

The Rainbow Nation versus the colours of the rainbow:

Nation-building versus diversity in post-apartheid South Africa with some notes on the role of the media

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1. Introduction

The Preamble to the new Constitution of the democratic South Africa states: “We, the people of South Africa, believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.”

The noble sentiments expressed in this preamble are reiterated in the myth of the Rainbow Nation – first coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu – which became the dominant rhetoric in the first years of the democratic state (Blaser, 2004; Ramsamy, 2007). The most popular interpretation of this myth is that the colours of the “rainbow” are reflective of the various ethnic and racial groups residing in South Africa who are united in a harmonious whole within the new democracy.

Under apartheid racial and ethnic identities were both created and reinforced through far-reaching processes of social engineering (Ramsamy, 2007). The power of White Afrikaners was furthermore consolidated by promoting and legislating geographic, racial, cultural and ethnic forms of social identification – in many instances in the form of so-called ethnic “homelands”. With the advent of a new political dispensation the geographic unity of South Africa was re-instated by integrating the former “independent” homelands with the South African state. Thus the legal segregation of groups was erased from the law books. However, social analysts agreed that – due to the reification of divisive and exclusionary identities

during the apartheid era – the people of South Africa lack a commonly accepted national identity and sense of nationhood. A process of nation-building was consequently perceived as the logical step to fill the gaps left by the apartheid system and to create a united and harmonious South African nation (Eaton, 2002).

However, despite the overwhelming discourse of nation-building and a plethora of initiatives to overcome the divisions of the past, the South African government continues to be challenged by the problem of national unity – or the lack thereof – and in many ways South African society remains fractured along racial and ethnic lines (Ramsamy, 2007) In this lecture we will focus in the first place on the ideology of nation-building and the formation of a national identity; the practise of nation-building in Africa as well as the processes followed in South Africa to build a South African nation and to forge a common national identity, will furthermore be discussed. Attention will also be given to some of the successes of as well as the challenges to nation-building. Finally, some concluding remarks regarding the future of South Africa and the nation-building project will be made.

2. Nation-building – theories, discourses and applications in South Africa

South Africa is not the only country that has embarked on the road of nation-building. In recent history many African and East European countries have followed this route. In order to get a better understanding of nation-building in the world today as well as the way it has been practised in Africa, we need to consider current theorising and discourses regarding nation-building and the formation of a national identity.

3.1 Theories of and approaches to nation-building

The concept of “nation-building” is a normative concept that often means different things to different people (Stephenson, 2005). It came into use during the 1950s and 1960s among historically orientated political scientists such as Karl Deutsch and William Foltz (1963), Charles Tilly (1975) and Reinhard Bendix (19xx). These theorists focus primarily on processes of national integration and consolidation that contributes towards the establishment of the modern state (“Chapter 2. Nation-building”, n.d.). Thus nation-building is perceived as a process of social transformation to bring underdeveloped, poor and parochial groups into a

modern state characterized by peace, equal opportunities and economic viability (Vorster, 2005).

The traditional, pre-modern state usually existed of isolated groups with insular cultures at the lower end of society and a distant and aloof state at the top (“Chapter 2. Nation-building”, n.d.). It has been theorised that through processes of nation-building these two spheres have been brought into closer contact with each other. Members of disparate groups have been drawn into the larger society through education and political participation. The state, on the other hand, has expanded its obligations to the larger society by offering an extended range of services and integrative networks. Thus the subjects of a monarch, for example, became active and participatory citizens of the nation-state. Most importantly, loyalty to and identification with substate or subnational groups become less important and lose their political relevance. These are superseded by loyalty to and identification with the larger entity, namely the state or nation state.

Scholars such as Deutsch and Folz (1963) argue that modernisation – that is the proliferation of networks for communication and transport, together with increasing urbanisation and industrialisation – would result in the assimilation of citizens from far-off regions and parochial groups into the mainstream of national life, the dissolution of ethnicity and the shifting of loyalties from disparate ethnic groups to the state. Thus eventually all groups will dissolve into a homogeneous and united nation (Simpson, 1994).

Central to conceptualizations of nation-building is the formation of an overarching national identity that supersede parochial ethnic, cultural and racial identities (Blaser, 2004; Cornelissen & Horstmeier, 2002). Thus national identification – as a form of social identification – is perceived to reflect a sense of belonging and attachment to the nation created through nation-building. A national identity is furthermore enhanced by the promotion and use of national symbols.

Criticism of modernist nation-building

During the mid-1970s discussions and theorising on nation-building came under attack (“Chapter 2. Nation-building”, n.d.). Walker Connor (1994 – first published in 1972) notes that the nation-building literature almost completely ignores cultural diversity or the possibility of the continued existence of ethnic groups within a nation state. Modernist

theories often does not take into account that the earliest conceptualisations of the term “nation” refers to a group of people who share a common history, traditions and culture, that is a common ethnicity. Connor points out that only 9 percent of the member states of the United Nations could be regarded as true nation states that are ethnically homogeneous. Since nation-building usually implies assimilation into the larger society and the denial of and/or the eradication of ethnic diversity, Connor holds that the social engineering associated with nation-building could become the eradication of ethnic diversity and thus the destroying – rather than the building – of nations. Various analysts furthermore point to the fact that the efficiency of the social engineering associated with nation-building has often been overestimated (Horowitz, 1991; Simpson, 1994). It is, for example, not self-evident that modernisation will result in the dissolving of ethnic identities. In contrast, social engineering towards nation-building is often counter-productive and results in a backlash of ethnic revival. Furthermore, all over the world attempts to eradicate ethnicity and other forms of diversity have been largely unsuccessful.

Connor (1994) points to another fundamental flaw in nation-building theory, namely the terminological confusion due to the diverse meanings attached to the word “nation”. It is sometimes used to refer to self-conscious cultural groups and peoples, while other analysts use it to describe political entities such as in the name “United Nations” and “international politics”. Even more confusing is the use of the term “nation” to refer to the total population of a particular state without taking into account whether it is ethnically diverse or not.

A new generation of analysts such as Anthony Smith (1992) and Kymlicka (1995) prefer to use the term “nation” when referring to ethnic or cultural groups rather than to the total population of a country – thus emphasizing the ethnic aspects of a nation. Although Smith acknowledges that nations as we know them today are recent phenomena, he believes that they have a long pre-history and evolved from ethnic cores. From the conglomerate of earlier ethnic groups some have developed into nationhood aspiring towards independence and autonomy (usually in a state), while only a few have acquired it. Why some ethnic groups have become nations and others not, are ascribed to a combination of historical and other factors as well as to the influence of so-called “nation-builders”.

Connor’s (1994) criticism of nation-building theory was taken further in different directions. Analysts such as Benedict Anderson (1994), Tom Nairn (1997), Ernest Gellner (1990) and Eric Hobsbawm (1990) emphasise the myth aspect of the nation. Modern nations are

described as “imagined communities” in the sense that members of the group do not know each other personally and therefore can only imagine to be members who are in a communion with one another. Gellner and Hobsbawm take this idea even further by associating the idea of an imagined community with “fabrication” and “invention” and “social construction”. In essence this view holds that ethnic, racial or even national identities are not static or fixed, but dynamic and fluid. Identities are furthermore influenced by social and political processes and changes in the environment. Tambini (cited in Blaser, 2004) furthermore holds that that people hold multiple and evolving identities. The hierarchies of these identities are furthermore difficult to establish as they are constantly changing.

It is however important to note that Smith (1992), Kymlicka (1995) and others have given a “neo-primordial” notion to the term nation-building by associating it with the cultural, symbolic and myth-making aspects of ethnic groups. Within this viewpoint ethnic homogeneity and cultural unity is an important consideration when nation-building is considered. In societies that are deeply heterogeneous, nation-building should be associated with an ideological commitment to pluralism, cultural tolerance and the logic of the ethnic situation.

Models of nation-building

Two forms of nation-building are associated with the two divergent viewpoints of the role and position of ethnic groups (Dersso, 2008). According to the modernist or liberal viewpoint, ethnic groups should be dissolved to become part of the “higher” dominant culture. The “higher culture” is associated with the nation state and it is assumed that there should be coincidence between the state and the nation. Thus it is believed that the nation should become a linguistic and cultural homogeneous entity that reflects the unity of the state. Thus nation-building entails processes of “assimilation”, “acculturation” or “amalgamation” for the forging of a single culture, identity and language and to form new loyalties and a new identity associated with the state. This viewpoint furthermore draws a one-to-one relationship between modernisation and cultural homogenisation. This model – which used to be the dominant model and feature of the modern constitutional state – is often referred to as Jacobinistic nation-building.

The alternative neo-premordial viewpoint is inclined to see cultural diversity as beneficial to a society and a safeguard against tyranny. It is believed that society should not be directed by the ideology of unity, uniformity and assimilation, but rather by respect for diversity. Thus this second approach – also known as syncretistic nation-building – recognises and values the reality of various ethno-political communities and groups within the realm of the state (Dersso, 2008). Various mechanisms exist not only to accommodate their interests, but also to actively nurture ethnic cultures as well as the allegiance of the members of such communities with the state. Ethnic identities are given recognition through various institutions and policies that provide public space for their recognition, while a common national identity is simultaneously promoted through common institutions and shared values and symbols. This has become a common mode of nation-building in a number of modern multiethnic states such as Switzerland and Canada.

The latter viewpoint furthermore questions the direct relationship drawn between modernisation and cultural homogenisation and believes that it is futile to attempt to eradicate ethnicity (Dersso, 2008). It is often rather the case that modern developments in the fields of communication and transport serve to increase ethnic awareness as these serve to make the members of ethnic groups more conscious of the differences between themselves and other groups. Simpson (1994) points out in this regard that the period after the Cold War have been characterised by an upsurge of ethnicity not only in many of the newly independent states in Eastern Europe and Africa, but also in Western states that are long believed to be “stable” democracies such as in Quebec, the Basque country, Catalonia, Scotland, Wales as well as renewed tension between the Flemish and Walloons in Belgium.

The experience in the former member states of the Soviet Union brings Brubaker (1996) towards a tripartite typology of state models that coincide with various viewpoints of diversity and nation-building:

- In the first place there is the civic state, that is where the state is there for its citizens irrespective of their ethnic membership
- The model of the bi- or multinational state consisting of two or more core ethno-cultural groups
- The hybrid model in which the state is not understood as a national or a nationalising state. Members of minority groups not only enjoy individual rights as citizens, but

also particular minority group rights, usually in the field of education, that protect them against potential nationalizing tendencies of the state.

Whereas ethnicity and minority cultures have no place in the civic state, they do have public and political significance in the bi- or multinational state. In the civic state the constitutive elements are individuals; in the bi- or multinational state ethno-cultural groups. The hybrid state contains elements of both.

3. Nation-building in post-colonial Africa

The problem of the heterogeneous and diverse nature of their populations has been one of the most important challenges facing many African countries at the time of independence. According to Dersso (2008), this problem has been particularly formidable due to fact that the borders of most African states have been determined by colonial adventurism with the result that their borders include numerous and unequal groups and communities with separate languages, cultures and histories. Problems associated with diversity have been furthermore aggravated by weak institutional capacity as well underdeveloped economies and infrastructure characteristic of many Africa states.

In an attempt to find solutions for the problems associated with diversity, the imagination of most African leaders has been captured by the nation state (or Jacobinistic) model of nation-building (Dersso, 2008). In Africa, due to many factors – among others the liberal constitution tradition – this model has had the appearance of the natural choice for addressing issues of diversity. In accordance with 19th century liberal thinking, it has been widely believed that a single, homogeneous identity is a prerequisite for democratic government and political stability. It has furthermore been believed that the smooth functioning of the modern state requires a culturally (and linguistically) homogeneous society so that citizens can conduct transactions with each other, the bureaucracy can be run effectively and the same court system can be used for all. Another important reason is the fact that African ethnicity is strongly associated with tribalism which is commonly believed to be an impediment to modernisation and development.

Thus most African states have embarked on assimilationist and integrationist nation-building strategies (Dersso, 2008). Thus the emphasis has been on homogeneity and oneness. Constitutions, laws, and development policies have all become instruments in the

hands of highly centralised governments to further and enforce homogeneity and unity. According to Francis Deng (1997:28), a prominent African scholar “[u]nity was postulated in a way that assumed a mythical homogeneity amidst diversity”.

The centralisation of political and economic power has become one of the most important forces in suppressing pluralism (Dersso, 2008). A common theme running through most constitutions and political discourses in Africa has been the refusal to give legal, political or institutional expression to distinct groups and the abrogation of any form of group protection. Ethnicity has furthermore believed to be a divisive force that undermines national unity. Expressions of ethnic solidarity and political mobilisation on an ethnic basis have furthermore been proscribed. In doing so, the governments of African states have hoped to eradicate distinct ethnic loyalties in order to transform their states into “a nation-state proper and hoping to live happily ever after” (Dersso, 2008, p. 571).

Living happily ever after, in the words of Dersso (2008), is unfortunately not what has happened. Nation-building processes and policies have had dire consequences for ethnic groups in Africa. In the first place unitary and highly centralised forms of government have resulted in the domination of the state machinery by particular dominant groups and widespread socio-economic disparities between groups and regions (Dersso, 2008). In many cases this situation has engendered, on the one hand, competition (instead of cooperation) for control of the state and, on the other hand, the marginalisation and alienation of minority groups. Within the political realm, violence – even armed violence – has often been the bitter result of nation-building. In a country such as Sudan inter-ethnic violence finally resulted in secession and the creation of two new states, Sudan and South Sudan.

On the cultural level, nation-building in Africa has led to the nationalisation of culture and languages in order to reflect the “unity” of the country (Dersso, 2008; Moyo, 2003). In most African states the two major colonial languages – English and French – serve not only as the symbolic languages of national unity, but have become the lingua franca and languages of the government and economy. If recognition has been given to indigenous languages, preference has been given to the languages of dominant groups. The use of many minority indigenous languages has consequently become limited to the family, church and the smaller community resulting in the marginalisation, denigration and decay of these languages and cultures. Although the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU) – now the African Union (AU) – already in 1986 initiated a Language Plan of Action for Africa

that calls for the recognition of indigenous languages and the encouragement of the increase use of these languages on all levels of society, Moyo (2003) holds that little has come of this initiative in many African countries. This is particular the case in sub-Saharan Africa.

4. Conceptualisations of the nation and nation-building in post-apartheid South Africa

As mentioned in the introduction, the call for nation-building in South Africa has become familiar in the political discourses since the advent of a new political dispensation (Maré, 2005). This came as no surprise as the newly elected government with the African National Council (ANC) as dominant party need to construct the new from the fragments of the past: fragments of groups differences that had been reiterated and manipulated during apartheid; fragments of “ethnic homelands” that had to be integrated into the new state; large-scale inequality and wide-ranging class differences.

However, Naudé (2010) holds that it is difficult to understand how the ANC conceptualises nation-building and what they are aiming for. According to Ramsamy (2007), this confusion has been caused by the fact that the ANC has espoused different definitions of nation-building at different times during the struggle against apartheid and thereafter. Each of these definitions constructs an imagined South African community with different implications for majority as well as minority groups.

Non-racialism

The idea of an inclusive and common South Africanism was already voiced by Nelson Mandela in his Rivonia trial in 1964:

I have fought against White domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

The notion of non-racialism has its roots in an alliance of people of all races and backgrounds in the struggle against apartheid. According to Ramsamy (2007) the acceptance of the doctrine of non-racialism happened gradually and was not one of the

ANC's founding principles as is often assumed. During its formative years the ANC was organised along racial lines and had an exclusive Black membership. It furthermore represented the narrow interests of the Black urban intelligentsia and not those of Coloreds and Indians. The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was established in 1804 to mobilize Indians against racial domination and – similar to the ANC during those years – represented the concerns of Indian merchants. It is only from 1940 that African and Indian movements, and later also Colored movements, began to explore multiracial alliances with other organizations also fighting apartheid. However, membership of the ANC was restricted to Blacks until 1960 when the ANC opened its doors for Indian, Coloured, White and members.

The Freedom Charter – often regarded as the blueprint of the opposition against apartheid – developed from the multiracial alliances with other organizations. However, Ramsamy (2007) concludes that – whereas it is commonly believed that the Freedom Charter embodies the principle of non-racialism – this document reflects a multicultural and multiracial stance on national unity and nation-building. The Charter does not, for example, declare that identification with ethnic and racial groupings should be abolished for the sake of non-racialism. It accepts the existence of a number of group identities, but emphasizes their equality.

However, after the ANC was banned by the apartheid government, it began to shift from its multicultural and multiracial approach towards an ideology of inclusiveness and non-racialism. This doctrine became central to the discourse and strategies of nation-building and became the ANC's governing ethos. Within the doctrine of non-racialism ethnic and racial identities are regarded as vestiges of the apartheid policies of “divide and rule”. Although it is recognized that these identities could play a role in the personal lives of people, they are not seen as relevant factors in the social and political life of the country. This viewpoint is reflected in the following comment made by Nelson Mandela: “We have no whites, we have no blacks. We only have South Africans” (cited in Ramsamy, 2007, p. 471).

The ideology of non-racialism is furthermore illustrated than in the words of another ANC politician, Mac Maharaj, who became the Minister of Transportation in 1994. In view of the doctrine of non-racialism he denounced his Indian identity and explicitly stated that he did not want to be recognized and/or typified as an Indian: “The only

thing that I have in common with Indians is that I share a mutual love of curry and rice. I am as non-racial as they come or supposedly come, but don't call me 'Indian'" (cited in Ramsamy, 2007, p. 471).

The doctrine of non-racialism consequently assumes that all South Africans are united by common historical experiences, shared ideas and a common destiny as the people of South Africa (Ramsamy, 2007). Any form of ethnic awareness is perceived as a vestige of apartheid and as unimportant in the social and political life of the nation. In essence the stance on non-racialism represents an emphasis on the creation of a civic nation that is based on allocating individual rights to all citizens regardless of their creed or origin (Blaser, 2004; Brubaker, 1996).

Rainbowism

However, the reality of racial and ethnic diversity in South Africa confronted the ANC already during the period when the organisation had to transform itself from a liberation movement into a governing party (Ramsamy, 2007). One of the factors that bothered Nelson Mandela was the failure of the ANC to draw significant numbers of whites, coloureds and Indians into the party membership. Although Mandela's vision was that the ANC should become a movement that represents all people of all races and ethnicities, this simply did not happen. Mandela was acutely aware of the fact that the ANC was widely perceived as a black party with which large numbers of whites, Indians and coloureds could not identify.

In his closing address at the 48th National Conference of the ANC, Mandela (1991) voices his concerns regarding the continued existence of ethnicity in the post-apartheid South Africa:

There are different ethnic groups in this country and ethnicity, especially because of the policies of the government, is still a dangerous threat to us. We have to redouble our efforts to make sure we have the confidence of all the different sections of the people of this country, something which is not there at the present moment.

In an attempt to defuse this situation, the ANC has adhered to the metaphor of the Rainbow Nation in which different ethnic and racial groups – symbolised by the different colours of the rainbow – are perceived to be united in a harmonious whole.

As such the Rainbow Nation metaphor represents a compromise between the ANC's commitment to non-racialism and the need to deal with the continuing politicisation of ethnicity in post-apartheid South Africa (see section 4 - Ramsamy, 2007). Instead of the denial of the social and political reality of ethnic and racial groups as is the case in the doctrine of non-racialism, the Rainbow Nation imagery accepts the social and political reality of sub-national groups. Ethnic and racial groups are regarded as the building blocks of the new nation. This shift implies that the ANC returned to its earlier multiracial stance as voiced in the Freedom Charter. However, despite its recognition of sub-national groups, the aim of rainbowism remains the creation of common loyalty to the civic state, a single nation and one dominant identity (Blaser, 2004).

Rainbowism has been criticised on various fronts. Degenaar (1994) holds that even the use of a word like nation-building (or the Rainbow Nation) is dangerous in a heterogeneous South Africa as it encourages uniformity whereas diversity should be respected. According to Gqola (2001) the myth of the Rainbow Nation creates the image of a false unity and serves to maintain inequalities that are associated with racial and class differences (Blaser, 2004). Although the South African Constitution acknowledges 11 official languages, Neville Alexander (2000), anti-apartheid activist and former head of the Pan South African Language Board (PANSALB), criticises the ANC government for allowing the dominance of English as lingua franca in the new civic state – in order to create a sense of unity – instead of adopting a truly multilingual policy in which African languages, in particular, are promoted. According to Alexander the *laissez faire* policy that in the end results in the dominance of English are catering for the needs of the middle-class only and inhibits empowerment on a broader base. Naudé (2010) holds that the acknowledgement of the social and political reality of racial and ethnic groups usually implies that power and finances is diverted to regions or ethnic and racial groups. That is currently not happening in South Africa. Power is instead highly centralised. Ethnic and other minorities furthermore find it difficult to protect their interests in the current political system as it does not guarantee the rights of minorities despite the emphasis on rainbowism.

Blaser (2004), on the other hand, feels that the metaphor of the Rainbow nation nevertheless creates a symbolic representation of a united nation that has promoted stability during the difficult years of transition to a new dispensation. Such symbolic constructionism has been important to create a sense of belonging in the new democratic state.

Africanization of the nation

Various authors point to an Africanist turn in the nation-building strategies of the ANC government since the Mbeki era (Blaser, 2004; Eaton, 2002). According to Blaser an African nationalist current has been constantly present in all anti-colonial movements in Africa. A shift from the Rainbow Nation ideology to promoting African hegemony can therefore not be regarded as a change of policy, but rather as a shift of emphasis. Thus, despite the fact that the nation-building ideology in South Africa promotes equal rights for all people, the nation becomes culturally defined in terms of an African culture. The aim of nation-building consequently becomes the creation of a single nation with a dominant African identity that should become the primary identity of all South Africans. This alternative conceptualisation of the South African nation is voiced by former president Thabo Mbeki (ANC, 1997, para 44):

But it is critical that the overarching identity of being South African is promoted among all those who are indeed South African, as part of a process of building an African nation on the southern tip of the continent. The affirmation of our Africanness as a nation has nothing to do with the domination of one culture or language by another – it is recognition of a geographic reality and the awakening of a consciousness which colonialism suppressed.

Some of the reasons forwarded for promoting Africanism is that South Africa should be prevented from becoming a clone of the USA and the UK and that the liberation of African people from colonial powers should be celebrated (Blaser, 2004). The promotion of African hegemony furthermore presents an anti-colonial dimension and a thrust towards creating a truly African state. It is furthermore motivated by the realisation that South Africa is still a divided country characterised, among others, by large-scale inequalities between blacks and

whites (see section 5). A new impetus has therefore been sought to overcome the legacies of apartheid.

Some analysts regard this Africanist shift as the triumph of an overall pan-Africanism promoted by the Pan African Congress (Blaser, 2004). However, it is also criticised for being driven by a Black modernising elite in an attempt to assert dominance and to cover up ethnic tensions within the black community. It has also been asserted that the new Africanism was driven by a particular ethnic group, namely Xhosas, and as such represents a new form of racism. Furthermore, Africanism pays no heed to ethnicity and the existence of ethnic, cultural and language differences between black ethnic groups as well as the fact that South Africa is also the homeland of a number of non-African groups.

The shift to Africanism has deepened the discrepancies in the nation-building discourse. On the one hand, the doctrine of non-racialism promotes a civic nation where all citizens have equal rights and are predominantly loyal to an overarching South African identity. Racial and ethnic identities are restricted to the private sphere and are not regarded as relevant in social and political life. Rainbowism, on the other hand, does give acknowledgement to the existence and relevance of ethnic and racial identities and the fact that people have multiple identities. The formation of a common South African identity remains a priority nevertheless. Little recognition is furthermore given to the social and political relevance of sub-national groups in policies such as language policies that have important implications for minority groups. Little power is furthermore diverted to these groups and group rights are not recognised in the Constitution. Thus the shift from non-racialism to Rainbowism has not implied a shift from building a civic nation to creating a multi-national state. The promotion of an African identity, on the other hand, exerts hegemony in an essential multicultural and multilingual society. Whereas adherence to a dominant South African identity is one of the main aims of nation-building, the Africanist viewpoint holds that this identity should include and reflect an African culture (Blaser, 2004).

If adherence to a common South African identity should be regarded as the hallmark of a classical state nation-building project, the crucial question that needs to be asked is if and to what extent an overarching South African identity or an African identity can be really inclusive. Is it possible for South Africans of all races and creeds to identify with such an identity? Some of these issues are addressed in the sections that follow.

5. Successes of and challenges to South African nation-building efforts

An even more important question to ask is whether and to what extent the nation-building strategies of the ANC government has been successful and what the challenges to nation-building are (Vorster, 2005). In the following sections some of the achievements as well as some of the factors hindering nation-building in South Africa are discussed.

5.1 Economic development

Economic processes of modernisation and development has always been associated with the notion of nation-building (Vorster, 2005). It is almost self-evident that unity and harmony cannot exist within an environment of poverty and despair. This fact was well understood by the new South African leadership and they immediately began with grand economic planning in order to redress the inequalities created by apartheid. Programmes such as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), affirmative action, land restitution, large-scale housing projects for the poor and homeless, the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) and later also the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programme (Gear). To the surprise of many, the new government also opted for a liberal economy and the privatisation of some of its assets.

After almost seventeen years many positive results have been achieved (Vorster, 2005). Thousands of homes have been built for the poor. The land restitution programme succeeded in solving as much as 58000 of the initial 70 000 claims that was received. Black empowerment is advancing in the agricultural sector where many new Black farmers have gained entry. More and more Blacks are employed in both the public and private sectors. Both the public sector as well as private corporations are spending large amounts on training.

However, there is a dark side to this picture. Although the economic initiatives of the post-apartheid government have succeeded in creating a vibrant, highly visible and vocal black middle class, immense economic disparities still exist in South Africa (Terre Blanche, 2006). Despite the fact that South Africa is often classified as an upper-middle-class country, a large percentage of South Africans still live in utmost poverty, while the distribution of wealth is one of the most unequal in the world. Although the poor is not confined to a particular racial group, the largest percentages of low-income households are black or coloured – with the exception, as already mentioned, of a small group of elite.

These economic disparities that largely coincide with racial divisions have an immense adverse effect on nation-building. Thus former president Thabo Mbeki (1998, para. 29) distinguishes between “poor blacks” and “rich whites” as “two nations”:

South Africa is a country of two nations. One of these nations is white, relatively prosperous, regardless of gender or geographic dispersal. It has ready access to a developed economic, physical, educational and other infrastructure ... The second and larger nation of South Africa is black and poor, with the worst affected being women in the rural areas, the black rural population in general and the disabled. This nation lives under conditions of a grossly underdeveloped economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure.

Terre Blanche (2006) holds that racial apartheid has been replaced by class apartheid and that the persistence of poverty among a large percentage of blacks in contrast to the relative wealth of whites presents a serious threat to harmonious relations in South Africa.

Affirmative action programmes which aim to promote black empowerment has however met with resistance (see section 5.4). Various analysts furthermore point to growing numbers of white poor in South Africa (Robinson, 2004). The recent economic recession has furthermore slowed down growth in South Africa and many thousands of people of all groups have lost their jobs. Consequently unemployment remains extremely high (Anonymous, 2011a; Kingdon & Knight, n.d.). In the last quarter of 2011, 24% of the country’s population was unemployed. According to Kingdon and Knight this represents one of the most serious socio-political problems facing the government. In fact, it could be a time bomb that could not only disrupt democracy and governance, but also disrupt unity and harmony and result in a breakdown of intergroup relations.

4.2 Political factors

Against general expectations the country made a relatively peaceful transition to democracy (Adam, 1995). Also, former marginally independent homelands were re-integrated into the South African state. This renewed unity served to strengthen the new polity, while both black and white secessionist forces were marginalised.

South Africa became a constitutional democracy (Vorster, 2005; Wiechers, 2010). After a long process of negotiations between various parties the final Constitution was adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on 8 May 1996 (Bornman, 2006). It became law on 10 December 1996 (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, n.d.). In the Preamble it is stated that the Constitution represents the collective wisdom of the people of South Africa and is founded on general agreement. The main premises emphasise some of the key principles of a civic state: the unity of the South African state; human dignity; the equality of all people; the advancement of human rights and freedoms; non-racialism and non-sexism; the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law; voting rights for all adult citizens; one common voters roll for all; regular elections and a multi-party system of democracy. The Bill of Rights furthermore guarantees South Africans freedom of association and the right to use their home language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice. However, the Constitution does not stipulate any group rights (Wiechers, 2010).

In order to create unity, patriotism and to advance the nation-building project, a number of new national symbols have been introduced (Bornman, 2006). A new national flag and anthem have come to reflect national unity and a common South African identity. It can hardly be denied that the metaphor of the Rainbow Nation together with the new national symbols – the new national flag and anthem – as well as the Constitution have played a significant and decisive role in the transition to democracy. Their apparent popularity and general acceptance creates the impression that they have indeed been successful in creating reconciliation, unity and new forms of nationalism. The metaphor of the Rainbow Nation has, for example, become a catch phrase and is exploited not only by the public sphere, but also in the private sphere and, in particular, for marketing purposes. The new multicoloured flag has been "banalised" by being painted on faces at sports meetings (such as during the Fifa World Cup), printed and displayed on all kinds of curios and consumer items. Overall the impression has been created that national pride has surged to levels formerly unknown (Adam, 1995; Malan, 1998).

However, Wiechers (2010) points to a number of shortcomings in the 1998 Constitution. Issues that have become controversial in the new dispensation such as the lack of minority rights and the practises of affirmative action (see section 5.4) should receive attention. Welsh (2010) voices the concern that the Constitution will once again be destroyed by nationalism – this time by African nationalism. According to Welsh the Great Depression of 1930 played a significant role in mobilising Afrikaner nationalism. Similarly, the current economic

downturn and the large number of unemployed people could serve to fuel African nationalism. Wessels (2010) points to the apparent lack of respect of the government for the law and the Constitution reflected in the large number of court cases against the government. The high crime rate – and in particular the high rate of murder and killings – implies that the most basic right of South Africans, namely the right to life, is continuously threatened.

Although democratic elections in South Africa have been hailed by observers as highly successful, prominent analysts such as Schlemmer and Giliomee characterise the results as little more than a “racial census” (cited in Adam, 1995, p. 459). Although nine provinces have been established, the South African state remains highly centralised with few federalist trends. According to Brink (2010), the unitary and centralised nature of the state paves the way for the powerful hand of the state to continuously interfere in the lives of citizens. Even the liberal-democratic Constitution with its Bill of Rights offers little protection to individuals against state power. Furthermore, as no power and finances are diverted to groups, minority groups find it very difficult in the new South Africa to protect their interests and to advance their language and culture (Blaser, 2004).

Despite the apparent popularity of the new national symbols as assumed by Adam (1995) and others, research has indicated that they are not as widely accepted as is often assumed. Bornman (2006) reports that blacks attached significantly more value to the new national symbols than coloureds, Indians and whites who are further removed from the seats of power. The lowest importance ratings were recorded for Afrikaans-speaking whites. In fact, the ratings for this group were so low that they can be interpreted as a lack of identification with or alienation from the current nation symbols. The results of this study furthermore indicates that people who identified more strongly with a community or group distinguished by a distinctive culture identified less with the national symbols. The South African Constitution was, in fact, the only factor with which South Africans of all racial and ethnic groups identified strongly.

Maré (2005) holds the opinion that the new national symbols often serve to divide rather than to unite. For example, the current national anthem represents a combination of a Black freedom song, *Nkosi Sikilel' iAfrika* (known in English as Lord Bless Africa), and the anthem of the former dispensation *Die Stem* (the Call of South Africa). For Black South Africans *Die Stem* often serves as a reminder of the divisions of apartheid, while Whites who

often do not understand and cannot identify with the Xhosa words of *Nkosi Sikilel' iAfrika*, tend only to sing the parts of *Die Stem* that they know well.

The conclusion can be drawn that although South Africa made a peaceful transition to a new political dispensation, it cannot be assumed that nation-building and the establishment of a constitutional democracy has created a united South African nation where peace and harmony reign. Some of the divisions in society have not vanished. This aspect is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

5.3 The persistence of sub-national identification

Although it is true that ethnic and racial consciousness was manipulated and augmented during apartheid, this manipulation cannot, according to Ramsamy (2007), provide an explanation for the persistence of ethnic, racial and other identities in the post-apartheid South Africa.

The continued existence of racial and ethnic identities in post-apartheid South Africa was however predicted by Horowitz in 1991. Horowitz predicts that South African society will remain diverse and deeply divided and that the racial and ethnic divisions will probably not dissolve with the advent of a democratic dispensation. In contrast, Horowitz holds that the history in Africa and Asia have shown that ethnic and racial differences do not vanish within a democratic context when former disadvantaged groups enjoy more legitimacy. It is rather a case that ethnic and/or racial groups remain distinctive entities that render support to their members and which can be easily mobilised in order to reach particular goals. Horowitz consequently holds that ethnic and racial identities will remain relevant in South Africa long after the demise of apartheid. Another analyst, O'Malley (1994), states that strategies towards nation-building and reconciliation in South Africa will be futile if the nationalistic drive of ethnic groups are not recognised on constitutional and political levels.

The results of various empirical studies after 1994 indicate on the one hand that a strong South African identity have indeed been established among the majority of South Africans. However, research furthermore indicates the simultaneous flourishing of ethnic, racial and other identities (Bornman, 2010). In a countrywide survey conducted in 1994 – the year of transformation – Mattes (1994) recorded high levels of ethnic awareness among South African groups. Despite the fact that the majority of blacks voted for the ANC and common

beliefs that blacks reject ethnicity due to the apartheid history, approximately 60% of the ANC supporters regarded themselves as members of a distinctive group that can be distinguished on the basis of language, culture and other ethnic characteristics. The concomitant figures for the supporters of the traditional white parties were 75% for the supporters of the then National Party (NP) and 90% for supporters of the Freedom Front (FF). As much as 39% of the supporters of the ANC – the party that pledges non-racialism – regarded themselves in the first place as members of an ethnic group. This figure was as high as 80% for the Zulu-ethnic party, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), but only 24% for the predominantly White supporters of the NP.

A similar question was included in a countrywide survey conducted in 1998 – four years after the advent of a new dispensation (Bornman, 2006). Almost 90% of Afrikaans-speaking whites (or Afrikaners) regarded themselves to be members of a distinctive community on the basis of ethnic-related characteristics. The concomitant figures for blacks, coloureds and Indians were 65%, 76% and 84% respectively. The lowest figure of 52.1% was recorded for English-speaking whites. Although responses on this question cannot be regarded as a denial of a South African identity, it illustrates the persistence of ethnic awareness despite the implementation of a policy of non-racialism in the early years of the new dispensation.

The results of two surveys conducted in 1994 and 2001 not only indicate that a South African identity co-exists with ethnic and racial identities, but also point to marked differences between the identity patterns displayed by various groups as well as possible changes in identity patterns (Bornman, 2010 -see Table 1). In both surveys respondents had to indicate on five-point Likert-type scales how much they identified with particular groups.

Table 1 Social identification patterns in South Africa

	Blacks		Coloreds		Indians		Afrikaans-speaking Whites		English-speaking Whites	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1994 Survey										
South Africans	4.7	0.8					4.7	0.7	4.7	0.6
Africans	4.3	1.0					3.2	1.4	3.6	1.3
Blacks	4.8	0.6					2.7	1.4	3.3	1.3
Whites	2.7	1.3					3.8	1.2	4.3	1.0
Black ethnic group	4.6	0.9					2.9	1.3	3.4	1.2
Afrikaners	1.8	1.1					4.8	0.6	3.9	1.1
English-speaking Whites	2.9	1.4					4.2	0.9	4.7	0.6
2001 Survey										
Rainbow Nation	4.3	1.0	4.1	1.0	4.5	0.7	3.7	1.2	4.1	1.2
South African state	4.0	1.0	3.9	1.0	4.2	0.7	3.7	1.2	4.1	1.2

Racial group	4.2	1.1	3.9	1.1	4.4	0.7	4.1	1.0	3.9	1.2
Ethnic group	4.3	1.0	4.0	1.1	4.4	0.8	4.2	1.0	4.2	1.1
African culture	4.4	1.0	3.8	1.2	4.3	0.9	3.2	1.2	3.6	1.3
Western world	3.0	1.2	3.2	1.2	3.4	1.2	3.5	1.1	3.9	1.1
Western culture	2.8	1.2	3.0	1.1	3.3	1.2	3.4	1.1	4.0	1.0
Global community	3.4	1.3	3.4	1.2	3.8	1.0	3.5	1.2	3.9	1.1

Table taken from Bornman (2010)

In 1994 all three groups that were investigated – blacks, Afrikaans- and English-speaking whites – identified equally strongly with South Africans. However, Afrikaans-speaking whites identified more strongly with their ethnic group (Afrikaners). There were however no significant differences between the South African identity of this group and their ethnic identification (Bornman, 2010). A similar tendency can be observed for English-speaking whites. This group furthermore identified strongly with a broader white identity. For blacks there were three important identity groups: blacks, South Africans and black ethnic groups. No significant differences between identification with these three groups were found. An Africanist identity was subordinate to these identity categories for all three groups. The conclusion can be drawn that for all three groups a South African identity as well as their respective ethnic and racial identities were important, although their racial identity was less important for Afrikaans-speaking whites than for the other two groups.

Some differences can be identified in the results for 2001 (Bornman, 2010). Afrikaans-speaking Whites identified significantly less with the Rainbow Nation, the South African state and an African culture than any of the other groups. The primary identities of Afrikaans-speaking whites were their ethnic and racial groups. In comparison with 1994 and with other groups, it appears that Afrikaans-speaking whites identified less with identities related to the South African state. Blacks, on the other hand, not only identified strongly with the Rainbow Nation and the South African state, but also with their racial and ethnic groups. However, in accordance with the African turn in nation-building, an African identity has now become the primary identity of blacks. Indians also identified strongly with the Rainbow Nation, the South African state as well as their racial and ethnic group. Despite the fact that blacks and Indians identified the strongest with the Rainbow Nation and the South African state, they also identified the strongest with their ethnic and racial groups – even more than Afrikaans-speaking whites. Coloreds and English-speaking whites, on the other hand, identified less with the Rainbow Nation and the South African state than blacks and Indians, but more than Afrikaans-speaking whites. For these two groups their racial identity was also less important than for the other groups. With regard to an African culture, Indians identified almost equally as strongly with this category than blacks, while the other groups did not display a strong

African identity. The largest between- group differences were found for identification with African and Western culture which could indicate that civilizational tension might be evolving and that the idea of an Africanist South African identity did not appeal to all. It appears that whereas the two White groups – and to a lesser extent also coloureds – identified significantly less with an African identity, the opposite was true for blacks regarding identification with Western culture.

These results reiterate the warning of Mattes (1999) that social identities in heterogeneous states are torn between identification with the larger political community represented by the state and identification with subgroups. Groups who perceive themselves to be nearer to the centres of power, identify more strongly with the state, whereas groups that feel marginalised will identify less with the state. It is likely that Blacks and Indians that were allies in the anti-apartheid movement and have been strongly represented in the post-apartheid government, might not only identify strongly with the state and the state nation (the Rainbow Nation), but their ethnic and racial identities have also been strengthened in the process (Bornman, 2010). Afrikaners, on the other hand, felt marginalised in the new political system and therefore identified less with the state and the Rainbow Nation and the state. It furthermore appears as if this group have been withdrawing within the realms of the ethnic group.

Similar tendencies can be detected in the results of the countrywide Afrobarometer survey conducted in 2008 (Afrobarometer, n.d.). Respondents that identified themselves as Afrikaners, were significantly less proud in being South Africans than respondents that identified with some of the major black ethnic groups (Xhosas, Xulus, Sesothos and Setswanas). Despite the lower levels of identification with a South African identity among Afrikaners, all the studies indicate some degree of identification with South Africa among all groups. The conclusion can be drawn that South Africans hold multiple identities. Identification with South Africa does not necessarily preclude simultaneous identification with subnational groups and/or an African identity. Contextual circumstances will probably determine whether ethnic and racial identities will be dominant or not and/or become the basis for group mobilisation.

Different branches for different memories

Maré (2005) and Ramsamy (2007) ascribe the continued existence of sub-national identities to the fact that these identities are grounded in historical experiences unique to a particular group that are reiterated through the minutiae experiences of everyday lived experience. Although identities of this nature might be manipulated and mobilised and can thus be described as “imagined”, they are nevertheless treasured by members and in particular by communities that are marginalised and have a need for recognition and representation.

According to Maré (2005) a further problem in South Africa is that the memories of different groups hang from different branches. There is, in fact, no common memory on which to build a truly united South African nation. The divisions still existing within South African society are no better illustrated than by the case of the memories of various groups regarding the recent so-called Border War, that is the war waged by soldiers of the apartheid regime on the borders of the then Southwest Africa (now Namibia) and Angola (Baines, 2009). Whereas white South Africans, and in particular Afrikaners, believed that they fought against “Communists” and “terrorists”, blacks perceive this war to have been part of the freedom struggle. In the recently erected Freedom Park in Pretoria – a site said to be committed to fostering a new national consciousness – a memorial wall was erected to commemorate all those who died during conflicts that have shaped present-day South Africa. The conflicts were identified, among others, to include pre-colonial wars, the South African wars (first and second Anglo-Boer War), World War I and II and the liberation struggle. The Freedom Park Trust made an appeal for organisations to nominate names for inclusion on the Wall of Names. However, when veteran organisations submitted the names of South African Defence Force (SADF) soldiers who fell during the Border War, these appeals were denied by the Trust, while the names of Cuban soldiers who died on African soil in the same war were included. The end of the story is that an alternative wall, the South African Defence Force Wall of Remembrance, was erected at the Voortrekkermonument to commemorate the SADF soldiers who died in the Namibian/Angolan conflict. Thus there are now two walls – each representing different branches of memories, different historical traditions, different groups and perhaps also different civilisations.

Afrikaner identity in the postapartheid era

Afrikaners have been the group that has been most affected by the social, political and economic changes that have happened over a short period of time (Blaser, 2004). The impact

of nation-building as practised in South Africa has furthermore stunned and demoralised the group to such an extent that an analyst, Alistair Sparks, declared Afrikaner nationalism to be dead (cited in Blaser, 2004, p. 192).

Various Afrikaner academics and group have nevertheless expressed discomfort, discontent and strong resistance to non-racialism and the lack of recognition of ethnic groups in the new dispensation (Blaser, 2004). These discourses have however been characterized by ambivalence, uncertainty and differences of opinion on what to do and which way to go. The *Groep van 63* (Group of 63) formed by Afrikaner academics concerned about the challenges that the group is facing calls for a system of group rights. Another academic, Johan Rossouw (2002), calls for the creation of an Afrikaner Board of Deputies similar to the Jewish Board of Deputies. Other prominent Afrikaners such as the late liberal politician Van Zyl Slabbert and the journalist Max du Preez, on the other hand, do not subscribe to the idea of group rights. They furthermore feel that Afrikaners should not isolate themselves from other groups within the South African dispensation. A number of Afrikaans cultural organisations have nevertheless called for a “succession settlement” with the ANC-led government due to feelings that the new state offers little protection for minorities and that the Afrikaans culture and language are neglected in the new dispensation. However, Afrikaner-based political parties such as the Freedom Front (FF) have not done well in the new dispensation and most Afrikaners apparently choose to vote for the multiracial Democratic Party (DP). Discontent among young Afrikaners can nevertheless be detected in resistance against affirmative action, the flourishing of Afrikaans popular culture epitomised in the immense popularity of a song *De la Rey* which calls for Afrikaner leadership in the new dispensation and the fact that memories of the old anthem, *Die Stem*, is kept alive in popular Afrikaans songs.

A number of organisations have been established to support Afrikaners, their identity and language within the new dispensation. Probably the most prominent and most successful of these is the trade union *Solidariteit* (Solidarity) and its well-known subsidiary Afriforum. Solidariteit not only strives to protect the rights of Afrikaner workers, but is active in a number of other terrains such as offering training for tradesmen in Afrikaans. The activities of yet another subsidiary *Helpende Hand* (Helping Hand) are directed towards the growing number of white poor. Afriforum is also active on a variety of terrains such as combating crime, fighting for the rights of parents to give their children an education in Afrikaans and preventing hate speech against Afrikaners. Afriforum also has a youth league that has succeeded to mobilise Afrikaner youth to win, for example, elections for student

representative councils at various universities and to protest against affirmative action. The Afrikaans-speaking language group (which include coloureds) also established the *Afrikaanse Taalraad* (Afrikaans Language Council) to promote the use of the Afrikaans language on all levels of society.

Although the majority of these activities are not political in nature and are restricted to the level of civil society, it will probably only take the right circumstances to take one step further into the political domain. On the basis of his research among Afrikaans-speaking students at the University of Potchefstroom, Van der Merwe (2010) predicts that Afrikaners will move strongly forward in the next decade as nation-building efforts have served to re-ignite Afrikaners to protect their identity, culture and unique identity with the South African landscape.

Ethnic and regional identities among other groups

Ethnic awareness can also be detected among other South African groups (De Haas & Zulu, 2007). Although South Africa is essentially a unitary state, it is also divided in nine provinces which each reflect to a certain extent the ethno-linguistic variety of South Africa (Cornelissen & Horstmeier, 2002). Thus each of the provinces represents a microcosmos that could potentially be a site of ethnic identification, but also of regional identification.

One of the most conspicuous of these is the province of Kwazulu-Natal which not only include the former Zulu homeland, but also have large numbers of Indian and English-speaking White residents. During the transitionary negotiations, the leader of the Zulu-based IFP – Mangosuthu Buthelezi – took a strong stand for a federalist dispensation. Due to its opposition to the idea of a unitary state, this party only decided on the last minute to participate in the first general elections. Since 1994 the IFP lost political control over Kwazulu/Natal in favour of the ANC. The election of Jacob Zuma, born in Zululand, as president of South Africa furthermore served to defuse Zulu ethnic mobilisation. The research of De Haas and Zulu (2007) indicates, however, that many blacks living in Kwazulu/Natal – including young men and women – describe themselves as Zulu and associate this identity primarily with the Zulu language. Many others perceive themselves in the first place as black or African. This identity is often linked to colonial oppression. However, few Zulus describe themselves in terms of a primary South African identity. Zulu

ethnic awareness is fostered by perceptions of differences with other blacks and participation in ceremonial activities. However, as already indicated, Zulu speakers have divided political loyalties and many of those who describe themselves as Zulu, prefer not to vote for the IFP. Some of the reasons proposed for this is the fact that Buthelezi used to be too close to the apartheid government. The strong presence of Zulus in the current ANC leadership probably also serve to dampen Zulu ethnic mobilisation.

Indian identity

According to Ramsamy (2007), Indian identity is currently characterised by ambivalence. Indian-based organizations such as the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and Natal Indian Congress (NIC) not only played a prominent role in the anti-apartheid struggle, but also served to strengthen Indian identity. In the post-apartheid era the point was made that the continued existence of these organisations counteracted the ANC's policy of non-racialism. A prominent NIC-member, A. K. Docrat, asked the question: "Can you describe yourself as an Indian in the South African context and still claim to be non-racial?" (cited in Ramsamy, 2007, p. 473).

It was furthermore believed that these organisations have outlived their purpose and fears were voiced that they could give rise to anti-Indian sentiments (Ramsamy, 2007). However, their dismantlement has not meant the end of Indian ethnic awareness. An executive member of the former NIC reasoned: "I also cannot agree that acknowledging the existence of ethnicity is racialism. Ethnicity is a reality of the human race to be recognised as a fact of life. Any attempt to suppress ethnicity must, like apartheid, fail in the end" (cited in Ramsamy, 2007, p. 473).

It is furthermore important to note that, in order to win the Indian vote, the ANC stepped down from its stance on non-racialism and has started to canvass the Indian community by appealing to their culture and ethnicity. According to Ramsamy (2007), Indian ethnicity is furthermore fuelled in the new dispensation by persistent perceptions of the vulnerability of Indians regarding issues such as property rights, job security, the quality of Indian educational institutions and the way affirmative action is practised. However, as no strong Indian party has emerged that could win the majority of the Indian vote, Indians are also divided in terms of their political loyalty. Whereas the upper class who has benefited

tremendously from ANC policies – similar to the upper classes of other groups – is voting for the ANC, the middle and lower classes tend to vote for the DP.

Regional and local identities

Cornelissen and Horstmeier (2002) focus on identity formation in the Western Cape. The Western Cape is the only province that is currently not under ANC rule as the Democratic Party (DP) achieved a majority in the 2009 provincial elections. The Western Cape is also the only province that has accepted a provincial constitution and has consciously striven to foster a Western Cape identity by establishing, among others, provincial symbols and provincial youth, language and religious commissions.

Cornelissen and Horstmeier (2002) conducted individual interviews with a number of leaders in the Western Cape as well as focus groups with different groups in the province. The single most important finding was that there existed a shared discourse on a Western Cape identity among leaders. The researchers ascribe the motive for this discourse to attempts to strengthen the legitimacy of the provincial government and to gain greater independence from the central government. However, the focus groups with residents revealed that local and subprovincial identities – rather than a provincial or national identity – were more important to ordinary people. Local identities were related to loyalty to and acquaintance with the immediate surroundings. The fact that many people still lived in racially segregated areas resulted in the fact that local identities were often defined in terms of race and class.

Conclusions

The conclusion can be drawn that, in accordance with the predictions of Horowitz (1991), ethnic and racial divisions and other forms of subnational identification have not dissolved due to the advancement of non-racialism and nation-building. Although research indicates a relatively strong South African identity among most groups, ethnic, racial, regional and local identities are apparently co-existing with a national identity. According to Kymlicka (1995), strong identification with South Africa among minority groups could also be an indication of patriotism and allegiance with the country which they regard as their mother land, rather than identification with the state or the state nation as a whole. There is however currently few

signs of significant ethnic mobilisation on a political level. It appears that the strong centralised ANC government has been succeeding in defusing and suppressing far-reaching ethnic mobilisation. However, given the right circumstances, ethnic mobilisation will probably always remain a possibility in a heterogeneous society such as South Africa.

4.4 Intergroup relations in the post-apartheid South Africa

According to Reicher (2004), processes of social identification have far-reaching consequences for the ways in which people behave towards members of the own group as well as towards members of other groups. The continued existence of ethnic and racial identities in South Africa is perhaps no better illustrated than by the persistence of racism and the failure of the government to promote harmonious relations on all levels of society.

Experiences of racism

Ramsamy (2007) illustrates this point by relating Indian experiences of racism in post-apartheid South Africa. As allies of the ANC during the apartheid struggle, optimism abounded in 1994 as it was believed that the racial divide between Indians and blacks had been overcome and would no longer be relevant in the future.

That was not to be. Ramsamy (2007) cites a series of xenophobic statements against Indians. For example, just before the 1999 elections, former editor of the *Ilanga* newspaper in Kwazulu-Natal, Amos Maphumolo, wrote that whites and Indians were responsible for exploiting blacks. Maphumolo furthermore uttered the desire that a South African Idi Amin would be born that would expel Indians from South Africa similar to what Idi Amin did in Uganda. The popular playwright and musician, Mbongeni Ngema, furthermore caused a furore with the lyrics of a song *Amandiy* which claims that whites are better than Indians and calls on brave (black) men to confront Indians. In October 2003 a statue of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled in Johannesburg to celebrate his role in organising resistance against white minority rule. For the Indian community Gandhi represents a heroic figure that symbolises their role in democratising South Africa. However, a number of African newspapers denounced the role of Gandhi. One newspaper stereotyped Gandhi as a racist who did not see blacks as human beings. More recently, the former leader of the ANC youth league,

Julius Malema, angered Indians by referring in a 2011 speech at the Thembelihle township to Indian children as “coolie children” (Shoba, 2011). The word “coolie” is a derogatory term often used for Indians. According to Ramsamy instances like these have served to augment feelings of fear, insecurity and vulnerability among Indians and have served to enhance ethnic awareness.

Similarly, Afrikaners have been consistently complaining of racism against the group. The most recent example is the court case that the organisation Afriforum made against Julius Malema for hate speech in order to prohibit him and the youth league from singing a song popularized during the freedom struggle “Kill the farmer, kill the Boer” (Anonymous, 2011b). Although the court case ruled in favour of Afriforum, it has infused a backlash against Afrikaners in speeches of Malema and other political leaders. However, the fact that Malema was recently disciplined and kicked out from his position as leader of the ANC Youth League should have helped to defuse White and specifically Afrikaner fears. On the other hand, the anger of Blacks was evoked when a prominent Afrikaans novelist, Annelie Botes, declared that she did not like blacks and felt threatened by blacks (Wanner, 2010).

Particular government policies such as affirmative action have also served to elicit racial responses. Affirmative action has been perceived as a crucial aspect in nation-building and in redressing the inequalities of the past (Blaser, 2004). However, many Afrikaans-speaking white workers experience it as reverse discrimination. Affirmative action is also believed to be one of the most important reasons for the skyrocketing of membership of the trade union Solidariteit and the youth league Afriforum. However, Indians and coloured workers also experience affirmative action as racist (Ramsamy, 2007; Cornelissen & Horstmeier, 2002). Cornelissen and Horstmeier found that participants in focus groups felt that they were deprived by affirmative action. The issue also incited racist responses such as “‘coloureds’ still get better positions than ‘blacks’” and “Affirmative action only benefit the ‘blacks’” (p. 76). Ramsamy furthermore reports that working class Indians are despondent regarding their economic prospects in South Africa as they feel that Indians as a group are particularly disadvantaged by affirmative action policies.

Crime is another issue that is often related to racism in South Africa (Vorster, 2005). Although political violence has been limited, crime rates have skyrocketed. Violent criminal acts in which people are killed or seriously wounded – especially when the victims are members of minority groups – are often experienced as acts of racism. Within Afrikaner

circles the term “ethnic cleansing” have even be used when referring to the many White people, and in particular White farmers, that have been killed in criminal acts since the advent of a new dispensation.

Although it could be reasoned that the preceding discussion refers to isolated events and issues, research on intergroup attitudes furthermore points to interracial tension in South Africa.

Research on intergroup relations

During the apartheid era, a number of studies conducted among different samples indicated relatively positive reciprocal relations between blacks and English-speaking whites, but negative attitudes between Afrikaans-speaking whites and blacks and vice versa as well as between Afrikaans-speaking whites and other groups (see the overview of Foster, & Nel, 1991). Foster and Nel (1991) draw the conclusion that intergroup attitudes during the apartheid era cannot be regarded as racist due to the fact that blacks, coloureds and Indians held significantly more positive attitudes towards English-speaking whites than towards Afrikaans-speaking whites.

A number of studies conducted shortly after the advent of a new dispensation did not indicate much change. Duckitt and Mphuthing (1998) investigated a cohort of black college and secondary school students in Johannesburg shortly before and four months after the advent of the new dispensation. The findings were in accordance with those of pre-1994 studies in the sense that black students still evaluated English-speaking whites significantly more favorably than Afrikaans-speaking whites. Although the post-1994 mean scores were slightly more positive, the differences between the two sets of scores were not statistically significant.

Mynhardt’s (2003) study among a countrywide sample of 3 688 respondents from all four racial groups also indicated no dramatic changes with the results of pre-1994 studies. In accordance with the findings of Duckitt and Mphuthing (1998), the attitudes of English-speaking whites towards blacks were still more positive than those of Afrikaans-speaking whites, while blacks also evaluated English-speaking whites more positively than Afrikaans-speaking whites. However, the attitudes of English-speaking whites, Indians and Coloreds towards blacks were more negative. Mynhardt furthermore recorded distinct changes in the

relations between blacks and Indians in Kwazulu-Natal. Both groups evaluated each other remarkably more negatively.

Noteworthy changes in intergroup attitudes have however been recorded in more recent studies (Bornman, 2011). In an overview of the results of a number of studies, Durrheim, Tredoux, Foster and Dixon (2010) conclude that prejudice decreased among whites, but remained fairly consistent among blacks. It was furthermore found that blacks were more likely to discuss their prejudiced attitudes freely, while whites were more hesitant to express prejudice or to evaluate any group negatively. High degrees of ingroup favouritism were furthermore recorded. These tendencies were confirmed by Gibson and Claassen (2010) who measured responses to a series of nine questions on intergroup tolerance and reconciliation among large samples of all major population groups in 2001 and 2004. Among whites and coloureds no changes were found between the two sets of intergroup measures for the majority of items. However, whites did show an increase in tolerance for two of the items and coloureds for one of the items. Dramatic changes were however recorded for Indians who demonstrated significant increases in tolerance on all nine items. Blacks, on the other hand, showed an increase in prejudice (a decrease in tolerance) towards whites for four of the nine items, while no significant changes were found for the other items. Gibson and Claassen summarise the results as follows: some positive changes were found for whites and coloureds, robust positive changes for Indians, but negative changes in white prejudice among blacks.

Bornman (2011) compares the results of three countrywide surveys that were conducted in 1998, 2001 and 2009. However, whereas countrywide probability samples were involved in the 1998 and 2001 surveys, the sample of the 2009 survey differs in the sense that a telephone sample was employed. As the density of landline telephones in South Africa is low in rural and low-income residential areas, this sample can be depicted as a predominant elite sample. Intergroup attitudes were measured on five-point Likert-type scales.

Table 2 Mean scores for attitudes scales – comparisons between three surveys

		Blacks	Coloreds	Indians	Afrikaans-speaking Whites	English-speaking Whites
Attitudes towards Blacks						
1998	<u>M</u>	4.9	3.6	3.6	2.7	3.4

	<u>SD</u>	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
2001	<u>M</u>	4.9	4.2	3.9	3.4	3.9
	<u>SD</u>	0.3	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.7
2009	<u>M</u>	4.7	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.3
	<u>SD</u>	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0
Attitudes towards Coloreds						
1998	<u>M</u>	3.6	4.5	3.7	3.0	3.6
	<u>SD</u>	1.2	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.2
2001	<u>M</u>	3.8	4.6	3.9	3.6	4.0
	<u>SD</u>	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.9	0.6
2009	<u>M</u>	3.8	4.6	4.1	4.1	4.3
	<u>SD</u>	1.2	0.7	1.0	0.9	1.0
Attitudes towards Indians						
1998	<u>M</u>	3.3	3.5	4.6	2.7	3.6
	<u>SD</u>	1.3	0.9	0.5	1.1	0.9
2001	<u>M</u>	3.5	3.8	4.4	3.5	4.0
	<u>SD</u>	1.3	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.7
2009	<u>M</u>	3.6	4.0	4.6	4.0	4.3
	<u>SD</u>	1.3	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.0
Attitudes towards Afrikaans-speaking Whites						
1998	<u>M</u>	2.7	3.6	3.4	4.7	4.1
	<u>SD</u>	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.7
2001	<u>M</u>	2.6	3.7	3.3	4.5	4.0
	<u>SD</u>	1.4	1.2	1.1	0.6	0.8
2009	<u>M</u>	3.4	4.1	4.0	4.5	4.4
	<u>SD</u>	1.4	1.0	1.2	0.7	0.8
Attitudes towards English-speaking Whites						
1998	<u>M</u>	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.4	4.5
	<u>SD</u>	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6
2001	<u>M</u>	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.3	4.4
	<u>SD</u>	1.3	1.0	0.9	0.6	0.7
2009	<u>M</u>	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.6
	<u>SD</u>	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.7

Table taken from Bornman (2011)

One of the most noteworthy findings is the negative attitudes recorded for Afrikaans-speaking white attitudes towards blacks and vice versa (see table 2). In the 2011 survey the mean score for the attitudes of both groups towards each other was below the midpoint of the scale ($M=2.7$) indicating more negative rather than positive attitudes (Bornman, 2011).

Although the attitudes of Afrikaans-speaking whites improved substantively in the 2001 survey, there was even a slight decline in black attitudes towards this group. Another important finding is that black attitudes towards English-speaking whites were no longer as positive as during apartheid. In fact, blacks held more negative attitudes towards English-speaking whites than any other group. The fact that mean scores were generally more positive in 2009, could be an indication of more positive racial attitudes in urban and high- and middle-income areas and among people with higher educational qualifications. However, attitudes between Afrikaans-speaking Whites and Blacks remained on the two ends of the continuum, although the attitudes of Afrikaans-speaking whites towards blacks were no longer significantly different from those of other groups.

The conclusion can be drawn that the advent of democracy and equality as well as nation-building strategies have not (yet) succeeded in creating a harmonious and united South African society. Intergroup tension appears still to be a part of every day life. In some cases it seems that circumstances in the new dispensation relations have caused racial attitudes to worsen rather than to improve.

The way forward

Overall, the conclusion can be drawn that after more than 17 years of democracy in a new political dispensation South African remains a divided and deeply heterogeneous society. Although nation-building strategies have seemingly succeeded in establishing a relatively strong South African identity among most groups, ethnic, racial and other forms of sub-national identities have not abated as was hoped and expected. In some instances these identities have even become stronger due to the position of power of the particular groups and in other instances due to feelings of marginalisation and vulnerability in the new dispensation.

However, the strong hand with which the doctrine of non-racialism, in particular, has been practised by the ANC-government, has largely succeeded to stifle ethnic mobilisation on a political level. That does not mean necessarily that all groups are satisfied and content with circumstances in the new dispensation or that the government has succeeded in creating a united nation characterised by social harmony and positive intergroup relations. It is rather a case that in many cases tension has been brewing below the surface. An important question is

how long the government will be able to keep tensions related to the diversity of the population under control and how long before it will be forced to deal more consciously with this diversity.

The model of a multi-national state probably fits South African society much better than the civic or nation state model with a single homogeneous nation South Africa is currently striving for. The well-known Canadian analyst Will Kymlicka (2003) identifies a number of characteristics of a multi-national or multi-cultural state:

- In the first place it involves the repudiation of any ideas that the state “belongs” to a single, homogeneous group or any majority group living within the realms of the state. It is important that the state should be seen as belonging to all its citizens including all racial, ethnic and cultural groups. That means that citizens do not need to hide or deny their ethnic or other identities in order to have access to all services that the state offers.
- The state furthermore has the obligation to render the history, language and culture of minority groups the same recognition and accommodation than those of the majority group or groups.
- In a multicultural state acknowledgement is furthermore given to any injustices done to any groups and should manifest a willingness to offer some form of remedy or rectification.

Both Kymlicka (2003) and Dersso (2008) furthermore notes that there is unfortunately not a single recipe that will fulfil the aspirations of all groups within a particular multinational society. According to Kymlicka it is important to distinguish between groups with a strong sense of identity and with a distinctive language and culture which have been used to govern themselves or to govern a particular territory. It is almost inevitable that such groups will strive towards some degree of self-autonomy – typically within some kind of federal or quasi-federal system – and the establishment of public institutions functioning in their own language. In addition to self-autonomy, At the other end of the spectrum other groups might not strive towards self-autonomy, but nevertheless wish their culture and language to be recognised, the right to practise their culture and language and/or the removal of any form of discrimination and barriers that prevent their full integration and participation in the broad society and their acceptance as full citizens. For all groups the right to culture, namely the

right to pursue their own cultures and languages and the right to be educated in their own language, is however important (Dersso, 2008).

This mean, however, that the unitary and unilingual state not only need to be replaced by a multinational and multilingual state. According to Kymlicka (2003) a truly multicultural state not only recognises that its citizens are different with regard to culture and language and hold different identities, but also that these citizens are different in various ways which means, among others, that they strive to have different relations with the state by means of different forms of multicultural citizenship. For some groups multiculturalism may imply the removal of all forms of discrimination and all barriers to their integration into the mainstream society, while for others it will mean the advancing of powers to render them some form of self-government. Thus, in becoming a multinational and multicultural state, a state should transform itself to accommodate various forms of multicultural citizenship – a principle which Kymlicka calls “deep diversity” (p. 153).

These forms of multiculturalism does not deny, however, that some degree of unity will still be retained and that citizens will continue to view themselves for some purposes as members of the larger nation (Kymlicka, 1995). Kymlicka offers the example of the Swiss who retains a strong sense of common loyalty and Swiss identity despite the cultural and linguistic differences inherent to Swiss society and the various ways in which these diversities are accommodated. In fact, heterogeneous states can often only survive and retain their unity if the various groups living within the ambits of the state have an allegiance to the larger political community.

According to Horowitz (1991) there is however no quick solutions to the problems related to the diversity of a country or the lack of recognition of that diversity as is currently the case in South Africa. International experience has shown that governments and their opponents will only change their strategies after a process of long and bitter experience. The changes are high that the same will happen in South Africa and that there is still a long and difficult road ahead before solutions that satisfy the needs of all groups will be reached.

Some notes on the role of the media

The role of the public broadcaster and the national press has not only been to inform, educate and entertain the citizens of the state. Within the nation-state model, one of the central tasks

of these institutions has also been to promote a national identity and to foster nation-building (Habermas 2001). According to Habermas, national consciousness as a modern form of social solidarity is indeed the product of the development of new forms of communication and especially mass communication such as the radio, newspapers (print) and television. The fact that the mass media have been enabling all citizens to hear, read and see the same messages, have been used to create and foster unity and an overarching identification with the nation state. Governments of nation states usually also expect the media to continue its role fostering a sense of national unity in particular in multi-cultural societies.

However, the problems experienced with diversity in different parts of the world have led to a re-consideration of the role of the media in this regard (Zayani, 2011). On the one hand, as already mentioned, many multinational and multicultural states have been experiencing an upsurge of ethnic consciousness. On the other hand, due to increasing immigration in various parts of the world, many countries – and in particular developed countries – are confronted with intolerance toward immigrants as well as demands by immigrants for the recognition of their right to culture. Thus, in writing about the transformation of the British public service, Stuart Hall (1993, p. 35) holds that the media are currently being called to foster and promote a “new more plural, diverse, culturally differentiated conception of the ‘nation’ by representing its diversities.” This new role implies, among others, that the media should no longer reinforce “sacred” sources of cultural autonomy or reproduce “old” cultural hierarchies. Within this alternative framework it is expected of the media not only to present the “changing face of the nation” – that is an alternative to the one state, one nation viewpoint – but also to promote a broader discourse on multiculturalism, to foster tolerance for diversity and to diversify its contents, control and ownership (Rodríguez, 2009, p. 168).

However, an analysis of scholarly writing on diversity in the USA media brings Rodríguez (2009) to the conclusion that the media tends to reinforce the status quo albeit subtly or tend to be crisis-orientated and to focus on intergroup conflict. In the USA, for example, prize-winning articles tend to focus on the idea of the “American dream”, faith in this dream, the current system and the concomitant values by writing, among others, success stories on how some immigrants were successful or still hope to realise this dream. There are however a number of articles that display an alternative viewpoint and depict, for example, African American culture as a “nation within a nation” (p. 180). However, in general diversity writing often fails to address the most disturbing and complex challenges associated with diversity

and to promote a broad discourse on the deeper and more fundamental issues related to diversity.

Although few scholarly analyses have currently been done, the available evidence suggests that the South African media have probably also stood in the service of the nation-building strategies of the South Africa government since 1994. This tendency can at least partially be ascribed to the legacy of apartheid as most media have been eager to play a role in overcoming the divisions of apartheid and some also to make amends for the role that they played in entrenching apartheid. The South African government probably also expected from the national media to promote a South African national identity in particular during major sports events such as the recent Olympic Games and the 2010 Fifa World Cup. The nation-building discourse in the South African media is perhaps no better illustrated than by the caption of a report published in the Afrikaans newspaper, *Beeld*, on 15 August 2012 on the home-coming of the country's Olympic team: "Julle het 'n nasie verenig, geïnspireer" (You have united and inspired a nation – p. 3). It is the opinion of this author that there is currently very little signs that the alternative role of the media in promoting diversity and multiculturalism as visualised by Hall (1993) has taken root in South Africa. When diversity is covered in the South African media, it is often characterised – similar to the USA – by a focus on intergroup conflict and the denouncement of any form of racism or racial discrimination. The media furore surrounding the comments of the Afrikaans author Annelie Botes that she did not like blacks and felt threatened by blacks is but one example in this regard (Wanner, 2010). Although the South African media have to be hailed for playing a role in denouncing racism and racial discrimination in South African society, they have yet failed to promote a broader discourse on the deeper and more complex issues related to the heterogeneous nature of South African society.

Conclusions

Overall, the conclusion can be drawn that South Africa still has a long road to travel in becoming a truly multinational, multicultural and multilingual state. According to Naudé (2010) the first step on this way should be the full recognition and acknowledgement of the diversity of the South African population on all levels of society – from the highest political levels and in every level of the public sector and government to the micro-cosmos of local communities. This pluralism should furthermore not be perceived as a threat but as one of the

greatest assets of the country. Only then will it be possible to develop strategies and policies that will meet the interests of all groups. However, without such recognition, it will be difficult if not impossible to move forward. In promoting a more realistic vision of South African society and the South African “nation” and the recognition of the complexity of diversity on various levels, the South African media will need to adapt its role of promoting unity by also promoting a broad discourse on vital issues related to the aspirations of the various groups in South Africa.

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