive-in politics, economics and society places the ANC in a position of absolute control, which is not compatible with any democratic norms or principles.

6.3 Reflections on the research process

Overall, the research process for this thesis was relatively smooth. The two major issues encountered were finding an appropriate analytical framework and mastering the use of Atlas.ti. The point has been made several times that South Africa does not have a totalitarian regime, hence the classic totalitarian model would not be applicable to South Africa as every indicator needs to be present for the regime to be considered totalitarian. However, Guo's (1998) revised model is what made it possible to pursue this thesis topic constructively. Its flexibility and clearly identifiable indicators, which offer great analytical depth, proved invaluable. Even more so pertinent, is its ability to be applied to any regime type to assess for totalitarian tendencies.

The second issue which took up a large amount of the research time was mastering the use of Atlas.ti. The ANC's S&T documents are very long and dense, with the additional factor that this thesis made use of multiple iterations, significantly complicated the process of the data collection. This happened to such an extent that at one point the researcher considered doing the coding the data by hand, as at the time that seemed far easier. However, Atlas.ti is a program that rewards perseverance and consistency. It may be extremely difficult to use for a while, but it most certainly proved useful once the researcher had mastered all of its features properly.

While not as much of an issue as the two previously mentioned concerns, the researcher became increasingly aware of the true difficulty associated with drafting a full master's thesis. The researcher has always preferred an environment of organized chaos and leaving work quite close to the deadline as the pressure aids in boosting concentration. However, a different approach was needed to complete this thesis in a timely manner. The researcher was forced to learn better time management and work more consistently as opposed to doing large batches of work infrequently.

6.4 Summary of Contributions

Since the ANC's adoption of the NDR, it has been a popular research topic. The drafting of the theory of the NDR in the Soviet Union and the way in which it made its way to sub-Saharan Africa produced much research on the policy's characteristics. Africa's liberation movements tended to be led by the bourgeoisie, not the working class. Since this did not fit well into the Soviet Union's imperialist vision of the working class rising in revolt, the Soviet theory of the NDR was developed. This was the idea of a two-stage revolution in Africa – first liberation, then communism. In South Africa the first stage, liberation, was achieved with the first democratic elections in 1994. Considering that the ANC persists with the NDR as its national policy, it becomes worth asking whether communism remains the second-stage goal.

The literature on the ANC has continually made their unwillingness to redefine themselves apparent. This particular research project draws inspiration from this line of argumentation and contributes to it through the lens of utopianism. The ANC clearly has its vision of a 'perfect' society in mind, and the NDR is an active step towards achieving this. Others have warned of the consequences if the NDR were to be fully acted upon; this is a discourse which needs to be sustained until the NDR is completely abandoned. The literature is clear, totalitarian regimes no longer exist, but their spirit lives on (Guo, 1998:274). This research has made this insight abundantly clear and has actively contributed to the on-going discussion to ensure these regimes remain relegated to the annals of history.

This thesis has sought to provide the understanding that the ANC's NDR can be viewed as a blueprint for a totalitarian utopia, the study is among few to have employed the utopian lens in relation to the ANC. The party remains heavily influenced by Marxist ideology, although the form of this ideology has evolved over the decades. This thesis thus contributes to an understanding of South Africa's current political landscape by offering insights into the

aspirations of the ruling party of a democratic country – aspirations that are informed by a decisively Marxist and utopian vision.

This thesis thus contributes to the understanding of South Africa's prospects for a flourishing democracy and possible reasons as to why this has not been attained yet. Most political parties are guided by a set of policy documents, these are the most complete collection of their political thought and ideology. The nature and content of these documents in relation to the ANC is possibly one of the keys as to why democratic consolidation is proving difficult for South Africa.

6.5 Suggestions for Further Research

The thesis was delimited intentionally in such a way as to create an in-depth but manageable research project. This research was restricted to the case study of the South African liberation movement turned government, the ANC. As noted in Chapter One, the research was focused on content analysis of the party's S&T documents rather than a behavioural analysis of the party. The ANC exhibits many characteristics of utopian thought in their policy documents. The literature revealed that utopian thinking usually has a set of identifiable characteristics. This provides space for the research question to be expanded into a larger comparative study, possibly looking at the way other countries' governing parties' guiding policy objectives exhibit similar utopian features.

It was found in this research that the ANC has demonstrated a shift towards the new left, specifically making use of a warped version of 'social justice'. The ANC claim to desire a unified South Africa yet the social justice policies hinge on denying other South Africans opportunities so those who are deemed oppressed can be given preferential treatment. This thesis has mainly explored the idea of social justice and the new left from a language perspective as language has power over social reality. Further research into this newer approach and its effects on democratic consolidation for South Africa would be insightful.

Finally, it is important for further research to be conducted on this topic of utopia and totalitarianism as utopian thought is seeing a resurgence. We may not see totalitarian regimes in line with the Hitler or Stalin model anymore, however the legacies of these regimes still linger. The author thus recommends that further research be done on the understanding of equity or equality of outcome from a utopian perspective. Perhaps an in-depth study is

necessary of the distinction between equality of outcome and equality of opportunity, and the implications of governments pursuing either of these types of equality.

6.6 Conclusion

This thesis intended to ascertain whether the ANC's guiding policy objective, the NDR, could be understood as a utopian blueprint. It further sought to investigate what ideology informed this approach. This was done by codifying key terms, drawn from the literature and an analytical framework, in the Atlas.ti program. At the end of this thesis, a number of conclusions can be posited.

The ANC and its national policy, the NDR, continue to be influenced by Marxist ideology, even though being implemented in a democratic setting. Although the form of Marxism has not remained the same, it has evolved to suit the current social reality South Africa finds itself in. The language of the new left, specifically that of social justice, is the natural evolution of classical Marxism's class struggle into further binaries of identified oppressed and oppressor groups. The ANC's social justice rhetoric seeks to capture the identified oppressed groups such as blacks and women. Instead of the class warfare which the oppressed need to win for any real change to occur, as was the case with classical Marxism, the ANC's social justice makes use of state power to ensure equity or equality of outcome for the identified oppressed groups. Programmes such as BBBEE, Affirmative Action and land redistribution without compensation are social justice initiatives which grant preferential treatment to oppressed groups to the detriment of the broader South African public. The ANC claims to desire a unified South Africa, however, these initiatives spurred on by social justice, are the very antithesis of unity.

Finally, this thesis concludes that the ANC's NDR can be seen as a blueprint for a totalitarian utopia. It must be restated that South Africa is not a totalitarian state, but since the NDR is a blueprint, it is aspirational towards potential totalitarianism. The ANC has begun taking steps towards achieving their vision of perfection; the analysis of above-mentioned programmes is strongly indicative of this. The party has taken the step which the literature decisively warns against; the NDR in the early 'struggle' years existed only in thought and on paper, but this is no longer the case. Perhaps the more concerning issue lies in with the way in which the ANC views itself. South Africa is a liberal democracy which relies on a vibrant, pluralistic, and competitive political atmosphere to function constructively. And yet the ANC has placed itself

above being a mere political party; It has proclaimed itself the rightful leader of South Africa, the only one capable of fulfilling this position. It is this kind of absolutist language which needs to be treated with the utmost caution, it is not in-line with democracy, and neither is the NDR; it is utopian and if converted into action can only result in totalitarianism.

As a final word, the ANC has yet to redefine itself and completely abandon the NDR. Until they do so, there is every indication that, if fully acted upon, their utopian vision will end in a totalitarian government.

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