A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE POLITICAL IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY OF THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

By

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Abstract

This thesis is a critical engagement with the political identity and ideology of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) as a political formation in post-apartheid South Africa. Using the concept of 'thin ideologies' developed by Freeden (1998) and other theorists, I argue that the party's ideology, as a populist formation, is thin. Its thinness enables the EFF to subscribe to multiple and often contradictory ideologies at once. The thesis demonstrates how these multiple ideologies find expression within and are articulated by the party. Based on its subscription to many ideologies, I contend that the party is, ideologically speaking, promiscuous. In other words, the thesis argues that the party, like other populist formations, is a political chameleon with a unique ability to subscribe to different political identities, ideologies and thoughts at any time to serve the interests of the party. Furthermore, I highlight the fact that despite proclaiming itself as a movement of economic freedom, the party has no clear coherent programme to bring about this freedom that it promises. Put differently, beyond the nice sounding slogans that the party is known for, its proposals are contradictory and not so largely different from what is already offered by other political parties, particularly the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC). Like a typical populist political formation, the EFF thrives politically by exploiting and capitalizing on the ANC's weaknesses and political failures. Similar to many populist formations, the EFF exploits these by amplifying and articulating these failures as constituting a political crisis. A crisis in which only the EFF, as a supposed people's party, can solve. Unlike most studies that have highlighted the performative and theatrical nature of the EFF's populism, the thesis focuses on the political identity and the political ideology aspect of the party.

Key Terms: Populism, ideology, thin ideology, populism, democracy, nationalism, economic freedom, racial polity, non-racialism.

<h1 style="text-align:center">Declaration</h1>

I, Pumlani Majavu, declare that **A critical study of the political identity and ideology of the Economic Freedom Fighters** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis/dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

Signed:

Pumlani Majavu   Date 20 May 2021

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Dedication

To my beloved brother Luzuko. I miss you bro. Forever in our hearts and thoughts.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction and Methodology

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is a unique critical study of the politics, political ideology and political identity of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). The thesis argues that the EFF, above all else, is a populist political party. This study critically analyses the party through an understanding of populism as a 'thin ideology' (Freeden, 1998; Stanely, 2008). It argues that the EFF's ideology and political identity need to be understood through conceptualizing populism as a 'thin ideology' and or a 'thin centred ideology' (Mudde, 2004; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). The thesis critically highlights the fact that the party's political ideology and identity as a populist can be seen in its championing of chameleonic and contradictory politics. While many studies on the EFF have mostly only highlighted the party's populism only as it pertains to its daily rhetoric, performances or theatrics, dress code, and its leader, this thesis is the first of its kind to argue that everything about the party, particularly its political ideology, identity, and the policies it claims to be the pursuit of, is thin, contradictory and chameleonic.

The thesis critically analyses the ideological underpinnings, the politics or political ideology, the party's political identity and the key policies of the EFF beyond the slogans offered by the party. The thesis concludes that the EFF is a populist political party with largely unclear and contradictory key policies that are only slightly different from the governing ANC. The nature and character of the party, the thesis further argues, enables it to be many different things and a political home to people who subscribe to different political ideologies. These people join or support the EFF, not because of the party's political ideology, but essentially because they are aggrieved by the status quo and the ANC. This, in essence, makes the EFF a party of the disgruntled, rather than a political home for

people who subscribe to a particular ideological outlook advanced by the party. Through a careful and unique analysis of the party that brings different discourses and theories together, such as populism studies, postcolonial thought, and critical race theory, the thesis advances a new argument about the political ideology and political identity of the EFF.

1.2 Background Context and contribution of the study

The discussion about the character and political identity of the EFF has been a subject of many commentaries and debates outside the academic space. In these discussions, the EFF is either caricatured as a fascist political party (Buccus, 2018a; February, 2018a; Habib, 2018a; Habib, 2018b; Legardien, 2018; Maharaj, 2018; Satgar, 2017) or described as a left political party (Gumede, 2019; Mbembe, 2014) or simply a populist party (Friedman, 2014; Friedman, 2017; Mkhabela, 2018). A careful analysis of the academic literature on the party, as detailed in the next chapter, reveals the same trend (see Booysen, 2015; Essop, 2016; Mbete, 2015; Niefdtagodien, 2015a; Nel, 2019; Roberts, 2019; Satgar, 2019). In other words, both the popular discourse or mainstream analysis and the academic literature on the EFF tend to write about the party from these three perspectives. The central issue in all this literature is the question of identifying the political identity, character, politics and nature of the EFF as a political formation. This literature is also concerned with the kind of politics that the EFF represents, its role and significance as a political party in post-apartheid South Africa.

This thesis converses with, builds and departs from the existing literature on the EFF. The thesis significantly departs from the current available literature on a number of levels. Firstly, the in-depth theoretical analysis of the EFF as a populist party presented in this thesis is unmatched, as the literature review chapter will demonstrate. Although there are a number of studies that have argued and highlighted the populist character of the EFF politics (Essop, 2016; Folscher, 2020; Mbete, 2015; Nel, 2019), none have done so to the extent of this thesis. And the studies and commentary that have

highlighted the populist nature of the EFF have hardly advanced the argument that the EFF's populism goes beyond the performative and theatric politics of populism, at least not to the extent that this thesis does. Secondly, the uniqueness of this thesis comes from understanding populism not merely as a style of politics or theatrics, but importantly also as an ideology, a thin ideology (Mudde, 2004; Mudde 2017; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Stanely, 2008).

This ideational understanding of populism advanced in this thesis equips us with the lens to understand populism beyond the theatrics and performative nature of the EFF's politics (Canovan, 1999; Mudde, 2004; Mudde 2017; Stanley, 2008). It equips us with tools to analyse and deconstruct the multiple ideologies that the party subscribes to at different times to different audiences and for different purposes (Stanley, 2008). The ideational approach also gives us the language and theoretical tools to make sense of the lack of commitment and fidelity to any of the ideologies, sometimes conflicting, that the party, at different times, claims to subscribe to (Albertazzi, 2006). And lastly, this thesis's uniqueness comes from the fact that no other study of the EFF has critically analysed, to the extent that is done here, the supposed key and central policies of the EFF. Most studies have often glanced at the slogans that supposedly serve as the party's central policies without analysing what the party says about them. This thesis also differs from the available literature in the sense that it provides an in-depth analysis of the party's primary policies.

This thesis not only contributes to our understanding of the political identity of the EFF, but also to the global scholarship on populism. It does this in multiple and interconnected ways. Firstly, the thesis contributes to the growing literature that advances the argument that populism and nationalism, although similar in certain ways, are distinct (Brubaker, 2017; De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017). The thesis does this by highlighting the fact that although the EFF's host ideology is in many ways nationalist, the party remains a populist party rather than a black nationalist party. It is a populist

party that often relies on nationalist discourse as a means of reaching out and appealing to 'the people', much like many other populists in different parts of the world (Brubaker, 2017; Tas, 2020). The thesis also contributes to the global understanding and uses of the ideational approach of the praxis of populism, in its analyses of the EFF (Canovan, 1999; Mudde, 2004; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Stanley, 2008). And lastly, it confirms the global trend that supporters and members of populist parties join and support these parties as an act of expressing their resentment or unhappiness against the incumbent party and or existing political party (Mudde, 2007; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017).

1.3 Problem statement

This study seeks to unmask the politics, the political identity and the political ideology of the EFF as a political formation in post-apartheid South Africa. The problem that this study seeks to solve is that describing, naming and identifying the EFF as a political phenomenon. As seen above, and as will be further discussed in the following chapter, the scholarship on the EFF often grapples with this very issue. The available literature on this matter, and the political party as a whole, however, has a number of limitations as will be soon demonstrated. Thus, the current study arose as a result of the identified gaps within the existing scholarship and literature. One of these gaps, as noted above, being the absence of an in-depth critical analysis of what the party claims are its central and non-negotiable policies. The current existing literature has also not thoroughly examined the multiple and often contradictory ideologies and politics of the party. The problem, therefore, was the absence of a better analysis and theoretical tools for understanding the political identity and ideology of the EFF. This thesis solved this problem through the concept of populism as a thin ideology.

1.4 The research questions

This thesis is a critical engagement with the politics and ideology of the EFF. The main question that it seeks to answer is: what is the political identity and ideology of the EFF? The subsequent questions that the thesis addresses are:

- What does the concept of economic freedom mean?

- What makes the EFF a political attraction or alternative?

- What is the EFF's political ideology?

- What is the EFF's idea of liberation?

- How do we best understand and characterize the EFF?

- What are the party's ideological underpinnings?

Put together, these questions help us understand the politics, the political identity, political ideology and the role of the EFF in contemporary South Africa.

1.5 The objectives of the study

The key objective of the study is to theorise the political identity and ideology of the EFF. Subsequently, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives.

- To critically analyse the concept of economic freedom.

- To critically analyse what makes the EFF an attractive political formation.

- To critically analyse the political ideology championed by the EFF.

- To understand the EFF's idea of liberation.

- To provide new theoretical tools to understand the EFF as a political phenomenon.

- To historicize and contextualise the party's ideological underpinnings.

1.6 Significance of the study

Research shows that populist formations often emerge on the basis of representing the neglected, the marginalised and the oppressed under the banner of 'the people' against the rulers, government, conglomerates and the oppressors who all fall under the banner of 'the elite' (Canovan, 1999; De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017; Mudde, 2004; Tas, 2020). The populists claim not only to represent the

people but that they are 'the people'. In presenting themselves as 'the people' the populists further argue that their political formation is the only one that is truly democratic and that it seeks to take power away from 'the elite' and restore it to the 'the people' (Canovan, 1999; Muller, 2019).

The few academic studies on the EFF thus far have not done what this thesis does in terms of critically analysing the party's political identity or ideology beyond its performative and theatrical nature of politics. Most of these studies have assumed that the party's ideology and policies are coherent and clear. The idea and argument that the EFF does not have clear policies, let alone original ones, is mostly missing from the current available academic literature on the party. Most of these studies, often look at the policies without ever critically interrogating the policies. In other words, the absence of a critical analysis of what the party refers to as its non-negotiable policies seems to suggest that most studies wrongly think that these are, firstly, coherent and clear, and, secondly that the party is faithful to these. This, therefore, means, that the current available academic literature is yet to provide and offer a thorough, critical and in-depth study of the political identity and political ideology of the EFF. This thesis uniquely does this.

The argument that unfolds in this thesis is that the EFF, as with most populist political formations, has opted for a combination of different ideologies (Freeden, 1998; Mudde, 2004; Stanley, 2008). In combining these the party is able to attract various, and often contradictory ideologues into the party. Furthermore, the thinness of the EFF's ideology is also reflected in the fact that the party, beyond the 'fine' slogans, does not have a clear-cut political programme to deliver on what it calls 'economic freedom'. In Chapter 6 of this study, for instance, where I critically analyse the party's seven key policies, it becomes clear that these key policies make fine slogans but are thin on details and largely inherently contradictory. A contradiction that inevitably raises questions about the party's fidelity to what it calls 'real freedom'. The thin details further make it hard to distinguish some of the EFF's policies from the current ANC policies. This thinness and contradiction are not only in one key

document, but in all the key documents of the EFF that` speak to these policies. The nebulous character of the EFF's politics positions the organization to be a home for all the people who are disenchanted with the status quo. The thinness of the organisation's politics gives the EFF a political latitude to partner with 'full ideologies' that express analogous grievances without having to develop a coherent and comprehensive political ideology or policies with which to address political issues (Freeden, 1998; Mudde, 2004; Stanley, 2008). This careful study of the EFF as political formation confirms Stanley's (2008: 95) argument that populists often do not have a "coherent programme for the solution to crucial political questions".

1.7 Methodology

This is a qualitative political research project. When researchers seek to understand or explain how and why a political event, issue or process came about, they are necessarily asking research questions that can be answered through using qualitative methods (Vromen, 2007). Qualitative research methods focus on detailed, text-based answers that are often historical, political, or include personal reflection from research participants in political organisations (Vromen, 2007). This study chose to utilise a qualitative research method because it is considered best suited to study and understand the complexities of political life (Pierce, 2011). The strength of this method lies in its unique capacity, through in-depth interviews and observations, to capture and fully understand the underlying values of individuals and groups (Pierce, 2011). Moreover, qualitative research methods enable researchers to make comparisons between what the individual says in the privacy of a personal interview and what they say in public (Pierce, 2011). This study then fundamentally differs from a quantitative research method research, which aims to answer research questions through the use of statistical methods that often focus on questions of "how many" to infer causality (Vromen, 2007).

As a politics research project, this study engages in political thinking about the post-apartheid political landscape. Thinking politically in academic research includes investigating the political views people hold and advocate for, as well as researching central political issues and challenges societies grapple

with (Freeden, 1998). To deepen its political insight, this research project uses history and political theory to frame political events and trajectories, to construct political explanations, as well as to critically understand political ideologies and models of political orders in post-colonial Africa (Philp, 2008). In politics, ideologies are understood to reflect substantive collectively held interpretations of the political world (Freeden, 1998). Most importantly, this thesis employs theory and history to develop a sense of what is politically possible (Philp, 2008). The discussion is anchored by a populist theory, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.7.1 Sampling

Consistent with the research techniques of the qualitative research methodology, this study uses the official EFF documentation in order to critically analyse what the party politically stands for and does not stand for. These official documents were particularly useful as they presented a more holistic overview of the party's positions on the key issues central in this study. Therefore, apart from data collected from interviewed participants, this study also utilised content analysis as a means of generating data. What this means is that the data analysis of this thesis is in two forms, one collected through the interviews, and another collected through analysis of the texts produced by the party. This form of data analysis is referred to as content analysis (Babbie, 2010; Bryman, 2012). Content analysis, notes Babbie (2010: 333) "is the study of recorded human communications". According to Bryman (2012: 290), "the main use of content analysis has been in the examination of printed texts and documents". Just like I could not interview all the members of the party, I also could not use all the texts or content data generated by the party. Rather than seeking to analyse all the data, I limited my focus to key documents that speak to what the party calls its key and non-negotiable policies. Most of the policies are often discussed in the manifestos of the party, hence the study analyses how these are discussed and articulated in the founding manifesto, and in all the other national election manifestos. Furthermore, I also analysed national conference resolution documents that discuss these policies. Put differently, the content analysis was limited to key documents where the key policies

are either explained or discussed. As will be seen in the next chapter, a lot of studies on the EFF have largely not done this, particularly to the extent done in this thesis.

The thesis further utilized semi-structured, in-depth interviews to collect data. The study's approach to interviews was influenced by what Charmaz (2006) terms "directed conversation" type of interview. Charmaz (2006: 25) describes this interview process as taking a form of a "directed conversation", whereby the researcher asks questions aimed at shedding more light on the topic. Unlike in an everyday conversation, in this 'directed conversation', the researcher has a responsibility of directing the conversation, and of shifting the conversation based on the setting, or information being presented. Although the researcher is the director of this conversation, it is the participant who talks more, while the researcher's role is to ask questions and to listen (Charmaz, 2006). In other words, the researcher is not the centre of attention during this process, as it is the views of the participant that matter more in this directed conversation (Seidman, 2013). Seidman (2013: 8) writes that interviews are important in qualitative research as they are another form of gaining knowledge about the subject, therefore interviewing is another "basic mode of inquiry". Interviewing is a means of getting "subjective understanding" from the people who have the experience of being inside the organisation one is seeking to understand (Seidman, 2013: 17). In other words, the purpose of this form of inquiry, or of conducting interviews is to get an understanding of how participants make meaning of the subjects that the researcher is investigating (Seidman, 2013). Therefore, the objectives behind this study's interview process were to encourage the participant to share their views, based on their experience, on the subject being investigated. This form of interviewing enables the researcher to ask questions and to seek clarity on issues pertaining to the research inquiry. Interviewing helps us to understand the context of the subject or topic of our inquiry beyond the documents or the researcher's observation. This approach to interviewing is consistent with qualitative research methods, which Holloway and Wheeler (2009: 3) define as a "form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live".

The study purposefully recruited research participants who either identified themselves as members, active supporters or as former members and former active supporters. In research, this is called 'purpose sampling'. Tongco (2007) explains that purposive sampling does not require the researcher to choose random people as sources or a specific number of people. Rather it allows the researcher to find an unspecified number of people that she or he thinks will bring value to the research (Tongco, 2007; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, Hoagwood, 2015). In other words, "the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience" (Tongco, 2007: 147). Tongco (2007: 147) describes these people as "Key informants [who] are observant, reflective members of the community of interest who know much about the culture and are both able and willing to share their knowledge". In other words, what makes these people key is the fact that they, as discussed above, have subjective knowledge of the topic that is under investigation. For this thesis, I was fortunate enough to recruit participants who all play or previously played significant roles within the party, at national, provincial and local level. The national and provincial participants were particularly key as they have a bigger role to shape and influence the discourse in and around the meaning, representation and political significance of the EFF at a much broader level. Branch and former branch members were also useful in helping me understand the party from the perspective of the party from a branch level. Thus, being able to interview someone at the national office, at the provincial and at the branch level proved in helping me as a researcher to get a thorough understanding of the party's political identity and ideology.

Unlike a quantitative study, the number of participants in qualitative research does not have to be large (Creswell, 2014). In other words, there is no set number of participants to be engaged in a qualitative study (Tongco, 2007). If anything, the number of research participants in a qualitative study depends on a number of issues, such as the nature of the inquiry (Creswell, 2014). For instance,

a narrative study can be based on either one or two research participants; while the number of participants in a phenomenological study can vary between 3 and 10 participants; whereas an ethnographical study can include up to 30 plus participants; etc. (Bagnasco, Ghirotto, & Sasso, 2014; Cresswell, 2014). The number of participants is also determined by the idea of saturation (Bagnasco *et al*, 2014). Saturation is the idea that one has collected sufficient data once the participants no longer offer new insights or information (Bagnasco *et al*, 2014; Creswell, 2014). What this means is that the researcher's role is also to decide how much is enough data based on the information collected.

The centrality of the researchers role in the process of data collection in qualitative research is also reflected by the fact that all the participants of this study were interviewed by me. I was also the one person who transcribed all the interviews. In total, 11 research participants were interviewed for this study. The people I interviewed included a high-ranking national office bearer, a Central Command Team member, a provincial officer bearer, a branch secretary, a deputy branch secretary, EFF Student Command member, and members who were active in their branches and in EFF activities in general during the interviews. In addition, I also interviewed a former branch leader, a former active supporter and a current active supporter of the party. The active supporters are not official members of the party, but support the party through fund raising, recruitment drives, campaigning for the party and promoting the party on media platforms. Five of the 11 were women. The active supporter is a man, while the former active supporter is a woman, and the former member is also a woman. Most of the 11 people interviewed either have jobs or are employed, except for 2. One of these two described himself as a full-time activist, while another was a student who, at the time, was helping out with union work. Furthermore, other than the full-time activist and another shop steward, all the other participants received formal education at institutions of higher learning.

Perhaps, I should note that I later learned that one of the women whom I interviewed is no longer a member of the party. Unfortunately, she declined to have a second interview with me that was going

to focus on her leaving the party and the reasons behind the departure. Be that as it may, the 11 participants proved to be sufficient firstly because, as noted above, this particular kind of study generally needs between 3 and 10 participants (Bagnasco, *et al* 2014; Cresswell, 2014). Besides, a researcher simply cannot research "everyone everywhere doing everything" (Miles & Huberman, 1984: 36).

The use of semi-structured, in-depth interviews was of importance in this study as it allowed me to probe the views of the interviewees and get clarity on the research topic (Barribell and White, 1994). The interviews were mostly one on one, except in one instance where the person I had scheduled an interview with was with fellow 'fighters' at the time of the scheduled meeting. The 'fighters' were also willing to participate in the study, hence in this case rather than a one-on-one session, it became a group interview. In this particular instance, the 'directed conversation' also turned out well, in the sense that they reaffirmed, elaborated and, at times, slightly contradicted each other's views.

The purpose of doing interviews was to collect data so as to help me understand the party's political dynamics much better from people inside the party. The kind of questions that I asked the members of the party related to the following: what attracted them to the EFF; what do they understand the party's political identity and character to be; what makes the EFF an alternative political party; how does it differ from other political parties; and how is it faithful to the ideal of liberation. As noted above qualitative study also relies on observations and documents pertaining to the research inquiry. This proved to be the case as well for this thesis, as I also relied a lot on documents such as policy documents, press release statements, interviews and speeches of party leaders. The party's book, *The Coming Revolution: Julius Malema and the fight for economic freedom*, edited by the EFF's Deputy President, Floyd Shivambu, was immensely helpful as it contains a lot of relevant documents about the party, such as the founding manifesto and the 2014 elections manifesto, and an extensive interview with the party's president Julius Malema by journalist Janet Smith.

1.7.2 Coding Data

Because of the amount of data collected in a qualitative study, the data analysis has to involve a process of focusing on certain parts of the data (Creswell, 2014). This is where the process of coding comes in. According to Creswell (2009: 186) "Coding is the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information". Saldaña (2010: 8) writes that "To codify is to arrange things in a systematic order, to make something part of a system or classification, to categorize". A code can be a word, a phrase or a summary used by the researcher to capture the essence of a particular section of the data (Saldaña, 2010). Coding plays the same role that a title of a book plays in terms of being a brief summative overview of the argument presented. It is a process whereby data is segmented and divided into categories, patterns or themes (Babbie, 2010; Bryman, 2012; Charmaz, 2006). Coding of data is interlinked with the design, approach and theoretical framework of the study, hence Saldaña (2010: 6) writes that "The act of coding requires that you wear your researcher's analytic lens… how you perceive and interpret what is happening in the data depends on what type of filter covers that lens". Coding can be done manually or through using sophisticated software. Manual coding was used in this thesis, which means that the study did not use sophisticated software to code the data.

According to Babbie (2010: 400), "the aim of data analysis is the discovery of patterns among the data, patterns that point to theoretical understandings of social life". Charmaz (2006: 46) writes that the process of coding enables the researcher to "define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it means". The process involves the researcher having to critically examine the collected data to see what themes came out of it (Bryman, 2012). For this study, the researcher looked for recurring themes within the data. The themes related to the research focus of the project, and helped the researcher answer the broader research question (Bryman, 2012). Throughout the process of data analysis the theoretical framework is not suspended (Babbie, 2010). In other words, the researcher does not lose sight of the study's theoretical framework while analysing the collected data.

These themes when put together are the answer to the research questions and help the researcher to theorise the findings (Bryman, 2012).

1.7.3 Limitations of the thesis

I do not aim to cover everything related to the EFF in this thesis, nor does the thesis contain everything about the post-apartheid political landscape. For instance, the study did not venture into a comprehensive analysis of the party's gender politics, particularly the lived experiences of women within the primarily patriarchal culture of the EFF. Nor does the study interrogate the role and significance of the student wing of the EFF as a political phenomenon in institutions of higher learning, its political activities or its seeming popularity in some campuses. The thesis also does not have a detailed analysis of the corruption allegations that have been made against the party and its leaders. Another limitation is that this study did not do a comprehensive analysis of the party's use of social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook to advance its populist politics. Indeed, the use of social media by the party requires its own study. Furthermore, given the limited number of research participants in this research project, I am unable to extrapolate my findings to the broader membership of the EFF.

1.8 Thesis structure

Chapter 1

This thesis is made up of 8 chapters. The current chapter served as an introductory chapter to the study, as well as a methodology chapter. In it, I introduced the thesis by briefly touching on some of the issues that will be discussed later in the thesis. In this chapter, I also mentioned the research questions that this thesis seeks to answer. This introductory chapter also discussed the methodology used to conduct this study.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 is a literature review. The chapter critically discusses the available academic literature of the EFF. This literature is made up of academic studies, academic papers and book chapters about the EFF. While highlighting the key arguments and the limitations of these, the chapter also situates and differentiates this thesis from the current available literature.

Chapter 3

This is a theoretical framework chapter. In it, I explain the importance and advantages of the theory I used to study the EFF. It is in this chapter where I clearly explain the concept of populism, but importantly the ideational approach to populism that this thesis employs. Building from the previous one, this chapter also theorizes the issues that will be later discussed in the thesis.

Chapter 4

Building from the previous one, this chapter is both historical and theoretical. In this chapter, I closely examine the history and theory of black nationalism in South Africa that the EFF often expropriates as its own. I argue that the EFF sometimes borrows from this history of black nationalism in positioning itself as the authentic black people's organisation, and also as the legitimate heir of this rich history.

Chapter 5

This chapter critically analyses the praxis of the EFF's populist politics. In other words, the chapter examines how the party acts out its populism. The chapter critically examines instances or events that have characterised the party's populist politics. The chapter, in essence, partly needs to be read as how the concepts discussed in both the theory and history chapter applies to the day to day politics of the EFF.

Chapter 6

This chapter is a critical analysis of the party's seven key policies. The argument in this chapter is that the party's thin ideology is noticeable in the lack of clarity, and detail of what is supposed to be its central policies. Apart from the inconsistencies, the party, in all its key documents, fails to demonstrate how its key policies differ from the ANC government's policies. This chapter, in essence, applies the concept of a thin ideology in analysing what is supposedly the party's main business, which is that of bringing about 'economic freedom' through these policies. It argues that the party's populism can be seen in the fact that the means that are meant to bring about this 'economic freedom' are vague, thin and very similar to the ones already offered by the ruling ANC.

Chapter 7

This is the data analysis chapter, and hence critically engages with the data collected through interviews with research participants. The chapter discusses themes such as the reasons why members joined and support the EFF as opposed to other existing political parties in the country. One of the themes that emerges from this chapter is that the support for the EFF is as a result of feeling and being disgruntled with the status quo and the failures of the ANC to deliver on its promises. The chapter also discusses the reasons provided by some for no longer being members or supporters of the party.

Chapter 8

The last chapter serves as a summative overview and a concluding chapter. The chapter summarises the main arguments made in the thesis, and in a sense emphasises the central argument that the thesis makes.

Chapter 2: The 'struggle' to characterise the EFF's political identity

2.1 Introduction

In the first chapter, I argued that this thesis' originality lies in a number of factors. Part of its originality, as noted earlier is due to the fact that no other academic research has studied the EFF in the manner that is done here. In its originality and significance, however, the thesis builds on the available useful academic research that has been done on the EFF. This chapter, therefore, provides a critical overview of the available literature on the EFF. In other words, it reviews the academic literature written about the party. Since the EFF is still a relatively new political formation, formed merely just over 7 years ago, there is limited academic literature on it. There is, to the best of my knowledge, only a handful of academic research that has been done on the party.

The available academic literature on the party mostly seeks to characterise and or categorise the party's political identity. Satgar (2019: 585) in his article on the EFF, refers to this as a "classification struggle" to characterise the party's political identity. From the useful and varied academic research on the party, at least two topical themes to describe the political identity of the EFF can be deduced, namely; the EFF as a left populist party and the EFF as a fascist political party. These themes are not exhaustive, nor are the lines between them clear cut. But the aforementioned topical themes do sum up the available academic literature on the EFF. This thesis contributes to and builds on this literature, and more importantly extends the academic literature that views the EFF as a populist political formation. While discussing the literature, I continuously point out how the current thesis differs from the literature under review.

This literature review chapter is divided into two sections. The first section reviews the literature that studies the EFF as a somewhat positive populist party, while the second one looks at the literature that highlights the dangers that the EFF poses to the country's democratic project.

2.2 Case of left populists, red jumpsuits and patriarchs

Some of the literature on the EFF have correctly characterised the EFF as a somewhat left populist political party (Booysen, 2015; Essop, 2016; Mbete, 2015; Niefdtagodien, 2015a). The current thesis, as noted earlier, supports this view and extends it. It, however, transcends some of this literature's limitations, thereby extending it, by advancing an argument that the populism of the EFF, as argued in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3, is based on a 'thin ideology'. As will be seen below, the academic literature on the EFF has mostly neglected to highlight and uncover the 'thinness' of the party's ideology.

In arguing that the EFF is a populist political formation, most studies on the party have almost exclusively focused on the performative and theatrical politics of the EFF (see Essop, 2016; Mbete, 2015; Nel, 2019). Although this literature is useful in helping us understand the party's political identity, it leaves a gap in the sense that it does not provide us with a holistic and overall understanding of the party's political ideology and identity. Furthermore, most of this literature almost present the EFF as if the party advances a unique and clear-cut coherent political programme without critically examining its key documents or ideology (see Essop, 2016; Mbete, 2015; Nel, 2019; Dlakavu, 2017; Niefdtagodien, 2015a; Robert, 2019). This is one of the gaps that this thesis fills, as it illustrates that the party does not have a consistent, clear-cut coherent political programme and a fully-fledged political ideology. Filling this gap is also significant in advancing the scholarship on the subject matter.

Mbete's (2015) article, one of the first important academic pieces to be written about the EFF, entitled 'The Economic Freedom Fighters: South Africa's Turn Towards Populism' is one of the articles that characterises the EFF as a populist formation based mainly on the party's political style. She correctly concludes that the EFF is a populist formation because of the party's political style which includes theatrics, creating a dichotomy between 'the people' and 'the elite', the party's rhetoric and the centrality of a particular leader of the party (Mbete, 2015).

In her article, she maintains that the party has a clear, albeit developing, ideological direction even though it blends various and different ideological traditions such as the Freedom Charter-associated congress movement, Pan-Africanism, and Black consciousness into one (Mbete, 2015). She writes that the EFF has a "nascent political identity" (Mbete, 2015: 42). Mbete adds that the EFF puts more emphasis on performance, and political style rather than substance. According to Mbete (2015: 36) "the substance of the EFF's politics is secondary to the impact of its political performance and populist political style on the content of current political debate in South Africa". While Mbete (2015) does not conceptualise the extent of this lack of 'substance', or exactly how the party lacks substance, in this thesis, I go further into details to explain its extent and conceptualise this as part of the party's 'thin ideology'. Moreover, Mbete's article focuses, almost exclusively, on what she calls 'political performance', this thesis goes beyond that as it critically examines the party's 'thin ideology'. Furthermore, in merely listing the party's seven key policies to highlight what the party supposedly stands for, as her paper does, is to suggest that these are clear and coherent (see Mbete, 2015: 39-40). As later discussed, beyond the radical sounding slogans, the party's key policies are unclear, identical to the ANC's and lack coherency. This thesis, as will be seen in the following chapters, also differs with the unsubstantiated assertion in her paper that the EFF "advocate[s] a different kind of representative politics" (Mbete, 2015: 55). This unsubstantiated point is incorrectly meant to depict the party as advancing the democratic project in the country. It is, of course, not factually correct for a number of reasons, key amongst these being that the representative politics of the EFF are not different from those of other political parties. Lastly, the EFF, as will be seen below and in the following chapters, limits rather than advance the democratic project within the party and in the country at large.

Essop's (2016) master's thesis also characterises the EFF as a populist movement without critically interrogating the party's policies which form a central aspect of the party's political identity. Her

thesis '*A study of collective subjectivity and political representation within the Economic Freedom Fighters in the North West province*', studies the politics of the EFF at a branch level. Her characterisation of the EFF, however, also overlooks the 'thin ideology' aspect of the party. This is despite the intended claim of her thesis which is to providing "a more coherent and thorough understanding and analysis of the EFF" (Essop, 2016: 9), in order to address the "theoretical shallowness" (Essop, 2016: 7) witnessed in writings on the EFF.

Using Laclau's theory on populism, Essop's (2016) characterisation of the EFF as a populist party is based on: the party being based around its leader Malema; dichotomies emphasised by the party between 'the people' and the 'elite'; the performative nature of the EFF's populism. Although she characterises the EFF as a populist, she, like Mbete (2015) above, insists on using populism not in a 'pejorative' sense (Essop, 2016). Essop's work on the EFF also mentions the nationalist aspect of the EFF's populism, although she does not discuss this substantially as this thesis has done in its Chapter 4, for instance. She writes that the "nationalist tropes and discourses of national liberation that place the anti-apartheid history at the centre are carried through in the EFF. The EFF is based within this matrix of nationalist politics that borrows from the ANC and the ANCYL" (Essop, 2016: 25). In this thesis, I advance this argument by arguing that the nationalist aspect of the EFF is linked to various, at times interlinked, traditions of black nationalism in South Africa and hence not limited only to the ANC or the ANCYL.

Essop's (2016) study is useful in many ways. For instance, her thesis reveals that some branch members of the party were unable to articulate the ideology, policies and vision of the EFF, particularly how these pertained to their lived experience. Despite this, however, these members believed that the party was the vehicle best suited to change their livelihoods if it were in power. These members were not able to articulate these probably because the party's vision, policy wise, is far from clear and this is in line with the argument advanced in this thesis of the EFF's populism as

being centred on a 'thin ideology'. Therefore, it is part of populist movements for their supporters not to know what the party exactly stands for, as the support base is meant to be attracted to the leader, slogans, and the theatrics of the party (Muller, 2019; Stanley, 2008). True to most populists the world over, these members rather explained that their membership of the EFF is down to Malema, the leader of the EFF (Essop, 2016). One of her participants explained this phenomenon best in an EFF meeting when he reportedly told the gathering that "you are only here for Julius, I am also only here for Julius" (Essop, 2016: 105). Populist parties often thrive on the popularity of their leader, rather than their conflicting policies (Canovan, 1999; Muller, 2019; Stanley, 2008). The EFF is no exception when it comes to this. The cult of a personality, of the leader, is also noticeable in the fact that the leader of the party is referred to as the 'commander in chief' while the rank and file are referred to as the 'grounded forces'. These military terms are used carefully to denote the authoritarian nature of the party, and a clear divide of those who follow and the one who leads (see Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on this matter).

Nieftagodien (2015a; 2015b), similar to Essop (2016 & 2015), views the EFF as a serious left project. In his article, 'the Economic Freedom Fighters and the politics of memory and forgetting', Nieftagodien (2015a: 446) argues that the EFF as part of the 1994 reconfigured left has sought to depict itself as the "most effective parliamentary opposition to the ruling party". Nieftagodien (2015a) argues that the support base of the EFF includes both the young black middle class and the unemployed youth. The party appeals to its constituency, he contends, because it has been able to redeploy "the symbols of the struggle for liberation" (Nieftagodien, 2015a: 447). This is as the party's message is centred on the idea that the struggle for liberation is not yet complete because the ANC has effectively betrayed the country and its people.

According to Nieftagodien (2015a: 447), the EFF's political programme is radical because it is "explicitly anticapitalist, with radical policies". This radicalness of the EFF, he asserts, also comes

from the party's 'ideological omnibus' that includes the 'unification' of "often antagonistic, political traditions of the liberation movement" (Nieftagodien, 2015a: 450; also see Mbete, 2015). He asserts that this political marriage of contradictory ideologies "cannot be dismissed as mere populist rhetoric" but should rather be seen as part of the party's ideological innovative capabilities (Nieftagodien, 2015a: 450). The EFF's 'omnibus ideology', he further states, has also freed a number of activists "from the political straight-jacket of the ANC, where they were expected to be disciplined and subservient to the official line" (Nieftagodien, 2015a: 450). Therefore, to him, the EFF "must be taken seriously as a force on the left", the first in the post-apartheid era that is challenging "the existing economic and political elites" (Nieftagodien, 2015a: 450).

While Nieftagodien(2015a; 2015b), writes glowingly, and almost uncritically, of the EFF, this thesis's overall argument is vastly different from his. For one, it argues that the silences and contradictions of the EFF's political programme mean that one cannot honestly sustain the argument that the party is 'explicitly anti-capitalist'. An honest reading of the EFF's key policies and observation of the party's body politics tells us that the party is not 'explicitly anti-capitalist', unless, of course, one grossly confuses state ownership with anti-capitalism. Rather than writing glowingly of the party's 'omnibus ideology', this thesis argues that the 'anti-capitalist' rhetoric of the party is part of its populist and deceitful strategy it uses to appeal to a large number of people. Moreover, the idea that the EFF does not expect its members to follow the official party line is, at best, based on hope rather than facts. The truth, as discussed in Chapter 5, is that the party is authoritarian to the core and as its 'ground forces' are expected to follow the instructions of the leader at all times.

While I differ with Nieftagodien (2015a; 2015b), the analysis and conclusion reached about the EFF in this thesis are similar to Booysen's (2015) book chapter. She argues that the EFF tends to depict itself as a somewhat left formation even though it is not worker oriented, nor is it seriously committing to giving workers more power once in control (also see Phandi, 2020). Therefore, in her view, it is

not entirely different from the ANC, as its idea of "radical is not 'revolutionary' in the sense of an overthrow of the prevailing political system" (Booysen, 2015: 228). Perhaps more than anything else, the EFF is more interested in replacing the ANC, rather than radically changing the prevailing elitist political system, she asserts. If anything, the EFF might perpetuate an even more extreme form of elitist politics judging by its incoherent policies and the party's authoritarian and hierarchal nature. Booysen (2015) also asserts that what essentially differentiates the two parties is the political 'style' of the EFF. She opines that (Booysen 2015: 228):

> "The EFF speaks revolution and proposes policy actions that appear to be radical nationalist, but in the end are populist and only mildly left of the ANC (examples can be found in its positions on nationalisation and black-nationalist empowerment). Its style and its appeal to people, however, are very different from the ANC's."

A large part of this 'style' is centred around the idea of 'economic freedom'. This idea of 'economic freedom', according to the party, will come into reality when its seven key policies are put into place. Booysen (2015: 229) argues that these policies "appear highly radical but have been accompanied by reassurances of moderation to business, and nationalism rather than outright radicalism". She further notes that the party's seemingly radical policies are at times "moderated" based on who the message is intended for at any particular time, hence "showing some ideological incoherence" (Booysen, 2015: 231).

The central point that Booysen (2015) makes, which is also emphasised and extended in this thesis, is that the differences between the EFF and the ANC are but minor. Furthermore, "In the final analysis, however, there are only a few aspects of EFF policy that have not at some stage or another been expressed by the ANC" (Booysen, 2015: 248). The main difference between the EFF and the

leftists within the ANC is that the one party performs populist and spectacle politics better than the other. What the EFF does is to 'package' and present these as 'radical' (Booysen, 2015).

Booysen's (2015) analysis of the EFF is very useful. However, the current thesis differs from her work in that I take the similarities between the EFF and the ANC, in the case of the policies, to a different level. I do this by closely examining each of the party's seven key policies, while she gives an overview. Furthermore, the current research, unlike hers', also provides a careful and more nuanced analysis of the party's form of nationalism and race politics. And unlike work which is grounded on the problematic non-racialist dogma, this thesis rejects this dogma as but another whiteness tool to maintain white privilege.

In a paper entitled, 'The Economic Freedom Fighters: Rethinking Du Bois in a tale of reconstruction' Phandi (2020), also argues for the EFF to be understood almost as a continuation and a part of the ANC's political history. The EFF is shaped by the ANC politics in so many ways to the point that the party's seven key policies are, she argues, a modernised and "a contemporary revision of the Freedom Charter" (Phandi, 2020: 417). She is of the view that the formation of the EFF not only meant the loss of ANC members to the EFF, but that the EFF also took one of the ANC's "foundational documents", namely the Freedom Charter, with it (Phandi, 2020: 423). According to Phandi (2020), both the old and the EFF's 'revised Freedom Charter' are silent on implementation. Nor does the EFF's revised and contemporary version of the Freedom Charter explain how it will avoid being an elitist project (Phandi, 2020). She concludes by arguing that the EFF will "not emancipate Black people from oppression" (Phandi, 2020: 417).

Phandi's (2020) contribution to the discourse on the political identity of the EFF is also very useful, particularly in drawing the links between the EFF's seven key policies, and the Freedom Charter. However, her paper also does not critically interrogate the EFF's seven key policies. Nor does she

provide us with the populist theoretical lens to help us understand the EFF's inconsistent relationship with the Freedom Charter, something which the current thesis does.

Dlakavu (2017) in her master's thesis also treats the EFF as a serious left project. She argues that the emergence of the EFF needs to be understood as a result of the post-1994 government's failure to liberate the country. The EFF, therefore, comes in to change the status quo, to do what the ANC has thus far failed to accomplish (Dlakavu, 2017). She also credits the EFF for being able to articulate the class and race political dynamic of the post-apartheid era. Her study, however, is aimed at shifting the gaze to its female leaders. In her thesis, '*Asijiki: Black women in the Economic Freedom Fighters, owning space, building a movement*', she focuses on the role that black women have played in building the party (Dlakavu, 2017). The contribution of women in the EFF, she argues, is often neglected as the attention is mostly drawn to the party's male leaders. Her study disputes the notion that women in the EFF are silently in the background, while males are building the party (Dlakavu, 2017). She, therefore, places women at the centre of the party's political dynamics, since women are not mere passengers to be driven by the males in the party.

Dlakavu (2017), who was a member of the party at the time of her thesis and was once employed by the party, opines that the EFF has failed to put gender at the centre of its 'theoretical' critique of post-1994. So much of the party's critique is on race and class, while gender is positioned on the margins of its analysis, she argues. The party's failure to put gender at the centre of its analysis "is an epistemological one because the EFF lacks a theoretical and conceptual foundation and language which guides the party's mission of dismantling patriarchy" (Dlakavu, 2017: 12). Furthermore, although the party is supposedly committed to ending patriarchy within its ranks, in her view, this commitment alone does not signify the end of patriarchy within the party. She maintains that the struggle against patriarchy requires the party to mainstream gender (Dlakavu, 2017). In her view, this

will require the party's theoretical lens, including the policy documents to shift from what she calls the "gender neutral analysis" (Dlakavu, 2017: 40) offered by the party.

A point that Dlakavu's (2017) important study neglects to mention, however, is that taking gender politics seriously must also mean that the face of the party cannot solely be that of a male figure. For instance, although the party, in paper, is supposed to have equal representation of men and women in leadership structures, the face of the party constantly remains that of a male figure; the president of the party who addresses press conferences is a male, the deputy president is a male, the influential secretary general position is occupied by a male, and the party's parliamentary Chief Whip is a male. This male face of the party is also reflected and perpetuated in who speaks for the party, the previous national spokersperson, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi is a male, and although he has symbolically been replaced by two people, a female (Delisile Ngwenya) and a male (Vuyani Pambo), it is the male (Pambo) who takes centre stage, and who issues press statements and generally liaises with the media. These faces mean that the discourse of what the EFF is is articulated by males and from a male positionality. In failing to address, what I call the face of the party, Dlakavu (2017) ultimately and perhaps unintentionally confirms rather than dispel the 'women in the background' argument.

Maggott's (2019) masters' thesis is clear that the EFF is a political party where male dominance reigns supreme, the 50/50 gender representation policy notwithstanding. According to her study, the 50/50 gender representation split does not eliminate the inherently patriarchal nature of the party and the male dominance within the branch (Maggott, 2019). She argues that females within the 50/50 split "are confined to positions perceived as less important, and thus less powerful or influential" (Maggott, 2019: 43).

Her thesis entitled, '*Contested Feminisms, Masculinism and Gender Relations in the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command: A view from the branch'*, is on gender politics, and the lived

experiences of women at a branch level (Maggott, 2019). She argues that the party's stance of being 'anti-sexist' does not translate into actions, nor does it shape the way in which women are treated and viewed within the party. Maggott (2019) argues that as a member of the party, and while doing her research she found that the party's economic freedom struggle included the erasure of women and feminist politics.

Paraphrasing Dlakavu (2017), she argues that the party is pushing for a 'gender neutral project'. One has to note, however, that both Maggott (2019) and Dlakavu (2017) are unfortunately misguided to think that there is a phenomenon such as 'gender neutral' analysis or project (see Dlakavu, 2017: 40; Maggot 2019: 40). Perhaps, as both former members of the party, they are reluctant to state the obvious fact that the 'gender neutrality' in a dominant patriarchal space means one thing, and that is the perpetuation of the normative (Mills, 1998). Either that or they both do not completely understand the feminist framework which is central in their otherwise good research.

Another issue with both studies is the romantic idea that within the party's political ideology there is "space for feminist politics" (Maggott, 2019: 19; Dlakavu, 2017). This is another argument that I think is expressed out of being sympathetic with the party because it is not supported by facts. It is not different from black people within the Democratic Alliance (DA) who somehow think that the 'race neutrality' of the DA will one day translate into an honest race analysis. Both sets of arguments are that of hope, rather than based on facts or reality.

2.3 The EFF as a danger to democracy
While some warn against characterising the EFF's populism as 'dangerous' (Mbete 2015), or 'pejorative' (Essop, 2015), Nel (2019), on the other hand, argues that the EFF's populism is a threat to the country's democracy. In her master's thesis, entitled '*The Economic Freedom Fighter's rise to power: A threat to South Africa's democratic consolidation*', she argues that the party is a threat to the country's established democratic ideal (Nel, 2019). Her argument that the party is against

democracy is based on what she calls the party's "political preferences, attitudes and behaviour" (Nel, 2019: 5). Her study is aimed at contributing to what she considers the absence of literature that examines the EFF's as a threat to the country's democratic project. One of her key arguments is that the anti-democratic nature of the EFF can be seen in the party's "intolerance to other political and minority groups" (Nel, 2019: 102; also see Carstens, 2019).

Nel's (2019) thesis uses computer software to code and analyse her data analysis, which is made up of texts produced by or about the party and speeches by leaders of the party. It needs to be noted however that Nel's analysis has a number of limitations as it fails to demonstrate a good grasp of concepts. For instance, she is unable to distinguish between various modes of socialism, nationalism, and populism. According to her, any sort of state involvement is a form of anti-democracy. Furthermore, she incorrectly states that the EFF is an "anti-state" political party (Nel, 2019: 2). The truth of the matter is that the EFF is a state centric party, hence it is not against state power. It actually wants to attain state power, so it cannot possibly be against state power. These limitations end up undermining her own argument of viewing the EFF as a danger to the country's democratic ideal.

The false idea of the EFF as a populist that hates 'minorities' is also taken up and propagated by Carstens (2019) in his master's thesis which is entitled '*The rise of populism within the Economic Freedom Fighters in South Africa: A theoretical case study of anti-establishment, economic inequalities and a cultural backlash'*. Carstens (2019) also supposedly uses the ideational approach to study the EFF's populism, which is used in the current study. However, Carstens (2019), similar to Nel (2019), fails to demonstrate a solid understanding of populism, let alone a good honest understanding of South African politics. This is reflected by the failure to read Margaret Canovan, one of the key theorists on populism and the ideational approach of populism. Canovan (1999) brilliantly explains, as demonstrated in the next chapter, that populism is not by and for itself a threat to democracy. It is a key reading for anyone who wants to talk about populism as it pertains to the

question of democracy. Furthermore, Carstens' (2019) thesis makes wild arguments such as that the EFF has electoral "strongholds" (2019: 61); that the supporters of the EFF "are generally less educated" (2019: 128); that the culture of white people "is not included in the conception of a South African identity" (2019: 128). According to Carstens (2019), whites are the victims of racism in the post-apartheid era. His study is rather thin on theory, even though it purports to be 'theoretical'. According to his thesis, the EFF 'strongholds' are wards where the EFF got over 40% of electoral support. It is bizarre to speak of 'EFF strongholds' because the party has not won a single council, nor governs any municipality or city. And it makes no sense to speak of ward 'strongholds' when the party in question has only participated in one municipal election. The notion that the supporters of the EFF are 'generally less educated' is a fantasy as it is not informed by reality or facts. The EFF is highly popular in institutions of higher learning, as demonstrated by the support its branches receives in these institutions and it is also popular amongst some educated black middle class (see Maggott, 2019; Nieftadodien, 2015a), therefore one cannot honestly sustain the idea that the party's supporters are not educated.

The idea that the EFF poses a danger to the country's democracy has some validity to it, and it is an issue that has been pointed out by a number of media commentators, as discussed in Chapter 5. It is also an issue that is addressed by Roberts (2019) in his book chapter entitled 'EFF Authoritarian or democratic contestant'. Roberts (2019) states that the aim of his chapter is aimed at knowing whether the party's populist stance can be regarded as a threat to the established liberal democracy or not. In the end, he concludes that the party is "characterised by a complex and often contradictory hybrid of populist, authoritarian and democratic tendencies", and hence a danger to the country's liberal democracy (Roberts, 2019: 111). He notes that this 'contradictory hybrid' tendency can also be seen in the party's use of conventional and unconventional means of holding the ANC government accountable (also see Booysen, 2015). On the one hand, they use parliamentary rules and the courts, while, on the other, they use force and theatrics as means to get their way. Furthermore, the party's

populism includes operating "in borderline spaces between legal and illegal" (Booysen, 2015: 223). Roberts concludes that although "For now, the EFF remains the only party of note to the ideological left of the ANC", the party is a "grave concern" to the country's young democracy" (Roberts, 2019: 112).

Roberts' (2019: 97) chapter is also one of the few academic writings that attempt to analyse an election manifesto of the EFF, particularly the "book-length" 2019 national election manifesto. He states that the 'book-length' manifesto is "highly detailed" (Roberts, 2019: 103). He, however, does not explain what he means by 'highly detailed', or highly detailed in comparison to what. As discussed later in the thesis, all the key documents of the EFF, including its 2019 'book length' manifesto, are thin on details. Roberts (2019) argues that the manifesto is largely based on two issues, 'land and jobs', but does not interrogate or analyse what the manifesto says about these beyond them being key themes of the manifesto. What he does do, however, is to list the demands that the manifesto makes. While Robert's (2019) chapter provides but an uncritical summary report of the manifesto, this thesis provides a critical extensive overview of what the EFF supposedly stands for, and in doing so highlights the party's inconsistencies, contradictions and lack of details.

Calland & Seedat (2015), in their article 'Institutional renaissance or populist fandango? The impact of the Economic Freedom Fighters on South Africa's parliament', look at the question of whether the EFF enhances or threatens democracy by analysing the party's impact in parliament. Although the party's theatrics have brought 'new energy' to parliament, it is debatable whether this 'new energy' has made parliament to be more effective than before, they note (Calland & Seedat, 2015). It remains debatable because, in its efforts to hold the ANC government accountable, the EFF ends up disrupting the processes of parliament. They write that the EFF which got into parliament through a "militant populist ticket" (Calland & Seedat, 2015: 305) began its "high drama and pandemonium" (2015: 312) in parliament, in 2014, during Question Time when the party felt that Jacob Zuma gave an 'evasive'

response to a question over the Public Protector's report. What was of concern in this 'high drama' was the fact that a parliamentary session and parliament "in general was "rendered dysfunctional by a minority political party… that saw fit to disrupt it" (Calland & Seedat, 2015: 314).

The EFF was again central in disrupting parliament during the State of the Nation Address in 2015, which is described as "the most dramatic opening of parliament in the country's history" (Calland & Seedat, 2015: 324). In disrupting this session, the EFF was again not only supposedly holding the executive to account, but also was infringing on "the constitutional right of other MPs" (Calland & Seedat, 2015: 324). They, therefore, argue that the EFF's theatrical efforts to hold the ANC government to account are not helpful as these also end up violating the democratic rights of other members of parliament that belong to various political parties.

Calland's & Seedat's (2015) analysis is limited to the actions of the EFF in parliament, while this thesis goes beyond parliament's 'high drama'. Unlike their analysis, this thesis also examines the theatrics of the EFF outside parliament, thereby criticises the party's fickle relationship with democracy both inside and outside the party.

Satgar (2019) in his article 'Black neofascism? The Economic Freedom Fighters in South Africa' takes the argument of the EFF being a threat to the country's democracy further than the literature discussed above. As the title of his journal article reveals, Satgar (2019) argues that the EFF is a fascist party. Rather than a left opposition party to the ANC, the EFF, he argues, is a 'right wing' political formation that is threatening "the post-apartheid democracy and nation building" (Satgar, 2019: 581).

The fascism of the EFF, he contends, is 'complex' and different from the fascism that the world witnessed during the 20th century in Europe (Satgar, 2019). The party's fascism, according to Satgar

needs to be understood on its own, by looking at the EFF's politics and its ideology. However, one waits in vain for Satgar (2019) to explain what, then, makes the EFF fascist if it cannot be compared to 20th century fascism or other fascists in general. Satgar's (2019) haste to categorise the EFF as a 'black neofascist' is also weakened by the fact that he associates fascism with the desire for state power. He writes that (Satgar, 2019: 589):

> "My definitional approach to fascism, which is not a definition of fascism, is simply this: *it is a tendency within the monopoly and contemporary transnational techno-financial stages of capitalism, enabled by particular conditions of crisis and takes on an organized form as part of the struggle to achieve a monopoly on state power*" (emphasis in original).

According to Satgar (2019: 592), the EFF's neofascist project is grounded on attaining state power with "class and capitalist affinities, race hatred, hyper masculinity, nativist nationalism and revenge; violence and constitutional democracy". According to him, the EFF breeds race hatred in the country, through its hate for whites and Indians. This hatred is apparently noticeable in the party's "crude politics of revenge" whereby "Whites must pay for the oppression and supremacy that the African majority endured" (Satgar, 2019: 599).

Satgar's (2019) characterisation of the EFF as a 'fascist' political party based on 'race hatred' is, it needs to be noted, misleading. The EFF's stance on many issues can and must be critiqued, but a misdiagnosis of the party's stance or political identity such as Satgar's (2019) does not help us much. More so when the party's rhetoric on race or its on-and-off critique of the notion of non-racialism is reduced to 'racial hatred' and 'revenge'. In its rejection of non-racialism, the EFF broaches race dynamics that the non-racial dogma avoids, such as the racial hierarchies within blacks, coloureds and Indians in South Africa. Satgar's (2019) argument of 'race hatred' and 'revenge' cannot be legitimately and honestly sustained, hence he resorts to come up with a fundamentally flawed

conceptualisation of 'black fascism'. As I demonstrate in this thesis, one does not have to resort to labelling the EFF a 'black fascist' party to highlight its dishonesty or its relationship with democracy.

Satgar (2019) also problematises the idea of the EFF as a vanguard of the working class because he notes the party "does not have deep roots in the organized working class" (2019: 593), nor do the leaders of the party emerge "from the ranks of the working class" (2019: 594). The party, in his view, is aligned to the "newly educated and professional middle class" (Satgar, 2019: 593). He attempts to support this argument by adding that the leadership of the EFF is mostly formally educated, and this apparently makes them not vanguards of the working class.

Satgar's (2019) argument, again, cannot be honestly sustained. To begin with, his 'definitional approach… which is not a definition' is unhelpful because, apart from it being utterly useless and vague, to say the least, it associates the desire for state power with fascism. With this sort of definition, then all the political parties in the country are fascists. Secondly rejecting the claim that the EFF is a left formation based on education is seriously flawed. Imagine Satgar being told that he cannot call himself a leftist because he is a male privileged professor who works in a relatively well off university. Therefore, in this thesis, the EFF's relationship with truth and democracy is discussed and criticised without reducing the party's political identity to a fantasy of 'black fascism'. I, therefore, advance the argument that it is more useful to understand the EFF as populist, rather than some kind of a fascist movement. As Satgar's (2019) paper shows the concept of fascism confuses even the ones who label their political opponents fascists. Furthermore, local and international literature on populism, rather than fascism, provides us with more intellectual tools to study the EFF, as illustrated in the next chapter. The concept of populism, therefore, is far more helpful in our analysis, and in helping us understand the EFF's political identity.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the available academic literature on the EFF. As can been above there is not a lot of academic literature on the party. The handful of literature that is available can be broken down into two, namely the idea of the EFF as advancing the country's democratic project, and as a party that is a threat to the country's democracy. The lines between these, as explained earlier, are not clear cut. Furthermore, apart from these two, there is also literature that does not easily fall into either category. The chapter began by critically reviewing works that, overall, view the EFF as advancing the democratic project of the country, and ended with the literature that argues that the EFF is a fascist and racist party that is detrimental to the country's democratic project. And in between these extreme positions, I also reviewed works that examined what the EFF represents outside these two positions. The chapter, in essence, provided an overview of how the EFF's political identity has been characterised.

Chapter 3: Populism as a thin ideology

3.1 Introduction

Although many have, as seen in the previous chapter, studied the EFF from a populist theoretical framework and have gone to argue that the party is indeed populist, no study to the best of my knowledge has done it in the manner and extent in which it is done in this thesis. Importantly, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, none of these studies has done it from a comprehensive theoretical perspective that views populism as, and hence the EFF, a 'thin ideology'. The one study that studies the EFF through an ideational approach to populism is not comprehensive and, as noted, it has a series of limitations and theoretical problems.

In this chapter, I explain the usefulness of studying the EFF as a populist political formation premised on a 'thin ideology'. As previously argued, the approach adopted here enables us to see the EFF's populism as incorporating a number of different and sometimes contrasting ideologies. The approach helps us to understand why the party can have more than one viewpoint, often contradictory points, on any single matter. Furthermore, this approach helps us understand that rather than a political principle, the party's viewpoint depends on the 'mood' of the leader, the audience at any particular time, and political interests at the time. This chapter, therefore, helps us understand that the EFF is naturally and inherently a populist political formation, and for that reason, the lack of a clear-cut and coherent political programme make it possible for the party to be everything and anything all at once. The chapter begins with a conceptualisation of populism, and of how populism is understood and used in this thesis. Read as a whole, the sections that make up this chapter help us understand what makes the EFF's political identity and ideology, first and foremost, populist.

3.2 Conceptualising populism

There is little doubt that populism, as a concept, has been one of the "main political buzzwords of the 21st century" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 1). Hence some have characterised the current era as a 'populist moment' (Brubaker, 2017; Mouffe, 2018) and or as 'the populist zeitgeist' (Mudde, 2004). According to Moffitt (2016: 1), "We are living in populist times". It is against this backdrop that the Cambridge dictionary went on to declare populism as the word of the year in 2017 (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2018).

The fact that the word populism is a 'political buzzword' or was the word of the year, however, does not mean that there is less confusion about the meaning of populism (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2018). Taggart (2002: 66) correctly argues that the "holy grail of a definition of populism is elusive". As far back as 1977, theorists such as Laclau (1977) pointed out that populism, despite being widely used, is hardly ever defined or conceptualised. According to Stavrakakis & Katsambekis (2014: 121), "In most available accounts, both journalistic and academic, the label 'populist' is applied in a manner that takes its meaning for granted and fails to provide any concrete and/or persuasive justification for its use". This, as a result, means that populism continues not only to be a 'contested concept' (see Weyland, 2001; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 2), but one that is also "poorly defined" even in the contemporary era (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2018: 1668). This misuse can be seen in how populism is often used solely in a pejorative sense to demonise certain individuals, and political opponents (Canovan, 2004; Mouffe, 2018; Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). Mouffe (2018: 10) points out that populism is often a word used to "disqualify all those who oppose the status quo". In other words, it has come to be used to characterize political opponents as 'extreme right wing' and an 'evil force' that is said to be a serious danger to the democratic project and our shared humanity (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). It is, of course, a fallacy, as illustrated below, to think that populism is inherently anti-democratic (Canovan, 2002; Mény and Surel, 2002; Mouffe, 2018; Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014).

According to *The Oxford Handbook of Populism,* there are at least three 'conceptual approaches' to studying and understanding populism, namely; the political strategy approach (Weyland, 2017), the sociocultural approach (Ostiguy, 2017), and the ideational approach (Mudde, 2017). The political-strategy approach places emphasis on the strategy used by the leader and the powerful to continue staying in power (Weyland, 2001 & 2017). Weyland (2001 & 2017) argues that populism plays out when political leaders who want to continue to be in power, resort to populism as a tool to get mass support. In other words, populism, according to this approach, is a political strategy used by those at the top to consolidate their position and power through mass support. It is, according to Weyland (2001 & 2017), a strategy that is centred on a particular leader. The leader, in turn, claims to lead in the name of the people. Therefore, Weyland (2017) argues that it is more useful to understand and define populism as a personalistic affair between the leader and the people. It is important to understand that in this relationship the leader enjoys more power over the people, rather than it being the other way around, despite the rhetoric from the leader that seeks to suggest otherwise. It is the leader, rather than the people, who commands. The leader uses this affair with the people as a means to avoid the use of institutions and more formal channels due to the notion that formal channels serve the interests of the elite rather than the people. In other words, populists avoid strengthening the institutions because more than being guided by unclear ideological programmes, they "govern as they see fit, depending on their own tactical considerations, sudden ideas, and even whims" (Weyland, 2017: 61). He, therefore, argues that "populism is best defined as a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers" (Weyland, 2001: 14). Furthermore, according to Weyland (2017) populists like announcing grand new initiatives, without necessarily following through on these. These grand initiatives are announced as part of the strategy to get more support for the leader.

The socio-cultural approach, on the other hand, highlights populism as a political style, as an act, and as a performance (Ostiguy, 2017). It does this by focusing on the behavior, the dress code, and the mannerism displayed by certain political figures in the public sphere. Through this approach, we learn that populism is and can operate as a performance (also see Moffitt, 2016). Populist figures perform populism in the public sphere using, amongst others, body language, speaking in a certain way, a certain dress code and the use of certain manners. According to Ostiguy (2017), the performance is meant to be both provocative and to shock, through the use of manners and behavior that is supposedly at odds with what is ordinarily accepted. The populist performance is intentionally part of the public relations exercise to firstly depict the populists as part of the ordinary people, rather than the established elite and secondly to attract media and people's attraction. According to Ostiguy (2017) populists relish and flourish in depicting themselves as the total opposite of any sort of behavior or mannerism that is often associated with the establishment. In fact, the approach defines populism as a performance based style of politics of transgressing the perceived status quo. Hence, the EFF wears bright red domestic worker uniforms and red factory worker overalls in parliament and legislature because, as Malema said, "we are not white, we are going to wear those uniforms … we are defying colonialist decorum" (Pillay, 2014a). Those who theorise populism as an approach, however, are careful to point out that the behavior and the performance of the populists "is *not* synonymous with poor people or lower social strata" (emphasis in original Ostiguy, 2017: 79). It is not synonymous because, in most cases, the populist actors themselves are often relatively privileged rather than poor, for example, the EFF leaders who are in working class clothes in parliament earn decent salaries as members of parliament. Furthermore, although they are supposedly against the elite, the audience they seek to appeal to is not only the poor and the downtrodden. Rather their behavior is intended to be provocative and it is intended to depict them not as members of the status quo or as people who subscribe to what is seen as some form of elitism. We see this desire of being provocative, for instance, with the EFF in the notion of associating suits, which Malema and other EFF leaders often wear in public but not in parliament, with being white.

Of interest to this particular research project is the ideational approach. I find it more useful because, from the approaches mentioned above, it is the approach that encompasses and factors in all the focus areas of the other approaches while viewing populism as "a set of ideas" (Mudde, 2017: 2; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2018: 1669; Stanley, 2008). The ideational approach is more equipped in this particular study because the thesis is not limited to studying solely the leader of the EFF, nor only the theatrics and populist performances of the EFF. Furthermore, as seen in the previous chapter, most academic studies of the EFF almost exclusively highlight the party's theatrics and political style while almost neglecting the 'thinness' of its ideology. The uniqueness of this thesis is, amongst other things, on its conceptualisation of populism. That is, in conceptualising populism as a 'thin ideology' or as a 'thin centred ideology' (Mudde, 2017: 2; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2018: 1669; Stanley, 2008). As a thin ideology, populism plays into and emphasises an antagonistic relationship between two sets of groups who fall either under 'the people' or 'the elite' in any given society (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2017; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2018; Stanley, 2008). Moreover, with this approach rather than seeing it only as a threat to democracy, it views populism as having an ambivalent relationship with democracy (Canovan, 1999). This ambivalence is also partly due to the 'chameleon-like' tendencies of populism (Mudde, 2017; Albertazzi, 2006). These chameleon-like-tendencies, it will soon be clear, do not only relate to the populists' relationship with democracy as they are a central and inherent feature of populism. In other words, the chameleon-like tendencies of populists do not only pertain to democracy, but other things as well, including the political identity that populist formations want to be associated with or the ideology that they often claim to represent, and their political stand on matters. Later in the thesis, we will see how these chameleon-like tendencies are inherent within the EFF.

It is important to note that while the three approaches discussed in this section have different emphases, they are not mutually exclusive. The ideational approach that is adopted in this particular

study is strengthened by the fact its theoretical lens is more holistic than the other two approaches. In other words, in its highlighting the ideological aspect of populism it does not neglect the praxis (performance), nor the importance of the leader (Mudde, 2017). The ideational approach is of use in this thesis because the populism of the EFF is not limited to the mannerism or the theatrics of the party. The argument of this thesis is that to understand the political identity of the EFF we also have to critically study the ideology or ideologies that it either claims to represent or that is or are in play at various times within the party's body politic. The ideational approach also helps us understand and theorise the populist performance through linking it to the ideology that the populist formation wants to highlight at the time of the performance. For instance, later it will be argued that the EFF often uses protests (performance) as another means of articulating its black nationalist ideology. Furthermore, although these different approaches reflect the contested nature of populism as a concept, it is important to note that they also overlap and interlink in many ways (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017 & 2018; Ostiguy, 2017). Ostiguy (2017: 90) explains these overlaps as part of shared "family resemblance among the many conceptualisation of populism".

3.3 Populism as a thin ideology

The concept of 'thin' ideologies or 'thin centred ideologies' was first introduced by Freeden (1998). He used it in his study and analysis of nationalism (Freeden, 1998). Scholars such as Mudde (2004), Stanley (2008) and Mudde & Kaltwasser (2017) have expanded the concept to the study of populism. According to Freeden (1998: 750) thin ideologies "are limited in ideational ambition and scope" and have limited and minimal political programmes. They are considered thin because they are not comprehensive enough to have a coherent vision. In other words, thin ideologies such as populism, on their own, have no clear and coherent end goal. Freeden (1998: 751) contends that the 'conceptual structure' of thin ideologies "is incapable of providing on its own solutions to questions of social justice, distribution of resources, and conflict-management which mainstream ideologies address".

They have solutions to these questions only by attaching themselves to 'host ideologies' (Freeden, 1998: 759).

Building on Freeden's (1998) conception of 'thin' ideologies, Mudde (2004) and Stanley (2008) argue that populism is a 'thin ideology' because of its limited scope and lack of comprehensive programmes (also see Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). Stanley (2008) argues that the thinness of populism as an ideology means that it comes to life only when it attaches itself to or 'cohabits' with other ideologies. This means that while populism is unique and distinct it is not a fully fledged ideology (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2017; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Stanley, 2008). In other words, it does not have the intellectual tools and concepts of other ideologies such as Marxism, for example. For instance, while there are 'sacred' texts on liberalism and Marxism, there are no "sacred texts upon which populist disciples can draw inspiration, no universally revered populist icons" (Aslandis, 2016: 89). Furthermore, unlike full ideologies such as marxism, populism means that populists internationally and locally are only united by a populist template rather than a goal. Stanley (2008: 95) argues that the thinness of populism can also be seen in the fact that most populist political formations do not have a "coherent programme for the solution to crucial political questions". Populism, on its own, has no comprehensive political programmes, and is largely "limited in scope" (Taggart 2002: 62). Populism, rather, tends to borrow and combine a number of contradictory ideologies all at once (Mudde, 2004; Mudde, 2017; Stanley, 2008). Therefore, populism is malleable and different across time and space. This can also be noticed by the fact that we have populists who are associated with different kinds of politics, and who might champion rightwing politics, while others might base their populism on left wing politics (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017)

The fact that populism is based on borrowing from different ideologies makes populists "highly chameleonic" in nature and character (Taggart, 2004: 274). As a result, they often adopt two opposite

views on a single issue depending on the time of day and the audience they seek to appeal to at any particular time. Mény & Surel (2002: 17) write that populist parties can be in support of or against an issue or someone based on "the changing mood of its leader". According to Albertazzi (2006: 133), the "chameleon-like tendency" of populists is also noticeable in the fact that they "borrow keywords and ideas from both sides of the political divide". As Mudde & Kaltwasser (2017: 8) argue, "the thin— centered nature of populism allows it to be malleable enough to adopt distinctive shapes at different times and places". The shift and change from one set of ideologies or stances on any issue can happen "at an amazing speed" (Albertazzi, 2006: 136). It is through understanding populism as a thin centered ideology that we are able to understand its malleability (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 8).

While the scholarship above correctly conceptualises populism as a thin ideology, Schroeder (2020) offers a different viewpoint. He argues that it is a mistake to conceptualise populism as a thin ideology. Populism rather, he contends, should be understood as a 'thick' ideology that is able to stand on its own without necessarily 'piggybacking' on other ideologies (Schroeder, 2020). He therefore rejects the view that populism is a thin ideology with no coherent and comprehensive political programme of its own (Schroeder, 2020). He maintains that viewing populism as a thin ideology is to mistakenly "imply that populism is a transient, minor or weak phenomenon on its own" (Schroeder, 2020: 16). He further argues that populism ought to be underststood as a fusion of right and left ideologies thereby creating a full or thick ideology.

Schroeder's argument of populism as a thick argument, howecer, is not convincing and runs into several theoretical dead-ends. For instance, while arguing that populism has a coherent and comprehensive political programme, he also points out that populism borrows from either or both right and left ideologies thereby making populism a fusion of these. In Schroeder's (2020) view, this fusion makes populism a thick ideology that is able to offer political programmes of its own. As seen

above, the idea that populism borrows from one or several ideologies at once has been advanced by scholars who argue that populism is a thin ideology. Furthermore, in talking about about "fusion" of ideologies (see Schroeder, 2020: 23), and "different left and right-wing versions of populism" (Schroeder, 2020: 14), Schroeder all but dismisses his own argument while confirming the arguments raised by scholars who view populism as a thin ideology that is unable to stand on its own.

The central argument of this thesis is that the discussion above aptly defines the political identity and character of the EFF. It argues that the populist ideology of the EFF finds expression through other thin and full ideologies, such as black nationalism which is discussed in the following chapter. Similar to populists across time and space, the EFF is able to use multiple and conflicting streams of black nationalism at any given time. The party's ideological contradictions are not only limited to its multiple expressions of black nationalism, but the entire body politic of the party. In fact, one of the arguments made in this thesis is that the party is the embodiment of contradictions. The thesis will argue, for instance, that the party defines and identifies itself differently on different days and to different audiences. Furthermore, while on one hand, it proclaims itself as a state centric party, it identifies as a workers' party on the other; or while talking about being led by the people it prioritizes centralization and strict top-down decision making; or while self describing itself as a party that prioritises the interests of black people, it is able to support a party that its leader Malema has called "a party of white racists" (Baker, 2016; Onishi, 2016). Furthermore, the idea of 'thinness' is also reflected in the largely incoherent political programme that is meant to bring about the economic freedom that the party prides itself with. The thesis argues that the party's political programme, similar to other populists across the world, is contradictory and is thin on details. The party clouds its lack of shortcomings with radical sounding slogans. In this regard, it is not far from the sort of politician that Fanon (2001) warned about in the post-colony. The kind of politician who uses "slogans" merely as a way of mobilizing people and getting more votes (Fanon 2001: 151).

3.4 The great Manichean divide

As stated above, populism is premised on the idea of a hostile relationship between 'the people' and 'the elite' (Mudde, 2017; Mouffe, 2018). The difference between these two groups, however, is not a clear-cut one, and often depends on the host ideology adopted by the populist party, as further discussed below. What is worth noting here though is that populists do not necessarily create these two groups, rather they amplify the already existing differences between them (Tas, 2020). Populists amplify these differences between groups by exploiting the modern idea of peoplehood, and also through a moral appeal to this peoplehood (Tas, 2020). Modern peoplehood refers to "an inclusionary and involuntary group identity with a putatively shared history and way of life" (Lie, 2004: 1). Inclusionary in the sense that members of the group, despite different social status, and gender differences are still considered as part of the group. And it is involuntary because members of the group, rather than choose, are born into the group. Peoplehood is a group identity that is often based on a shared history, common language, and similar cultural beliefs. According to Lie (2004: 1), the three 'major categories' of peoplehood are "race, ethnicity and nation". Modern peoplehood transcends boundaries of kinship, while at the same time it does not encompass the entire population. Peoplehood is institutionalised and is sustained by and through "institutions… law or culture and custom" (Lie, 2004: 14). The modern state played a "crucial" role "in forging and disseminating peoplehood identity" (Lie, 2004: 99; also see Mamdani, 2001). In colonial Africa, the 'forging' of peoplehood by the modern state was "legally enforced" through colonialism (Mamdani, 2012: 22). This enforcement led to black people, as a result of their shared history of being an oppressed group, forging an identity of peoplehood. The black South Africa's concept of peoplehood, as a result, is vastly different from that of whites or any other social group in the country because of the history, and the collective positioning of blacks in the country. White South Africans and other social groups also have their own idea of peoplehood. Therefore, populists tend to amplify, rather than create, this notion of peoplehood. We will see that with regards to the EFF, the idea of the people is based on modern peoplehood. The people that the EFF seeks to be seen to be speaking of and representing are black people for historical and contemporary reasons.

Secondly, populists distinguish between 'the people' and 'the elite' on moral basis (Hameleers & Schmuck, 2017; Mudde, 2017; Tas, 2020). The distinction is constructed so as to depict the difference between the two groups as being based on good versus evil (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Tas, 2020). According to Tas (2020: 4), the elite is depicted as the embodiment of evil, with 'souls' that are ingrained in evil and the elite are said to be inherently wicked. The moral aspect also "provides them flexibility that is particularly important when populists acquire political power", as further discussed below (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 14). Hameleers & Schmuck (2017: 33) contend that "The essence of populism revolves around the moral and causal divide between ordinary citizens as 'good' in-group and horizontally and vertically defined others as 'evil' and culprit out-groups" (Hameleers & Schmuck, 2017: 1426). This is another divide that is noticeable in how the EFF differentiates the people and the elite. The EFF rather than having to invent this divide simply employs history and the current lived experiences of many black people, the people, who have been and continue to be at the receiving end of institutionalized racism. In a country where black people have, for years, been oppressed based on their race, it is not hard for populists to emphasise the moral distinction between 'the people' and the 'elite'. The EFF, indeed, does this rather well as discussed in this thesis. The EFF does this so well, that the notion of an 'evil culprit' is not always the racist and white elite, but the ruling party as well. A case in point is, again, in 2016 when the EFF declared that the white oriented DA was a 'better devil' than the black oriented ANC. Explaining the decision to side with the lesser devil, Malema went on to argue that "We are caught between the two devils and had to choose a better devil" (Makhafola, 2016). The 'better devil' in this case was the party associated with racism. If the EFF was not a populist party it would be extremely strange for a black nationalist party to side with a white oriented party, but due to the manner in which populism is conceptualized in this thesis, the alignment of the EFF and the DA is part of the inherent populist identity of the EFF.

3.4.1 The people as a nation

The concept of 'the people' is an ambiguous one, so much that "those who use it" might not even "notice when they slip from one sense to another" (Canovan, 2004: 247). The concept, for instance, is simultaneously used to refer to ordinary people, the nation, the marginalised groups within the nation, and these, in turn, are also ambiguous. According to Taggart (2004: 274), the notion of 'the people' in a populist framework reflects "'heartland' that represents an idealised conception of the community". Unlike class, gender or race, 'the people' refers to an 'imagined' rather than a clear community (Taggart, 2004; Mudde, 2017). "The term heartland", contends Taggart (2004: 274), "is used because heartlands are something that is felt rather than reasoned, and something that is shrouded in imprecision". Although he does not reference him, Taggart's (2004) conceptualisation of 'the people' as a heartland seems to be influenced by Anderson's (2006 [1983]) study of nationalism which is discussed below.

The notion of a heartland, however, is still too broad. Hence it is better and more helpful to understand 'the people' by first identifying the host ideology of any populist party. It is the host ideology that gives the face of the 'people'. As a result, for Marxist oriented populists, 'the people' can be defined along class and or worker lines, while for nationalist oriented populists, 'the people' are the nation or race against a perceived enemy (Mudde, 2017; Canovan, 1999). In other words, the concept of 'the people' depends on the host ideology that a populist party has adopted. Hence, since the EFF's prime host ideology is nationalism, 'the people' in its frame are actually a black nation rather than the workers, for instance. As discussed above, the idea of a nation is one of the categories of peoplehood (Lie, 2004). According to Anderson (2006: 6), a nation is an imagined political community:

> imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.

The notion of a nation is a modern idea, it emerges out of the enlightenment, and as a political idea, it was instrumental in destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm (Anderson, 2006; Lie, 2004). In other words, the idea of a nation is based on the political notion of the community of citizens of a state, living under the same government, and share common traditions and aspirations, and united by a shared sense of history and political values and norms (Hobsbawm, 2012). According to McClintock (1995), nations are elaborate social practices enacted through time, through nation-building, or through a process of nationalism. McClintock (1995: 104) argues that "Nationalism both invents and performs social difference, enacting it ritualistically in Olympic extravaganzas, mass rallies and military displays, flag waving and costumery, and becoming thereby constitutive of people's identities" (McClintock, 1995: 104).

One of the defining themes of nationalism is that it is a gendered discourses (McClintock, 1995). Thus male political figures are often viewed as founding fathers of a nation. In every nation state, women have been traditionally cast as the '"bearers of the nation, 'its boundary and symbolic limit, but lack a nationality of their own" (McClintock 1995: 105). Male nationalists have historically condemned feminism as divisive, and have thus encouraged women to "hold their tongues until after the revolution is over" (McClintock 1995: 121). Indeed, the EFF is not far off from this male nationalist sentiment. The politics of the EFF and its conflicted ideologies are written from a male centric perspective. Many observers have argued that the party is not only authoritarian but sexist as well. Its sexism is often noticeable, some have argued, in the fact that the EFF often attacks female journalists more than it does male ones (Boswell, 2020; McKaiser, 2019; NewFrame, 2020).

So sexist is the party that its former spokesperson, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, assuming the role of being the arch propagandist, defended a group of EFF men who harassed Nobesuthu Hejana, a female journalist. By way of defending the sexist and undemocratic behavior of his party, Ndlozi took it upon

himself to invent a new definition of what constitutes harassment by a group of men on a woman. Ndlozi, in an Owerlian fashion, stated on twitter that "touching her is not harassment. The touch has to be violent, invasive or harmful to become harassment" (Boswell, 2020). Female members of the EFF, including and particularly the high profile members who sometimes pose as black feminists, such as Leigh Mathys and Naledi Chirwa, were in full support of Ndlozi's new male centric definition of harassment. The party's in-house feminists were in agreement that what happened to Hejane was an innocent "touch" by a group of men, rather than harassment. Hassim (2016) convincingly argues that one cannot realistically expect the EFF not to be sexist because its leader was once "taken to the Equality Court for his comments on women and sexual consent". The court found that Malema's words gave the impression "that men need not obtain explicit consent from women" (Sonke Gender Justice Network v Malema, 2010: 13). Therefore, Ndlozi's 2020 definition of harassment, which was fully supported by the party's in-house self-proclaimed feminists, was, in actual fact, a rehash of what Malema was found guilty of in 2010. Therefore, what Malema was found guilty of while leading the ANCYL is equally at home within the EFF.

The point being made here is that the EFF's conception of what it calls economic freedom does not move us beyond the old nationalist sentiment whereby women are expected to hold their 'tongues until after the revolution is over'. In other words, the EFF's politics represent "a repository of male hopes, male aspirations, and male privilege" (McClintock, 1995: 122).

3.4.2 The elite as the wicked enemy

The other key concept of populism is 'the elite' which is the antithesis of 'the people'. According to Mudde & Kaltwasser (2017: 12), "First and foremost, the elite are defined on the basis of power, i.e., they include most people who hold leading positions within politics, the economy, the media, and the arts". The elite that the populists are supposedly fighting against, in other words, is institutionalised through political institutions, economic institutions, judiciary and other institutions such as the media.

Populists argue that these institutions, collectively and individually only benefit and serve the interests of the elite, at the expense of the people (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). Canovan (1999: 3) argues that populists see these institutions as part of the "established structure of power" that serves the elite at the expense of 'the people'. Consequently, such institutions are depicted as the enemy of 'the people' and therefore constitute 'the elite' in the populist framework.

The Manichean divide between the people and the elite is, as discussed above, constructed along moral lines (Mudde, 2017; Tas, 2020). This moral line, together with modern peoplehood enables populist parties to continue to articulate a message and narrative of an antagonistic relationship between those identified as the people and those identified as the elite (Tas, 2020). The populist party, when in government, maintains its thin ideology through a careful process of "partly redefining the elite" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 12), or of "manufacturing new enemies" (Tas, 2020: 3). In this process, populists maintain "that the *real* power does not lie with the democratically elected leaders, i.e., the populists, but with some shadowy forces that continue to hold on to illegitimate powers to undermine the voice of the people" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 12). These 'shadowy forces' are said to be both national and international elites who are colluding against the sovereignty of 'the people' (Tas, 2020). Populist leaders often attribute the failure to deliver on their promises to these 'shadowy forces' and argue that the power lies not in government but with those with economic power (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). The process of redefining the elite also includes a narrative that purports that certain institutions such as the judiciary, private businesses, media, cultural institutions are colluding with the 'shadowy forces' against 'the people'. This often means that most of those who are seen as being critical of the populist party get to be characterised as part of 'the elite'. The EFF, similar to other populists across the world, also often attacks certain democratic institutions as enemies of the people. They have attacked the judges and the courts, the electoral body, the media, amongst others as institutions of the elite against the people. This is an issue that is further discussed at length in Chapter 5.

As with 'the people', the hosting ideology plays a role in who gets to be identified and defined as 'the elite' (Mudde, 2017). Populist parties whose host ideology is nationalism, thus, tend to identify 'the elite' along national and racial lines. Consequently, the EFF's conceptualization of the elite is largely white and their supposed collaborators. As seen in the next chapter, nationalism in South Africa has historically advanced the argument that oppression in the country is primarily racial, hence the struggle for freedom was against the white supremacist system which is discussed in the following section. The EFF situates itself within this framework and depicts itself as a continuation of the struggle against the white enemy. It situates itself within this history by arguing that the ruling ANC has sold out and is now collaborating with the wicked enemy against the people.

3.5. Populism and the two faces of democracy

Populism is usually written off as a threat against democracy (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). There are, of course, legitimate grounds for seeing populism as a danger to democracy and humanity in general because some of the world's tyrants have risen to power on the populist ticket (Canovan, 1999). The skepticism against populism, however, does not mean that populism per se is inherently anti-democratic (Mény & Surel, 2002; Canovan, 1999). In fact, it is the paradoxical nature of democracy that gives birth to populism (Canovan, 1999; Canovan, 2002). This birth is a result of the failure to reconcile the idea and practice of democracy, both of which constitute the 'heart of democracy' (Canovan, 2002). The idea and practice of democracy, although interdependent of each other, are often in conflict with one another. South Africa, for instance, is often regarded as having one of the best constitutions (the idea of democracy) in the world (Calland, 2017), yet at the same time, it is also regarded as one of the most unequal countries in the world (Oxfam-SA, 2020). Furthermore, although the South African constitution states that every citizen has a right to housing, water, education and so forth (see SA Constitution, 1996), in practice, however, not every citizen has access to these. To top it all off, as discussed below, whites continue to systematically benefit from

white privilege even in the post-apartheid era that the majority of black people in the country do not benefit from. Therefore, South Africa is one of the countries where there is tension between the idea and the practice of democracy.

It is helpful to understand this tension through what Canovan (1999) refers to as the 'two faces of democracy', namely the pragmatic face (the practice) and the redemptive face (the idea) of democracy. She describes the pragmatic face of democracy as the institutional aspect of democracy, the systematic processes that are meant to perform democracy (Canovan, 1999). These are meant to foster the peaceful coexistence of different people who might from time to time have conflicting interests, such as different political parties, or different groups of people with totally opposing viewpoints. State institutions exist so as to manage these conflicting interests through forms of rules such as what it is acceptable behaviour, and what governance entails. State institutions such as the courts, or justice system are part of these pragmatic face of democracy. Furthermore, the pragmatic face of democracy also helps to guide and limit the manner in which power and authority are used in the society through established norms. In other words, the pragmatic face of democracy refers to the institutions that are meant to bring the promises of democracy into existence.

The redemptive face of democracy, on the other hand, is premised on the idea that the people, rather than the state or its institutions, are the ones who are actually in charge. In other words, it is a romantic idea that rather than the institutions and the state, the people are the supreme rulers. Perhaps nothing describes the redemptive face of democracy better than the notion of 'government of the people, by the people, for the people' (Canovan, 1999: 10). We often see the redemptive face of democracy during elections whereby each citizen is supposedly voting for the government they want or would like to see in charge.

The pragmatic face of democracy without the redemptive side lacks legitimacy, hence the need for regular elections to renew and "lubricate the machinery of pragmatic democracy" (Canovan, 1999: 11). Without the pragmatic face, the redemptive face can be chaotic and without a legitimate structure. Therefore, democracy is a careful act of balancing these two different and interlinked faces. Canovan (1999: 10) describes them as two "squabbling Siamese twins, inescapably linked" together for the greater good of democracy. Hence it is important for functioning democracies to have regular elections, and to have effective institutions that ensure that people's needs and promises of democracy are delivered.

It is the failure to manage the squabbles and the inherent tensions between these two faces that "provide the stimulus to populist mobilisation" in democratic societies (Canovan, 1999: 10). The populist mobilisation is often on the premise that the incumbent government no longer serves the people, and that it has neglected the redemptive face, because of the democratic institutions, that is the pragmatic face. This particularly happens in cases where the incumbent government fails to deliver on its promises, or where there are 'political disgruntlement' within the country or society (Mudde, 2004: 547). Political disgruntlement in any society stands as an open "invitation" for populists to emerge and mobilise in the name of 'the people' (Canovan, 2002: 27). This is why populism is often described as a phenomenon that thrives and arises amidst a sense of crisis, real or imagined (Taggart, 2004).

Naturally opportunistic, populists present themselves as the ultimate solution to the said 'crisis'. In doing so the populists advance an argument that is "a biting critique of the democratic limitations within liberal democracies" (Mudde, 2004: 561). Their criticism is that democracy, as it is practiced by the current rulers serves only 'the elite' at the expense of 'the people' (Canovan, 1999). Populists, therefore, point out the contradictions between the idea and practice of democracy. They present these

contradictions as a 'crisis'. For the EFF, in a true populist fashion, the 'crisis' that is facing South Africa is due to the absence of what it calls 'economic freedom' (Shivambu, 2014). The EFF bases its existence on the fact that whilst most black people continue to live impoverished lives, whites continue to be relatively well off, with even black income earners also economically struggling compared to their white counterparts (StatsSA, 2019).

The EFF plays this part so well in their efforts of presenting themselves as the solution in post-apartheid South Africa. In their founding manifesto, they argue that the ANC government has only delivered a section or a part of freedom to South Africans, and that is what the EFF calls political freedom (Shivambu, 2014). They then move on to suggest that, unlike the supposedly compromised ANC, the EFF has the solutions that will bring about complete and true freedom in the form of 'economic freedom' to South Africa, particularly to black people (Shivambu, 2014). They argue that the compromise that the ANC made during the negotiations to end apartheid effectively left the old elite intact. The EFF, therefore, presents itself as the party that will serve the interests of the people rather than the elite that the ANC is apparently serving.

While the literature on populism often attributes the rise of populism to moments of crisis in the polity (see Brubaker, 2017; Laclau, 2005), Moffitt (2015 & 2016) argues that it is important to view these moments not only as external but also as an internal attribute of populism. He argues that populists should also be seen as actors who deliberately create and perform a crisis, thereby perpetuating the notion that there is indeed a crisis (Moffitt, 2015). Mudde & Kaltwasser (2017: 106) contend that populists "spare no effort in creating *a sense* of crisis" (emphasis in original). In other words, populists take the failures of the government, the state and other institutions and present these as symbolising a political crisis that needs to be urgently dealt with (Moffitt, 2015; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). It serves the populists to invoke a notion of a crisis, so as to set the stage for their drama and theatrics.

Populists, he argues, "elevate a failure to the level of crisis" (Moffitt, 2015: 198). In performing a crisis, they present themselves as the ones with the straightforward solutions and the leadership to turn the crisis around. In the process of presenting themselves as the solution, they portray their opponents as compromised, indecisive and having no ideas to turn around the 'crisis' (Moffitt, 2015). Performing a crisis is something that the EFF is constantly doing and is famous for (see Mbete, 2015). It performs it in a number of ways, as discussed throughout the thesis, particularly in Chapter 5. And in Chapter 7, I present how the solutions that the EFF presents have attracted some of its supporters and members to the party. The point being made here is that indeed the EFF, as will be seen by the end of this thesis, is a quintessential populist party above all else.

The media plays a huge role in the process of performing a crisis. Moffitt (2015) argues that the media serves as a political stage with a mass audience. It is through this stage where the notion of a crisis is perpetuated, often without being questioned (Moffitt, 2015). In other words, the media often plays the role of enablers of populism, more so when the lies and dishonesty of populists often go without being questioned and challenged. The media ends up perpetuating the politics of lying and deception that populists are famed for. In allowing themselves to be used as a platform to spread the often unverified and largely dishonest message of populists, the media ends playing a crucial role in the rise of populism. The link and convergence of populism and media (Mazzoleni, 2008) is a relationship that the EFF has also enjoyed. In its early days, the EFF used to be media darlings. So loved by the media that commentators such as Friedman (2017) argued that "the EFF is an endless source of dramatic stories" to journalists. Mbete (2016: 597, also see Habib, 2018a) argued that these dramatic stories were as a result of the party's "spectacle of politics". While Calland and Seedat (2015) refer to it as "dramatic commotion". Some political commentators argue that prior to Zuma's stepping down as the country's president, the EFF had a "romance with the mainstream media" (van Onselen 2019) and that it was treated by what they call "kid gloves by the media" (McKaiser, 2018: 21). van Onselen (2018a) is of the view that the kid gloves that the EFF was treated with often meant that the

party was not scrutinised by the media. Habib (2018b) says the kid gloves only went off once the EFF shifted its focus from Zuma. "For too long", he argues, "analysts, journalists, and opposition politicians have cut them too much slack" (Habib, 2018b).

The media is able to play the role of populist enablers also because the industry itself has shifted towards providing news as a form of entertainment (Mazzoleni, 2008). In this shift, the charisma, the controversy and the dramatic performance of populists make the media complicit allies of populist politics (Moffitt, 2015). Mazzoleni (2008) further adds that media savviness of populist actors provides them with "a special ability to make headlines and appear on breaking news" (Mazzoleni, 2008: 56). In an era where media is concerned and competing over the number of readership and viewership, the drama, catchy phrases, flamboyancy and headlines that populists provide somehow make them news media worthy (Mudde, 2004). Populists realising this mutual need embrace their role of being "a political 'pop star[s]'" or media darlings (Mazzoleni, 2008: 56).

3.5.1 The two faces of democracy in post-apartheid South Africa

Post apartheid South Africa is without a doubt "fertile ground for populism parties" (Mény & Surel, 2002: 11) to emerge. It is fertile because the disjuncture of the two faces of democracy in South Africa, as noted above, are so far apart. Both the wide disjuncture and their racialised nature reflect a past that permeates the present. In other words, South Africa is a fertile ground for populism because the post-apartheid government has failed to deliver on its promise to decolonise the country, break from its racialised past and break from the colonial legacy. This is a past, and present, that is at its core a white racist political-economic system. It is a system whose primary intuition is to privilege white people over black people. For centuries it has been central in determining who is human, who is not and how resources, opportunities, are distributed in society (Mills, 1997).

Similar to other political systems, it can intersect with other political systems of domination that result not only in racial oppression and domination such as male privilege or class privilege (Mills, 1997). As a political system, much like capitalism and other systems, it is not static and it might "take different forms in different parts of the world" at different times (Mills, 1998: 101). And as Gabay (2018) argues, it is fluid to the point that black people can lead and be part of institutions that perpetuate white racism. Consequently, a liberation movement took over state institutions in South Africa that were once openly anti-black. Black people's presence in these institutions, though, does not merely mean the end of whiteness as a political system. For instance, some of the legacies of colonialism in post-apartheid South Africa include the intolerable large racialized inequalities. Research (see: Chatterjee, Czajka, & Gethin, 2020: 1) shows that South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world and the racialized inequalities that exist in the country "is a clear legacy colonialism and apartheid, where minority rule was premised on racially motivated exclusion of the majority from ownership and participation in the economy". Furthermore, white South Africans are largely socialized to regard themselves as citizens of the Western world, thus their identities are "increasingly tied" to the racialized idea of the West (Dalmage, 2018: 400).

Many instances demonstrate the post-apartheid democratic dispensations' failure to carefully manage the two faces of democracy (see Pithouse, 2016; Gibson, 2011), yet perhaps Marikana is the one tragedy that symbolises it best. Marikana as a site and event, is the geographic location where 34 black striking miners were brutally massacred and many more were injured by the state police (Marinovich, 2012). The Marikana massacre is a clear case whereby the state institutions colluded with the economic sector against the people, to serve the interest of the elite. The massacre was a deeply tragic case demonstrating the state's failure to reconcile the two faces of democracy. In place of a well managed reconciliation, we saw one of the two faces of democracy being annihilated for the benefit of a mining company.

The 'crime' that the miners committed was to exercise their constitutionally protective right to protest. The protest in Marikana, similar to other protests in the country was a form of practicing redemptive democracy thereby questioning the current form of representative democracy. Alexander (2013: 605) opines that "as bodies fell to the ground [in Marikana] so too did the illusions in post-apartheid democracy". The current democratic dispensation's failure to reconcile the 'two faces of democracy' is best articulated by one of the survivors of the massacre who says that 'We as mineworkers are excluded from this democracy' (cited in Alexander, Lekgowa, Mmope, Sinwell & Xezwi, 2012: 116).

The Marikana massacre highlighted the deep tensions between the 'two faces of democracy' and the failure of the ruling party to resolve these tensions. As stated above, a failure to carefully manage these two faces for the greater good of the society is an 'open invitation' for populists to emerge. An invitation that was welcomed and accepted with both hands by the people who formed the EFF. The EFF goes as far as to attribute the existence of the EFF to the Marikana massacre and held its official launch as a political party there.

3.6. Conclusion

The chapter discussed the theoretical framework used to understand the political identity and character of the EFF. The chapter argued that the EFF's political identity is best understood as populist. The chapter argued that the party's populism is not only noticeable in its performance, but that the party's political identity and its body politic is best understood through what the chapter referred to as a thin ideology of populism. It is an ideology that divides the citizenry between a group that is referred to as the people and a group that is said to be the elite. The distinction between the two is marked, amongst others, by a moral divide, with the elite depicted as the bad while the people are the good. The people in the populist ideology are put on the pedestal of sovereignty and as the legitimate rulers on the polity. The chapter also discussed the importance of understanding the party's identity through the idea of 'two faces of democracy'. It argued that populist parties such as the EFF

often emphasize one of these faces as a means of being seen as people centered parties. They do this by delegitimizing institutions of democracy and depicting them as serving and protecting the interests of the elite. Furthermore, although the EFF's populism has, like all populists, a dramatic performance aspect, the chapter highlighted that populist politics also go with a thin or thin centred ideology. The chapter further argued that it is best to understand the party's policies, body politics, and its behavior by understanding populism not merely as a performance but as an ideology. It discussed the fact that populist parties such as the EFF often rely on a number of ideologies as the basis for their existence. Understanding populism as a thin ideology gives us intellectual tools to theorize the fact that populists are often inherently contradictory, and capable of committing to more than one ideology at any particular time. In other words, populism is thin and flexible enough for populists to adapt to contradictory ideologies. From these ideologies, there is often a host ideology that often trumps all the other ideologies within the party. For the EFF, the primary host ideology is black nationalism which is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Defining the people: EFF on Black nationalism, non-racialism and race politics in SA

4.1 Introduction

Populism is a thin ideology and is expressed through the use of other ideologies, and or a host ideology. The EFF's political ideology, as a populist party, is not different in this regard. Although the EFF often articulates itself and defines its political identity in a number of ways, I argue that its host ideology is shaped by various strands of black nationalism. The fact that the EFF is shaped by these various and often conflicting strands of black nationalism is noticeable in a number of instances, and most importantly in its conception of who constitutes the people and who constitutes the elite. In a number of instances, as will be seen throughout the thesis, the EFF also sometimes defines itself as a party of black people, or of the black nation. The elite, on the other hand, is often the white elite, racists, and captains of industry. Furthermore, the EFF, as seen below traces its ideological genealogy from black nationalist movements as part of the effort to depict itself as the ultimate and authentic political party for black people in contemporary South Africa. It, then, makes sense to discuss black nationalism as the host ideology of the EFF, and its historical place in the history of South Africa. This chapter does this in a number of ways, firstly a brief historical overview of black nationalism in South Africa is provided. Secondly, this is followed by a historically informed analysis of how this history informs and shapes EFF's black nationalism in contemporary South Africa. The politics of non-racialism, as an ideological instrument and praxis of policing black radical thought, are discussed. And the EFF's conflicting relationship with these and non racialism are discussed.

4.2 The EFF and the 'battlefield' of history

This chapter is also important because, as argued in the previous one, the populist's construction of 'the people' draws from the history of an 'imagined community, and or peoplehood (Tas, 2020). This is done so as to present the populist formation as part of the long lineage of 'the peoples' struggle

against oppression. This is a process that includes "treating history as a battlefield" (Tas, 2020: 6). Therefore, history "plays a paramount role" in populism (Tas, 2020: 5). The 'paramount role' of history is also noticeable in the fact that populists often "conflate the past, present, and future into a single narrative about the people's survival and prosperity" (Tas, 2020: 14). According to Tas (2020) populists legitimise themselves to 'the people' by depicting their political party as being part of a historical tradition that has always been on the side of 'the people'. Tas (2020: 13) contends that the populist "toolbox" includes presenting the party, and the leaders not only as the rightful heirs but as the second coming of that historical tradition. This involves a narcissistic view whereby the populist party and its leader present that history as belonging solely to them.

The EFF, as a populist party, is no exception to this and hence also treats history as a 'battleground'. This often involves a political act, a process whereby the EFF depicts itself as a continuation of the liberation movement tradition in South Africa. This act was in full swing at the 2013 official launch of the party where Malema mentioned a range of historical figures such as Hintsa, Sekhukhune, Shaka all the way up to Onkgopotse Tiro and Peter Mokaba as ancestors of the EFF (Shivambu, 2014; also see Nieftagodien, 2015a). Malema continued with this act following the passing of the country's first democratically elected president in 2013, when he pointed out that the EFF is "picking up the battle" from the "militant Nelson Mandela" (Star, 2013: 6). The notion of 'picking up the battle' from the previous generation also played out during Malema's (2016) address at Oxford Union. Floyd Shivambu (2014), the party's second in command, expresses the same notion in arguing that the party continues on the path of the anti-colonial struggles, whom without the EFF will most likely not be what it is. Dali Mpofu (2014: ix), then the party's Chairperson, went as far as to argue that "the history of the EFF began in 1652 with the arrival" of the settlers into what we now know as South Africa who conquered its people and their land. Linking the EFF to past formations that fought against colonialism and apartheid, one senior leader of the party told me that:

> In the relay race of struggles, those who first fought against the invasion of the land, passed it onto the ones who fought against land dispossession, and they gave the baton to the next generation of struggles and like that and like that…. We think that we are now caring the baton towards the finish line of economic emancipation. (Participant 1)

In other words, as far as the EFF is concerned, the party is the true custodian of the revolutionary tradition that successfully fought against the apartheid regime. It is within this context that those who were central to the formation of the EFF are able to state the following:

> We say that we also take inspiration from the 1940s Youth Congress movement which reshaped the congress movement. You know the congress movement, the ANC, there were many times they accepted the legitimacy of the colonial government. This changes with the Youth League of the 1940s. Who said let us fight for what is ours. Who said we are going to recognise freedom in our lifetime. (Participant 1)

What the above participant is referring to here is the change of the guard that took place in the 1940s and 1950s between what could be termed as the pre-Fort Hare ANC political leadership, which was largely educated overseas, and the largely Fort Hare educated generation of ANC Youth League leaders, which included the likes of Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, and Oliver Tambo. The Youth League of the 1940s helped to shift the ANC away from what was seen as the "old, petitionist methods of protests" towards a mass based protest movement (Drew, 1991: 346). The Youth League rejected the ANC's dated petitionist political methods, and thus, saw its first order of political business as being about transforming the "machinery of the ANC from within, moulding it into a mass-based organization pursuing national liberation and mobilizing support by means of a militant African nationalism" (Drew, 1991; Everatt, 2009: 54).

The ANCYL of the 1940s is said to have been born out of the frustration that the youth felt against the old guard of the ANC. They felt that the ANC was too apologetic about the needs and plight of black people (Gerhart, 1979). Prior to the formation of the ANCYL, the ANC "remained somewhat limited in membership and pursued a constitutional agenda involving petitions protesting Africans' treatment, dialogue with government figures, and generally favoured a policy of participation in government-sponsored forums" (Hughes, 2012: 563). This approach, however, changed in the 1940s as a result of the ideas of the ANCYL. The ANCYL of the 1940s "led moves to radicalise" the entire ANC (Everatt, 2009: 17). Glaser (2012) writes that from the onset the Youth League were agitators within the ANC in the sense that they tried to shape the political ideology of the mother-body. As agitators within the ANC, they transformed the organization "into a mass-based movement with a markedly more confrontational approach to winning its aims" (Hughes, 2012: 563).

Beyond transforming the ANC into a mass based political movement, the Youth League also highlighted and problematized the role that whites wanted to play in the movement. The Youth League, at its inception, argued that white liberals and Marxists were hellbent on distorting the nature, character and ideology of the struggle for black determination in racist South Africa (Majavu, forthcoming). The Youth League correctly pointed out that these were whites who wanted to ideologically control the struggle of the movement. One way they sought to do this was to propagate the false notion that the struggle in South Africa was that of class, rather than one of race (Majavu, forthcoming). Therefore, they wanted blacks to do away with the black nationalist thought and adapt a somewhat class analysis argument instead. These are the whites who set the struggle on a color-blind path where whites could retain their privileges that they enjoyed for no other reason than for being white in a racist polity (Majavu, forthcoming). They vigorously did this through manipulating the struggle away from an honest race discourse. A manipulation and dishonesty that went to the

extent of accusing and depicting blacks who called out the perpetuation of whiteness by whites who appeared to be on the side of blacks.

It is worth pointing out that the ideological midwife that helped with the birth of the radical ANC Youth League was an inchoate black nationalism of Marcus Garvey. The Fort Hare generation of ANC leaders was from its inception partly inspired by Garveyism (Gerhart, 1979). Indeed, in the 1940s, the ANC Youth League viewed Garveyism as a potent political weapon with which to fight white supremacy in South Africa. This is partly why some historians argue that the "Youth League's attempt in the late 1940's at formulating a philosophy of 'Africanism' would not have been possible without the South African Garvey movements that preceded it" (Hill and Pirio, 1987: 242). The ANC Youth League of the 1940s expressed its Garveyist ideology by advocating for the Africans to lead the struggle for liberation and to not be led intellectually or otherwise by whites and other groups (Gerhart, 1979). In other words, the Youth League ideology and politics were based on the radical and necessary Garveyist idea of 'Africa for the Africans'.

4.3 The Genealogy of Black Nationalism in South African

The radical strand of black nationalism that the Youth League championed that the EFF sometimes claims as its own has a long history in South Africa. It is one that cannot be properly understood outside the prominent role that both 'Ethiopianism' and Garveyism played in the history of black Nationalism in South Africa (see Campbel, 1995; Cobley, 1986; Frederickson, 1995; Marable, 1976).

The early development of black nationalism in South Africa occurred within the black South African independent churches movement – known as Ethiopianism, which took place between the 1870s and the 1910s. The independent black churches were largely viewed as a political celebration of Africanness, and "as practical experiments in black self-determination" (Cobley, 1986: 161). These independent churches were founded by blacks who "felt marginalised within" the broader white churches and missionaries (Duncan, 2015). Blacks who formed their own independent churches did

so as a form of resistance against white domination and white paternalism (Duncan, 2015). These were people who had experienced "paternalistic attitude" from their white counterparts who "looked upon them as children unable to take the reins of their destiny" (Lahouel, 1986: 682). According to Lahouel (1986: 681), "Since its inception Ethiopianism conveyed Africans protests against all forms of racial discrimination as practised by Europeans".

Religiously, Ethiopianism was inspired by the bible script, Psalm 68:31, which reads: "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Adi, 2018: 16). According to Fredrickson (1997), this verse resonated with oppressed blacks who saw themselves as the biblical Israelites. Adi (2018: 16) argues that Ethiopia in the verse "came to be used as a synonym for Africa". Fredrickson (1997: 75) further argues that "There was a natural, almost inevitable, association between the flight of the Israelites from Bondage in Egypt and their return to the Promised Land of God' s pledge to the Ethiopians, some of whom had also found themselves freed from bondage".

In 1896, the Ethiopian Church of South Africa officially affiliated itself with the United States-based African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church – the first black American church to be founded by African Americans (Jorgensen, 2009; Vinson, 2012). In effect, the Ethiopian Church of South African became the fourteenth district of the African Methodist Episcopal Church – "the most prominent black American link to Ethiopianism" (Vinson, 2012: 20). For many black South Africans, black Americans became the standard to aspire to and therefore black Americans were viewed as representing "the future of the black race" worldwide (Vinson, 2012: 21).

Black South Africans found the religious and political message of the Ethiopian churches appealing to the extent that by 1919, the colonial government recorded 76 independent black churches, with about one hundred "native ministers" (Cobley, 1986). The establishment of the Ethiopian Churches in South Africa and its affiliation to the United States-based AME precipitated the arrival of many

African Americans over the next century in South Africa. Additionally, the Ethiopian-AME connection contributed to a large number of black South Africans traveling to the United States. White settlers however did not view the Ethiopian-AME connection in a positive light. As far as white settlers were concerned, the link between Africans and Afro-Americans was a dangerous one that threatened white domination in South Africa (Davis, 1978). Furthermore, "Ethiopianism's rejection of white authority had led several newspapers, a number of white missionaries and South African government officials to refer to the movement as a threat" (Vinson, 2012: 20). Gradually, white settlers began to associate black Americans with Ethiopianism (Vinson, 2012.

Members of Ethiopian churches were viewed by much of the settler society as a source of political rebellion and sedition (Jorgensen, 2009). They were seen as a 'menace' that needed to be dealt with (Etherington, 2012: 59). Etherington (2012) points out that the government hired spies to infiltrate and report churches and people who propagated the ideas associated with Ethiopianism. Those suspected of basing their teachings on Ethiopianism were punished and harassed.

It is within this political climate that the South African Native Affairs Commission (SANAC), which was formed during the years 1903 – 1905 to investigate Ethiopianism among other things, found that "whites feared the possibility of Black political power" (Millard, 1995: 71). Dr. Hunter, the Editor of the *Christian Express* – a journal published by Lovedale Press, told SANAC that the Ethiopian Churches encouraged "native people of this country" to "drive out the British from South Africa, and make this an African republic" (Millard, 1995: 71). Dr. Hunter added that another opinion expressed by Ethiopian Churches was that "mission work carried on by the European missions in Africa is a failure, and that the European missions ought to hand over their money and their missions to the African Methodist Episcopal Church" (Millard, 1995: 71).

In 1906, after the Bhambatha rebellion, a black uprising in Natal, the colonial government "searched for sources of 'sinister external influence' upon which the uprising could be blamed; these included Ethiopianism, urban life, and the influence of black Americans and Africans who had studied in the United States" (Jorgensen, 2009: 300). Black South Africans came into contact with black American educational ideas and practices in four ways, namely (Davis, 1978: 69):

1) The first was to travel directly to the United States as students.

2) Black Americans went to South Africa. Although some went in secular roles, for the most part they were associated with one or another of the black American churches and functioned essentially as missionaries.

3) The third way was through independent schools established by Africans similar to black American schools.

4) Finally, there was widespread publicity given to black American education, particularly that at Tuskegee.

John Langalibalele Dube stands as a symbolic figure for a generation of educated Africans who increasingly looked to black Americans for political and educational guidance (Davis, 1978; Marable, 1976). Dube was the first president of the African National Congress (ANC) and was sometimes called "the Booker T. Washington of South Africa" (Davis, 2003; Marable, 1976). Two of Dube's successors as ANC presidents, that is, Pixley Seme and Alfred B. Xuma, were educated in the United States (Davis, 1975). Charlotte Maxeke, founder of the ANC's Women's League was also educated in the United States, and, in fact, while studying in the US she had encouraged Mangena Mokone, a founder of the Ethiopian Church, to write to the American Methodist Episcopal Church and seek affiliation with the AME (Lahouel, 1986: 686). Reverend Henry Reed Ngcayiya, who contributed to launching the Ethiopian Church of South Africa in March 1909, and his assistant - E. J. Mqoboli, were involved in the political affairs of the ANC (Lahouel, 1986).

According to Gish (2000), there are few black South Africans who embodied the links between black South Africans and African Americans as dramatically as Alfred B. Xuma did. Xuma's "exposure to black American ideas both radicalized and moderated his political outlook, depending on time and circumstance" (Gish, 2000: 2). His educational experience at Tuskegee Institute between 1913-16 was politically formative, and consequently, Xuma became "one of Booker T. Washington's most visible disciples in South Africa early in his career, preaching the necessity of black self-help and personal achievement throughout the country" (Gish, 2000: 2). Xuma's connections to African Americans extended beyond Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee "to include W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" (Gish, 2000: 2).

The lack of educational opportunities for black South Africans in colonial South Africa served as the impetus for travelling to the United States to study (Gish, 2000). In the early twentieth century South Africa, there were few schools that "provided training for their children beyond standard four or five" (Gish, 2000: 21). Lovedale was the only educational institution in the country that was offering black South Africans a complete secondary school curriculum (Gish, 2000). Hence, black students who wanted to go further in their education looked to the United States and Britain for greater educational opportunities (Gish, 2000). "The American model of black education, with its emphasis on self-help and freedom from direct white control, seemed especially appealing" for many black South Africans (Gish, 2000: 21).

Thus, Davidson Don Tengo (D.D.T.) Jabavu, an open admirer of Booker T. Washington and a promoter of his educational philosophy, shared his admiration of Washington with many of his contemporaries including Sol Plaatjie (Davis, 2003). Plaatjie had "close ties with R.R. Moton, Washington's successor at Tuskegee, and actively promoted the school and its founder by means of a traveling bioscope in South Africa" (Davis, 2003). Moreover, the South African branch of the AME

Church played a vital role in encouraging the black South African exodus to the United States (Gish, 2000). "It sent its followers to some of America's best known black colleges and universities" (Gish, 2000: 22). Between 1890 and 1910, many black South Africans regarded Tuskegee as a "shining beacon of hope for black social and economic upliftment" (Gish, 2000: 22).

White missionaries and colonial authorities lobbied the colonial government to discourage black South Africans from travelling to the United States for education. For instance, white missionaries and government authorities testified at the South African Native Affairs Commission, held between 1903 – 1905, that "American-educated Africans returned to South Africa with 'inappropriate' ideas of equality and freedom" (Gish, 2000: 24). SANACC had a solution to this challenge. SANACC recommended that the colonial government create a local "native university" for black South Africans in order for whites to "reassert their control over what Africans learned and how they learned it" (Campbell, 1995; Gish, 2000: 24). To that end, the colonial government established the South African Native College at Fort Hare, which opened its doors in 1916 (Davis, 1978: 74). Alfred Xuma "was the last of the pre-Fort Hare generation to seek an education overseas" (Gish, 2000: 24).

4.3.1 Africa for the Africans: Garveyism and Ethiopianism in South Africa

Garvey's idea of nationalism was partly shaped and informed by the teachings and philosophies of Ethiopianism. George Wellington Kampara is credited with establishing Johannesburg's first branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), a black nationalist organisation espousing the black internationalist politics of Marcus Garvey and the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' (Dee, 2018). Cape Town had the earliest and the largest number of UNIA divisions, five in total (Vinson, 2012). Garveyism came to South Africa via West Indians who worked in the Cape Town docks in the early twentieth century (Vinson, 2012). According to Vinson (2012), there were about 500 West Indians in Southern Africa in 1905, and they spread the idea of Pan-Africanism under the political aegis of Marcus Garvey's UNIA. They introduced UNIA ideology to the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) and to the African National Congress (Bradford, 1987; Vinson, 2012). Many

black South Africans saw the UNIA and black Americans as racial models and "as their divinely ordained liberators from South African white supremacy" (Vinson, 2012: 75).

Suttner (2014) argues that both Ethiopianism and Garveyism were driven by the desire of the Africans to determine their own lives. They both espoused an ideal of blacks setting up their own institutions such as schools and organisations wherever possible. Although Ethiopianism was largely a Christian based movement, it cannot simply be limited or reduced to a "religious phenomenon" (Duncan, 2015: 199) as it combined black educational aspirations, as well as political emancipation and faith-based principles that appealed to many black people in South Africa (Etherington, 2012).

The difference between the nationalism espoused by Ethiopianism and the Garvey-based nationalism is that Ethiopianism was a faith-based nationalism, whereas Garveyism was first and foremost a political ideology. In general, however, both were essentially philosophies for the liberation of black people from colonialism and white supremacy. It is for this reason that both the Ethiopianist and Garveyist strand of nationalism shaped and appealed to some members within the ANC (Hill and Pirio, 1987). Sol Plaatjie, while in the United States of America, is said to have attended and spoken in Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement and African Communities League (UNIA) meetings (Adi, 2018). Some ANC members, such as James Thaele who subscribed to these strands of nationalism refused, as a matter of principle, to work with white communists because they believed, as most Garveyites did, that Africans should be responsible for their own self determination and that they are the only ones who can liberate themselves (Hill and Pirio, 1987).

In fact, the very establishment of the ANC came as a result of black people who grew tired of being under white leadership and supervision (Vinson, 2012). It is partly for this reason that the membership of the ANC from its inception until 1969 was open only to blacks (Ndebele, 2002). Racial exclusion of the membership of the ANC remained the case, even as the ANC took the leadership role in the

Congress of the People where the Freedom Charter, with its white-centric and liberal declaration of South Africa belonging to all who live in it, was signed (Ndebele, 2002). While limiting its membership only to Africans, the ANC, however, did form strategic partnerships and alliances with other racial groups (Gerhart, 1979).

4.4 Black nationalism and the dogma of non-racialism

It is also important to note that the Youth League, that the EFF claims allegiance to, had from inception embodied two contradictory tendencies of black nationalism, namely: a radical strand and a kind of a petit bourgeois liberal nationalism that embraced non-racialism (Drew, 1991). As a result of these contradictions, the Youth League slowly began to split into two ideological camps in the 1950s. These contradictory strands of nationalism were also central in the bitter disputes that characterised the Congress Alliance (Drew, 1991; Everrat, 2009). At issue was the role of whites and the perpetuation of white privilege within the struggle by these whites. The radical strand of black nationalism argued that the non-racialism discourse advanced by the whites within the struggle was an intellectual tool used to silence the racial aspect of oppression in South Africa. The liberal approach, on the other hand, turned a blind eye to the issues raised by the radicals and hence supported the non-racialism dogma through Congress Alliance (Everatt, 2009). In his defense of non-racialism, Everatt (2009: 18) writes that whites who pushed for non-racialism were exemplary because for them "race was not the starting point of analysis or organisation". It is, of course, a display of white privilege to not view race as a starting point when the whole oppression structure is based on race. Also one imagines that it is very convenient for race not to be a starting point of resistance when you are a beneficiary of the racist system. It must be convenient because, after all, whiteness pretends to be non-existent, to be genuine and peaceful (Sullivan, 2006). This is a pretense, an act and an ideology that white South Africans have perfected over the years (Majavu, forthcoming). Mastered it to the point whereby they can be praised for not seeing race as a 'starting point' in a polity that was founded on race, operated on race, and that benefited whites based on race.

The formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944 brought back the radical tradition of black nationalism such as Garveyism to the centre. By the time the Youth League was founded, there was "a profound skepticism regarding white motives and the promises of "trusteeship" had set in; faith in the inevitability of enlightenment was dead, and a new mood of defiance and self-assertion was taking place in setting standards of thought and behaviour among younger Africans" (Gerhart 1979: 48). Much like the formation of the EFF, the ANCYL was born out of the frustration that the youth felt against the old guard of the ANC. They felt that the ANC was too apologetic about the needs and plight of black people (Gerhart, 1979). Prior to the formation of the ANCYL, the ANC "remained somewhat limited in membership and pursued a constitutional agenda involving petitions protesting Africans' treatment, dialogue with government figures, and generally favoured a policy of participation in government-sponsored forums" (Hughes, 2012: 563). This approach, however, changed in the 1940s as a result of the ideas of the ANCYL. The ANCYL of the 1940s "led moves to radicalise" the entire ANC (Everatt, 2009: 17). Glaser (2012) writes that from the onset the Youth League were agitators within the ANC in the sense that they tried to shape the political ideology of the mother-body. As agitators within the ANC, they transformed the organisation "into a properly mass-based movement with a markedly more confrontational approach to winning its aims" (Hughes, 2012: 563).

The ANCYL ideology was very much black nationalist in nature and character (Gerhart 1979). Like those before them, their black nationalism emphasised the racialised aspect of colonialism in South Africa. Two of its main leaders Lembede and Mda dissociated themselves from marxism or from describing themselves as such (Gerhart, 1979; also see Everrat, 2009). The issue with marxism to them, as has often been the case with many black activists, is that marxism is itself an ideology that is not inherently divorced from whiteness. As Oliver Tambo who was also a key member in the formation of the ANCYL stated, "African Nationalists, then and now, believed strongly that Communists had no interest in African Freedom" (cited in Everatt, 2009: 209). These activists, and

indeed many other politically active black people, not aligning themselves to marxism did not mean that they were aloof to issues that are often seen as class issues. This, for instance, can be seen in Mda's warning about the betrayal of the African "elite". To him, and surely to many other Africanists, the betrayal could be avoided by an active movement that "will ensure that there shall be no deal among the African elite which will betray the cause of the Millions of the illiterate and semi-literate African peasants and toilers" (Mda cited in Gerhart, 1979: 130).

Africanists wanted labour unions not to be grounded and centred on some European idea but to be based on and be cautious of the fact that they operate in Africa for African workers. More often than not, this meant that issues linked to black workers were connected to the whole national struggle for liberation and hence avoided the whiteness trap of falling into "a path of 'pure' class politics" (Buhlungu, 2006: 432). In line with Africana thought the world over, the Africanists knew that a purely class politics is not equipped to address the systematic dehumanisation of black people. This is why the leaders of the Youth League believed that liberation will not be as a result of importing "from the West foreign ideologies that do not fit into" the South African context (Edgar & Msumza, 2015: 128). It was clear to these Africanists that colonialism in South Africa was not merely a matter of materialism or simply economic in nature, but that it was a multifaceted racial affair. Lembede, for instance, realized, like many before him did, that colonialism is not only a matter of class oppression (Edgar & Msumza, 2015: 128). An issue that led John Nkatlo, a former member of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), to argue that "I accept being called an "Africanist" if it means an "African" who refuses to be politically subservient to "European" leadership and who refuses to entrust his destiny to some "European" careerists who exploit him" (cited in Everatt, 2009: 208).

Black nationalists knew the inherent dangers of the dogma advocated by non-racialist whites. Hence, the Black Consciousness movement broke ranks with the non-racial National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) because whites who were propagating the non-racialism dogma were not

necessarily anti-racists. Biko (2004: 26) argues that whites in the supposedly non-racial structures still had what he terms the white supremacy complex, whereby a white person sees him or herself as "a perpetual teacher and the black a perpetual pupil". Furthermore, according to Biko (2004: 69) the "liberal set about their business with the utmost efficiency. They made it a political dogma that all groups opposing the *status quo* must *necessarily* be non-racial in structure. They maintained that if you stood for a principle of non-racialism you could not in any way adopt what they described as racialist policies. They even defined to the black people what the latter should fight for". Biko's argument is that non-racialism, historically has often been a tool used by whites to police black thought and radical black organisations in general. As Biko (2004: 23) argues, the non-racial discourse was based on giving black people "a place at the white man's table". Thereby forgetting the fact that the liberation struggle in South Africa was not for blacks to be accepted in the whites' table that will largely continue to be privilege whites.

The radical strand of black nationalism realised that many white people who opted to be involved in the struggle in one form or another, never completely let go of their whiteness (Buhlungu, 2006; Biko, 2004). Writing about whites involved in black unions, Buhlungu (2006: 447) argues that "notwithstanding their involvement in a movement for black workers, many of these activists never ceased to view themselves as white, or 'the white left 'as some of them like to refer to themselves". Merely opposing colonialism and apartheid did not necessarily make white activists see black people as human beings who could think on their own and determine their own lives. An issue which led to Biko (2004: 26) to warn against white activists who tended to treat blacks as "perpetual pupil".

4.5 The PAC's nationalism of the conquered and the conqueror

The ideological collision between the radical and liberal strand of nationalism within the ANC Youth League eventually led to the expulsion of "ANCYL Africanists and the founding of the PAC in 1959" (Drew, 1991: 354). Both the EFF and the PAC were formed on the basis that the ANC has 'sold out', thereby placing the burden of representing the 'real' and better version of the ANC on themselves.

This burden, this act often includes taking political ideas of the ANC and programmes and articulating them as theirs. In a similar fashion to the sequence that led to the formation of the EFF, the PAC came into existence following a long drawn-out battle within the ANC (Kondlo, 2005). The ideological battle was related to the political ideology that was central to the formation of the ANC Youth League, namely African nationalism (Kondlo, 2005).

Those who broke from the ANC in 1959, to form the PAC, said they parted ways because the ANC was no longer following the African nationalist-inspired 1949 ANC Programme of Action. Similar to the PAC, the EFF claims that the party was formed because the ANC has failed to implement the ideals of the Freedom Charter (Shivambu, 2014). Kondlo (2005) writes that those who were central to the formation of the PAC committed themselves to the Programme of Action. Selby Themba Ngendane, writing as the secretary of the breakaway group, in his letter to the ANC explained why the Africanists broke from the ANC (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). He argued that they felt that the leadership of the ANC had compromised the ideology of black nationalism. This compromise was epitomised by the ANC's adoption of the Freedom Charter. Ngendane further argued that the Freedom Charter was a betrayal of the essence of African nationalism, particularly in glaringly claiming that the land belongs to all who live in it. Such claims, he argued, were not politically and historically correct (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). Motlhabi (1984) argues that the PAC members felt the ANC compromised the struggle by accepting a document that was premised on the assumption that both black and white people formed part of the same oppressed group in South Africa.

The adoption of the Freedom Charter might have been the epitome, but it was not the only difference between the radical and the liberal black nationalists (Gerhart, 1979). Sobukwe writing for *The Africanist* as the President of the PAC in 1959, identified two differences between the two movements (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). He argued that the ANC leadership has been influenced by the communists, read as whites, to view the struggle in terms of class as opposed to it being a national struggle. In his

view, the evidence suggested that it is a national and race struggle, as opposed to it being a class one (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). The difference being that the national struggle is premised on the fact that oppression in South Africa is racialised, rather than solely a matter of class or economic exploitation. This is a historical fact because black people were not landless because of their economic status, but because of their racial group (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). Sobukwe and the PAC were actually rejecting the liberal dogma of erasing race and racism as a point of departure in South African politics. The radicals argued that the race discourse could not be secondary because all whites in South Africa benefited from white privilege and are "all shareholders in the S.A. Oppressors Company (Pty.) Ltd" (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 508).

Potlako Leballo in an article published on *The Africanist* in 1957 was clear about the differences between the ANC and the PAC (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). The differences, he argued, emanate from the 'nature' of the struggle, the issue being that the ANC, in its adoption of the Freedom Charter, and its alliances focused on and saw the struggle as being about the issue of 'democracy' (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). Democracy in the sense that everyone is represented and taken into consideration. The radicals, on the other hand, are concerned by both democracy and justice, he argued. Justice was important in the country because South Africa is the land of the "conquered and the conqueror, the invaded and the invader, the dispossessed and the dispossessor" he argued (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 500). This divide is not some abstract ideology but is both a political and a historical fact. In his view, the liberation movement could not simply be concerned with the issue of representative democracy without taking the issue of dispossession with all the seriousness it deserves (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). Taking the fact of dispossession seriously, therefore, meant the discourse of democracy in the country translates into correcting past injustices and returning the land to its rightful owners, that is black people.

Leballo rejected the wishful thinking that he felt the Freedom Charter seemed to be making which was that the country can simply wake up one day and decide that the land belongs to all (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). In their view, as the PAC, past injustices needed to be corrected before claims such as that the land belongs to all are made. "Our struggle", he argued, "therefore, is democratic, involving as it does, the dispossessed majority against the privileged minority'' (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 500). The PAC believed that the ANC leadership by focusing solely on democracy opted to neglect "to the total exclusion" (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 500) the corrective justice aspect of the struggle. In more ways than one, it is this 'total exclusion' that differentiates the two, and this further leads to "differences in tactics and interpretation of events" (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 500) and different reading of events, leads to many other differences in terms of moving forward in the struggle. Taking the baton from the PAC, the EFF continues on this line of argument in presenting itself as a better version of the ANC. Much like the PAC, the EFF now accuses the ANC of having been consumed with and focused on 'political freedom' 'to the total exclusion' of 'economic freedom'.

The other critique against the ANC from the PAC was that the ANC seemed to be behaving as if it was an opposition party to the ruling governing party rather than being a liberation movement (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). The PAC argued that this shift in the ANC leadership from a national liberation movement was due to the fact that the ANC was intellectually led by the white communists who were invested in ensuring that the whole whiteness system was not overhauled. Leballo threw them in the same basket as the United Party (UP), with the only difference being that the UP only had white members (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). Both the ANC and the UP, he argued, saw the governing Nationalist Party as the legitimate government of the country and only opposed its policies (Karis & Gerhart, 1977). The ANC leadership, according to the PAC, also made the mistake of thinking and believing that everyone who was opposing colonialism and apartheid was an ally of the black people (Karis & Gerhart, 1977; Gerhart, 1979). The PAC, on the other hand, wanted to overhaul the entire structure, as opposed to just being an oppositional party to the ruling governing party.

It is for these reasons that the PAC leadership felt that the ANC had betrayed its 1912 objectives (see Ngendane in Karis & Gerhart, 1977). This is why Ngendane, one of the key members of the PAC could write that he and his comrades "are launching out openly, on our own, as the custodians of the A.N.C policy as it was formulated in 1912 and pursued to the time of the Congress Alliances" (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 506). For those who ended up launching the EFF also saw themselves as some custodians of the Freedom Charter (see Shivambu, 2014).

The launching of the PAC took place after an editorial of *The Africanist* had warned that the more the ANC deviates from its objective, the more the people will withdraw from it and find "a new Moses… with a gospel ringing the correct chord" (Karis & Gerhart, 1977: 499). The PAC, back then, saw itself, perhaps prematurely, as this new Moses. While the PAC prematurely saw itself as the 'new Moses' back then, it is the EFF who now presents themselves in that fashion.

4.6 EFF's nationalism and non-racialism

In presenting the EFF alongside and part of the 1940s Youth League, the EFF is laying claim to the radical strand of black nationalism. Claiming this radical tradition is in line with the EFF's efforts of presenting itself as the ultimate party for the black people of South Africa. It is a claim that depicts the EFF as a political party that will not compromise and 'sell out' the people to the enemy. But much like the ANCYL of old, the EFF subscribes to two contradictory ideologies of black nationalism.

The EFF's contradictions with black nationalism are noticeable in a number of instances, and they are made worse by the fact that the party is an embodiment of contradictions as seen below. Some of these contradictions, particularly when it comes to politics of race and the dogma of non-racialism reflect the party's lack of understanding of what it is claiming to be. For instance, although the EFF claims to be for black people, the party seems unable to talk about race and racism beyond and outside the class framework. In other words, I argue that although the party has sort of made an attempt to

explain its concept of 'economic freedom' discussed in Chapter 6, little effort has been made to theorize the party's position on race besides the superficial rhetoric level. This superficial treatment of race is also noticeable in the fact that race occupies a secondary place in the party's supposed ideology. In its 2014 constitution, for example, the party starts by defining its supposed economic position, before moving on to state its position on race and racism. The constitution of the party states that "The EFF is anti-capitalist, anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-imperialist in its world outlook" (EFF, 2014: 4). What this description tells us, as also illustrated below, is that race comes after class and or economics to the EFF. The point that race often takes a secondary role within the party will be further illustrated below.

The secondary treatment of race by the party is also reflected in its on and off relationship with the dogma of non-racialism. The EFF's stance on non-racialism is chameleonic, in line with its populism. For instance, according to Shivambu (2014: 14), the struggle for 'economic freedom' has a "fundamental non-racial character". Malema (2016) also echoed this 'fundamental character' when, speaking in London, he said that "we want to create a society where all of us exist as human beings and not as white and black". In an interview with a journalist, Malema described the EFF as "a non-racial organisation that fights for equal opportunities and rights for all South Africans, not blacks or Africans alone" (Shivambu, 2014: 227/228). And in its first ever press statements, the EFF "embraced… non-racialism and non-sexism" as one of its "values and principles" (Shivambu, 2014: 61).

As already been stated, populists are political chameleons whose political views on any single issue can change at any second based on their whims. Hence perhaps it is not a surprise that the party that 'embraces non-racialism' as a principle is the same party that rejects the political and moral bankruptcy of non-racialiam. For instance, while you saw Malema above embracing non-racialism, speaking to a different audience in a different time the same leader correctly stated a political and a

historical fact that non-racialism is nothing but an ideological tool used to defend white privilege, "This nonsense of non-racialism they are spreading in defence of white privilege, we are not part of that nonsense" (Mvumvu, 2019). We also saw this rupture from non-racialism in parliament when Malema stood up to define 'our people' as "the blacks in general and the Africans in particular" (Ndlozi, 2018). This definition of the people followed what the then national spokesperson of the EFF termed "a futile, historical and simplistic question" from Mosiuoa Lekota, the leader of the Congress of the People, who asked "who is our people" (Ndlozi, 2018).

Ndlozi (2018), in a confused opinion piece that was published in the white-centric news site *Daily Maverick* while still the party's spokesperson, also does not rule out non-racialism. In fact, in the piece, Ndlozi both embraces and rejects non-racialism at the same time. On the one hand, he correctly critics 'a commitment to non-racialism', while on the other hand, the same Ndlozi advocates for steps to "realise non-racialism". In other words, unlike Malema above who embraced and rejected non-racialism depending on the audience, Ndlozi performs the act of rejecting and embracing it in one opinion piece. Ndlozi's article, of course, displayed his and the party's high level of confusion because other than showing the party's inadequacy to talk about race outside of class, it reflected the party's lack of theoretical understanding of race (Suresh Roberts, 2019). Furthermore, Ndlozi's article was fundamentally confused because in the said article he embraces two contradictory positions at the same time on the issues he brings up. For instance, in the article, Ndlozi disputes the idea of a South Africa that "belongs to all who live in it", while affirming the same idea. Suresh Roberts (2019) correctly concludes that "Ndlozi forgets his own argument" in his own opinion piece.

The party's conflicted stance on non-racialism was also noticeable in some of the participants interviewed for this research. Participant 8, for instance, argued that:

> It is also important for people to understand that the EFF believes in anti-racism at the same time... In an aspiration context. So we believe that there

will be non-racialism in South Africa, we must fight for non-racialism in

South Africa after you start with the redistribution discussion.

The participant in this regard was conflicting two different ideologies, namely anti-racism and non-racism. The two differ in fundamental ways. While non-racialism is a pretend game of not recognizing one's race, a South African version of colour-blind as it were, anti-racism is its antithesis (Ansell, 2006; Majavu, forthcoming). Unlike the notion of colour-blindness, anti-racism recognizes the centrality of racism in the world. Anti-racism opposes the pretense-game, and advocates for the elimination of systematical and ideological racism (Kendi, 2019).

Non-racialism is an intellectual tool that stifles an honest critical debate about whiteness in South Africa (Majavu, 2021; Majavu, forthcoming). As discussed above, in practice, non-racialism is a way of serving and continuing to protect the interests of whites because it is based on the notion that the problem in South Africa, both historically and now, is essentially one of class rather than race (Milazzo, 2021). The black consciousness movement, as seen above, was highly critical of non-racialism because it knew what it was; a means of serving white interests at the expense of blacks. In line with the class-above-all-else approach, the discourse on non-racialism was and continues to be one aimed at displacing race as a focal point of resistance against colonialism and apartheid (Majavu, forthcoming).

Another mistake that Participant 8 made, which the party also makes, is to reduce the struggle against racism to the one about class. This was noticeable when the participant said

We think people need to understand the meaning of non-racialism in the

context of reparations. Stemming from the redistribution that we believe has

to happen. So non racialism must not be divorced from the economic policies

that we want to fight for. (Participant 8)

Participant 6 echoed the same sentiments in arguing that:

> Before we even begin to speak about the issue of non-racialism we need to
> undo the injustices of the past, we need reparations, we need black people to
> take back their land and ownership. We need black people to be on top. I don't
> believe in the notion of a rainbow nation or this thing of integrating with white
> people because we live already in an established society of white standards
> and white norms of which for us to exist in such a society is racist on its own.
> We must assimilate into such a space that does not accept our blackness.

The argument that both participants, together with the party which is premised on fighting for 'economic freedom', is to play into the old white liberal and white left project that always held the view that the primary issue in South Africa is that of class and capitalism rather than racism (Majavu, forthcoming). Participants 6 and 8 do this by highlighting the economic aspect of injustice and through invoking the idea of reparations. On the surface, this is a noble ideal, of course. A more careful analysis, however, reveals that what is at play here is an inability to talk about race and racism in South Africa outside the entrenched class analysis. To be fair, Participant 6 went on to factor in a solid black consciousness argument in his statement, but even he had to begin from a class position. The fault is not necessarily his but is a result of a party that is ideologically chameleonic and confused.

By putting race secondary to class, the EFF is playing into the whiteness project. In this project, race and racism occupy a back seat, while class is prioritized. This, it needs to be noted, is not a uniquely South African problem. Many black thinkers have had to abandon communist parties over it (Rabaka, 2011). For instance, in his 1956 resignation letter from the Communist party, Aime Césaire (2010: 147) writes that one of the reasons that led to his resignation was the tendency by the party of treating the "colonial question" as if it was "part of a more important whole". Césaire's argument was that the

race question cannot be diminished by the struggle against capitalism. Césaire (2010: 147) further argued that:

> In any case, it is clear that our struggle — the struggle of colonial peoples against colonialism, the struggle of peoples of color against racism— is more complex, or better yet, of a completely different nature than the fight of the French worker against French capitalism, and it cannot in any way be considered a part, a fragment, of that struggle.

Steve Biko's experience with the white left in South Africa was not different from Césaire's. The white liberals and leftists were comfortable with workers who fought against capitalism as workers, but they detested the idea of black people fighting against colonial oppression from the positionality of blacks (Biko, 2004). Bernard Magubane (1996: 4) writes that the white left's tendency to limit the oppression to class matters "ignores the critical differences in the exploitation of black and of white workers which are due specifically to racism". What Césaire, Biko and many others experienced from the white left was a situation whereby blacks were expected to assimilate into a system that continued to privileging whiteness, something that Participant 6 also alluded to. As Biko (in Gerhart 2008: 34) correctly stated:

> That it is not only capitalism that is involved; it is also the whole gamut of white value systems which has been adopted as standard by South Africa, both whites and blacks so far. And that will need attention, even in a post-revolutionary society. Value relating to all the fields —education, religion, culture, and so on. So your problems are not solved completely when you alter the economic pattern, to a socialist pattern. You still don't become what you ought to be. There's still a lot of dust to be swept off, you know, from the kind of slate we got from white society.

The point being made here is that even the party stance on being a 'party of black people 'is compromised by its prioritization of class over race, its confusion on non-racialism and the general inadequacy of talking about race. Were it not for populism, the party would clearly stay clear from advancing positions that serve the white liberal and left project, while proclaiming itself as a party of black people.

To be fair, the party seems aware that the prioritization of class over race is problematic, hence the forced ideological marriage of Marx, Lenin and Fanon (Shivambu, 2014). According to Shivambu (2014: 78), the aforementioned ideological marriage is meant to bring an end to the "bitter ongoing acrimony from the Eurocentric and racist arrogance of the West". He adds that the marriage also "finally liberates Marxism and Leninism from the mindset that dictates the African and black experience must be viewed from the Western perspective... Bringing Fanon into the great duet of Marx and Lenin completes the anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and anti-racist circle that is the only real basis for true liberation" (Shivambu, 2014: 78). Shivambu (2014: 78) is of the view that the inclusion of "Fanon signify a breakthrough of historic significance in the struggle against capitalism and white supremacy". Moreover, this ideological marriage, he argues, places the EFF "in the unique position to articulate black demands without shame or hesitation..." (Shivambu, 2014: 79). Therefore, the EFF "places black liberation at the core of its endeavors while extending an invitation to all people and races to participate in the struggle for economic emancipation for all" (Shivambu, 2014: 79).

Shivambu and the party that he represents completely miss the point, however. Firstly, the problem is not about liberating Marx and Lenin, rather the issue is that oppression in the colony and the post-colony has always been premised on race and racism. Hence a party that prides itself as that of black people, ought to recognize that race cannot be secondary in the post-colony. In speaking from a positionality of class and economy, the EFF is perpetuating the white left argument that colonialism and apartheid were essentially about class and the economy, rather than race. Together with the whites

liberals and white Marxists, they are in essence rejecting the fact that blacks were colonized firstly because they were viewed as half humans who needed to be civilized by whites, rather than as workers to be exploited by capitalists (Majavu, forthcoming). The argument is premised on the notion that once capitalism ends, racism will also miraculously be a thing of the past.

The reality, however, is that race and racism cannot be secondary in a post-colony that was founded on racist logic. This is why Biko above can say that merely changing the political economic system is futile if the question of race and racism is treated as secondary. Furthermore, as Césaire says, the struggle for the colonized and the former colonized cannot be considered as an addendum to that of class. It is worth repeating Césaire's (2010: 147) words in arguing that the fight against racism "is more complex, or better yet, of a completely different nature than the fight of the French worker against French capitalism, and it cannot in any way be considered a part, a fragment, of that struggle". Shivambu and the EFF have done exactly what Biko and Césaire warned against.

The inclusion of Fanon in the party's intellectual marriage seems more like an afterthought, a political decoration, rather than a serious undertaking of Fanon's thoughts. Fanon (1967a; 2001), after all, raises the same issues that Biko and Césaire raise regarding capitalism and colonialism. Fanon (1967a; 2001) is clear that the oppression of the black is not premised on class or the economic question, but on the very being of the black. Prior to asking for Marx to be rethought when dealing with a 'colonial problem', Fanon (2001: 30-31) states that in the colony "it is evident that what parcels out the world is to begin with the fact of belonging to or not belonging to a given race, a given species". This is why Fanon (2001: 31) talks about a "governing race" rather than a 'governing class'. In *Black Skin, White Mask*, Fanon points out that black people's oppression is different from other forms of oppression because the oppression of blacks is centered on their being. Rather than class, he argues, colonialism 'attacked 'the "corporeality", the "concrete personality" and the "actual being" of black people (Fanon 1967: 163).

Shivambu (2014: 79) further confirms not taking Fanon seriously when he concludes that "The Marxist-Leninist tools of analysis and guide to action dictate that, as a movement, the EFF is fighting for socialism and there is no doubt about that". Of course, no explanation is given as to why Fanon is suddenly omitted from the "tools of analysis and guide". The inclusion and the sudden omission of Fanon (who was never taken seriously in the first place) need to be understood as part of the populist politics of the EFF in line with the use of radical sounding slogans that in the end are meaningless. Furthermore, it displays a lack of commitment to take race and racism seriously beyond the nice sounding slogans.

Arguing that race be seen and treated as of primary importance is not the same as arguing that it be the alpha and omega (Mills, 1998). Rather the point is to avoid the situation where race is only treated as an add-on or is 'piggybacked 'into other theories such as class theory (Mills, 1998). It is to argue that class theories such as Marxism are "conceptually inadequate for the theorization of race and racism" (Mills, 1998). These are inadequate, firstly, because they tend to see race only as a capitalist tool that is supposedly meant to divide the workers of the world. Viewing race as an attitudinal manner, it argues that these racist attitudes will disappear once the capitalist system is overthrown. Secondly, they are inadequate because they do not take what Mills (1998) refers to as white racial polity seriously. The racial polity is a system that is able to independently function outside the capitalist or class framework. Similar to capitalism, the system privileges a selected group of people (Mills, 1997). Therefore, racism is a polity not a byproduct of capitalism but is a system that has its own rules (Mills, 1997; Mills, 1998). This idea should not be hard to understand in South Africa because the end of apartheid did not end the systematic racism that continues to privilege whites, at the expense of blacks. And it should not be hard to understand this idea in South Africa because the indoctrination of non-racialism has, as was intended by whites, led to a situation whereby race and racism are seen as secondary, if at all. In fact, in post-apartheid South Africa, the indoctrination of

non-racialism has led to a situation whereby those who highlight the prevalent racist nature in the country are the ones who are labeled as racists (Majavu, forthcoming). Malema and the EFF know this because every time they correctly call out the non-racialism ideology as a whiteness project, they get called all sorts of names as discussed in Chapter 5. Alas, the inherent populist nature of the party means that it cannot commit to any particular ideology or political stand.

4.7 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to trace some of the nationalist strands that the EFF often borrows from in order to supplement what I, in this thesis, refer to as the party's thin ideology. In being the populist political formation that the EFF is, with no clear and consistent ideology, the party then often makes use of slogans, phrases that can be traced to black nationalist movements that fought against colonialism and apartheid. The EFF borrows from this rich history as part of its strategy to depict itself as genuinely fighting for a better South Africa. As will be seen in the following chapters, beyond the slogans and populist rhetoric the party has no clear plan of how to move the country from its current challenges and lead it into the promised land. In fact, the EFF might set us back, rather than creating a more human society as the following chapter demonstrates.

Chapter 5: Praxis of a thin ideology: Performing populism

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses some of the characteristics that are central to the EFF's praxis of populism. Although the EFF practices its populism in various interconnected modes, in this chapter I largely focus on three of these, namely, the performance of the EFF as a 'people' protest party against the elite, secondly, the party's romanticisation of militarism and violence as symbolic acts of the revolution, and lastly presenting the leader of the party as a messiah. As will be seen shortly, these characteristics and performances of EFF's populism are interlinked and oftentimes play themselves out concurrently.

The chapter argues that the EFF's populist performances are all part of the design to position the party as an ultimate political party for the liberation of black people in post-apartheid South Africa. The argument that unfolds is that the EFF is able to depict itself in this manner because old and new forms of colonialism and racism have not been completely eradicated. In grounding itself in populist acts such as protests and violence the EFF is able to give an impression that it is more committed to the issues that affect black people more than the ruling ANC or any contemporary political party. In other words, the EFF depicts itself as some kind of a liberation movement of the moment that is fighting for the liberation of 'the people'. In this struggle, Malema is the leader who embodies 'the people's struggle and is seen as the face and the voice of 'the people' (Ostiguy, 2017). The chapter illustrates that the EFF is in the same league with other populist parties who "thrive on conflict" and whose "political business model is permanent culture war" (Muller, J.W., 2019: 36). And the chapter confirms the view that populists seek to "gain status, visibility and popular approval by generating

controversy, scuffling with incumbent political leaders and resorting to inflammatory rhetoric" (Mazzoleni, 2008: 55).

5.2 EFF and post-apartheid protest movement

Whilst still an important and influential member of the ruling ANC, Malema once chastised the then growing post-apartheid protest movement in the country as being made up of 'little spoilt brats'. His argument was that these 'little spoilt brats' should not be protesting because the ANC has delivered on its promises. The 'little spoilt brats' were protesting because, he argued, "They have been fed propaganda that there is no delivery" (News24, 2011). Malema went on to tell these 'little spoilt brats' that "only the ANC will take us out of poverty" (News24, 2011). This was a time when the ANC was embedded in Malema's blood, a time when he was willing and "prepared to take up arms and kill for" a particular ANC official who was facing corruption charges at the time (M&G, 2011; Posel, 2014). This was the time when he characterized opposition parties as patients who suffer from a 'serious illness' for opposing the ANC (Vincent, 2011).

Following his expulsion from the political party that was supposedly in his DNA, Malema has however sought to situate himself within the movement of 'little spoilt brats' and the 'seriously ill'. In situating himself and the EFF within this movement, they have gone to the point of describing the EFF not merely as a political party but also as a 'movement'. In its founding manifesto, the EFF says that it will "associate with the protest movement in South Africa" (Shivambu, 2014; 105). According to the same document, the party says it exists in order to be the "vanguard of community and workers' struggles and will always be on the side of the people" (Shivambu, 2014: 105).

In its founding manifesto, the party carefully and repeatedly defines itself as a "movement", more so than a political party (see Shivambu, 2014). Whilst still a key member of the EFF, Andile Mngxitama once claimed that "we're not a political party. We're a revolutionary movement" (cited in Booysen 2015: 234). The emphasis on 'movement', rather than a political party is but another populist stance

aimed at presenting the EFF, firstly not as a political party and secondly as different from the other political parties. Appearing to be different is a key part for the EFF, as the following quote from Malema demonstrates (Shivambu 2014: 244):

> So we always sit down and say how do we present ourselves differently because what we're saying is that we are an alternative. You can't be an alternative if you do what they do, so you need to model yourself and present yourself in a different way…

The party, therefore, models itself as being firstly against the status quo, and secondly as being against the elite establishment. Referring to itself as a movement is a part of modelling itself differently from the establishment parties. 'Movement' is used to make it seem as if the EFF is not part of the 'elite' political establishment and institutions that it is apparently fighting against. Repeatedly calling itself a 'movement', rather than a political party that it is registered as, symbolically removes the establishment and institutional status of the party. As noted earlier, populists thrive on differentiating themselves from other politicians and political parties on the basis that they are not part of the institutional and elite establishment (Canovan, 1999). Consequently, Taggart (2004: 276) notes that populists much "prefer to portray themselves as movements rather than parties". They are happy to be seen as part of 'the people' (Canovan, 1999). Mény and Surel (2002) contend that it is the nature of populists not to be seen as part of other political parties, even while they are registered as such and run for elections. The EFF proves itself not to be an exception from other populist parties who do not want to be seen as such despite the fact that it continues to be run like a political party with a strict top-down structure, rather than a horizontal and or 'people' power movement.

The EFF often feeds and attempts to give life to its 'movement' side through protests that the party has come to be both famously and infamously known for. Although the party has now grown to organise its own marches and protests, in the beginning, it often showed up in 'hot spots' in efforts

to be seen as organising and siding with protesting communities and workers across the country (Mbete, 2015; Nieftagodien, 2015a). Showing up for these protests was part of modelling the party as if it supports what Malema, in his ANC days, referred to as 'ill spoilt brats' who were fed propaganda. *Business Day* columnist, Steven Friedman (2014) hence could argue that the party's strategy, in those early days, was based on showing up in places where there were protests and proceeded to "telling local people what they want to hear". This is a strategy that Malema used when he went to Marikana on the eve and the aftermath of the massacre in 2012. The EFF would later claim that the platinum strike was inspired, if not necessarily led, by Malema (Nieftagodien, 2015a; Shivambu, 2014). The EFF was even officially launched as a political party in Marikana under the auspices that it was a worker's party (see Shivambu, 2014). The EFF, of course, is neither a worker's nor a 'people' movement, but rather a populist party.

The party has reached a stage where it is now able to organise its own significant marches and protests. The first of these was against the South African Broadcast Corporation (SABC) prior to the 2014 national elections. The protest was as a result of an election campaign advert that was banned by the SABC because the EFF called for 'people' to illegally destroy the e-tolls in the advert (Mbete 2015; EWN, 2014). Following the SABC's decision not to show the advert, which was upheld by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) an independent regulator, the party ended up using the ban "as a campaign tool and linking it to the grievances and methods of ordinary people" (Mbete, 2015: 43). In other words, the EFF argued that the ban was meant to serve the interests of the 'elite' and the establishment at the expense of 'the people'. The party suggested that both the ban and the ruling were part of a coordinated undemocratic process by the establishment to silence 'the people' (see Timeslive, 2014; EWN, 2014). The party argued that "Icasa by its ruling has confirmed that it is working together with all undemocratic interest groups" (Timeslive, 2014). According to Malema this was part of the establishment's strategy "to keep the EFF out the public eye" (Ndaba, 2014: 4).

The call for the 'physical' destruction of the e-tolls was perhaps the beginning of what Booysen (2015: 223) calls the "borderline spaces between the legal and illegal" campaigns that the EFF operates in. Some of these borderline spaces were the party's call for the illegal occupation of certain land spaces (Booysen, 2015). Over the years, EFF has continued to further blur the lines between legal and illegal means of protests in the name of the people. These blurred lines played out when the members of the party trashed H&M store following a racist advert by the retail clothing store. The rank and file members who participated in the protest received congratulatory messages from the leadership of the party, with Shivambu tweeting "Well done to Fighters who physically confronted racism" (February, 2018b). Despite the evidence of intimidation and the violent thrashing of stores, the party argued that the protests were "peaceful and orderly" (Sithole, 2018).

The party also 'physically' dealt with Vodacom stores after Mavuso Msimang, the chair of Corruption Watch, in one of his presentation slides, entitled "abusers of democracy" had the pictures of the top two leaders of the EFF at the Vodacom Journalist awards ceremony (Msimang, 2018). The party took this as a declaration of 'war', with the then deputy secretary, Hlengiwe Mkhaliphi tweeting that "Vodacom have declared war against EFF… let's go. Let's see who will win this war… Fighters Let's goooo" (February, 2018a). According to its then spokesperson, this was not merely a 'war' between Vodacom and the EFF, but a war against EFF by the entire establishment "uniting against us" (ENCA, 2018). He argued that the event was not an award ceremony, but a strategic meeting targeting the EFF. He warned, "fighters shouldn't be surprised that Vodacom was gathering journalists to strategise on how to deal with the party" (ENCA, 2018). Ndlozi's tweet included a White Monopoly Capitalism hashtag. The message that the party was sending out was that the EFF was a victim of 'the elite' and or 'the establishment'. The EFF uses such instances as further confirmation that it is not part of the establishment, and that in fact, the entire establishment colludes against it because the party is a 'people' movement. Populists, of course, thrive on the notion that the

establishment is against them, including the media, as further discussed below (Canovan, 1999; Tas, 2020). Framing the party as a victim of the system and the establishment is another tool used by populists as a real movement of 'the people' (Tas, 2020). The victimhood tool shifts the focus onto "the evil deeds and unjust harm of the adversary…[and] justifies one's moral superiority and the other's wickedness simultaneously", argues Tas (2020: 8).

The EFF's protest over a Clicks store advert was another that was framed along victimhood and moral superiority lines. The protest against Clicks is probably one of the party's biggest and most notable one by the party's standards. The protest against the store came after the company classified white people's hair as 'normal' and 'fine' while classifying that of black people as 'dull' and 'damaged' in an advert. The EFF, fresh from its lockdown induced hibernation, commanded its "fellow fighters, and ground forces" to "ATTACK" (Citizen, 2020a). The 'attack' led to another 'physical' confrontation with 'racism' which saw 'fighters and ground' forces' blocking entrances and locking Clicks stores across the country. As was the case with the 'physical' confrontation of H&M, and the war on Vodacom, the Clicks 'attack' also included intimidation of staff and customers, trashing of stores, and at least one store set alight (SABC, 2020). Even in this case, the EFF framed their protests as a necessary moral response of a 'people' against an evil establishment. Similar to the Vodacom protests, Clicks had to visit the party's headquarters to appease the leadership of the EFF in order for it to resume operations.

Through these protests, the EFF deliberately positions itself as a party of 'the people' against an evil white establishment. The party, particularly in its protests against H&M and Clicks, sought to affirm its place as a party of black people that 'physically' confronts racism for and with the people. In resorting to protests and calling on the 'ground forces', the EFF is playing into a key populist trope that it is a 'movement' for 'the people'. The idea of 'physically confronting racism', rather than going through other more formal and institutional channels, is part of the populist playbook that is central

to the party's body politic. Populists realising the mistrust that the general population has on politicians and political parties, pride themselves on being part of 'the people' (Canovan, 1999). Marches and protests are part of an act and political performance designed to suggest that 'the people's power has been restored (Mény & Surel, 2002). And the use of institutional channels is said to be a tool of the elite (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017).

The EFF's efforts of being seen as a 'people's movement' also take the shape of attacking institutions of democracy such as the regulatory body Icasa as serving the interests of the elite establishment. Over the years such attacks have become more amplified and are a key feature of the party's modus operandi. This, of course, is not unusual for a populist party to label institutions in such a manner (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). It is a key feature of populism since it further entrenches the perception that the populist party is for the people and against the institutions that are said to serve the elite. One such institution that has also come under attack from the EFF leadership is the South African Revenue Service (SARS). The fact that SARS found that Malema lied about his tax affairs is used by the party to its own political advantage. The party, true to its populist political identity, claims that revenue service targeted Malema only for political reasons (Shivambu, 2014). According to Shivambu (2014: 49-50), the tax charges by SARS were manufactured by "senior government officials" who met in Cape Town to plot against Malema. He says it was part of a plan to subject Malema to "humiliation and harassment" (Shivambu, 2014: 50). According to Malema, SARS only went after him because they wanted to "destroy" him since he is a "potential threat" (Shivambu, 2014: 271). Malema further states that (Shivambu, 2014: 271-272):

> It's a political agenda and it's unfortunate how SARS gets to be used like
> that… Is SARS a tool to destroy people? The Afrikaners, they dominate
> SARS. There are Afrikaner there who are using SARS to promote Afrikaner
> business and suppress African majority's business. They're there…

Are we really dealing with SARS or are we dealing with people who are suffering from a hangover of apartheid and anything else that seems to be representing an agenda to liberate the African majority against white supremacy?

Malema then concludes that he is a "victim of a political onslaught" (Shivambu, 2014: 269) who is dealing with enemies who "will use all different kinds of attack to undermine" him (Shivambu, 2014: 273). If these enemies had their way, according to Malema, they would have even taken all his clothes leaving him to walk around "naked" (Shivambu, 2014: 272). What is at play here is all in line with the praxis of populism. In Chapter 2, the thesis discussed how populists also make use of victimhood to further their political agenda (Tas, 2020). It was argued that when punished for their transgression, they spin the situation for it to reflect as if they are being punished by the 'elite' solely for political reasons. They invoke a 'collective victimhood' narrative to show that they, like 'the people', are the victims of institutions that serve the interest of the elite (Tas, 2020). We see this in how Malema strategically invokes the domination of 'Afrikaners' who are there to ensure that the apartheid agenda continues to reign supreme, and we see it in how Shivambu portrays Malema transgressions as being manufactured in a secret meeting by top government officials. This is what populists do to establish an "emotional link" between the leader and the supporters "while validating his 'one of us' exclusivist narrative" (Tas, 2020: 9). What the party will not tell us is that SARS went after Malema because he lied about his source of income and that he admitted to his dishonesty in the form of paying back the money he owed through an agreement with the same SARS that wanted to 'destroy' him politically. Tas (2020: 8) argues that the deployment of victimhood also serves to "diverts attention on the acts of the other, the victim remains a passive recipient of the injustices and cannot be held responsible for his own behaviour or actions". We see this diversion at play in how the EFF chooses to discuss Malema's tax transgression. The populist narrative is constructed in such a manner as to depict institutions such as SARS as part of a collective "corrupt group that works against the "general will"

of the people" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, 12). This is what populist do throughout the world in an effort to depict themselves as "political outsiders" who are persecuted for representing the ordinary people (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 63)

The EFF's narrative of being an outsider that is targeted by the elite institutions is also noticeable in how it talks about the judiciary and the media. Mudde & Kaltwasser (2017: 81) argue that these two are often "the most targeted institutions" by populists. The EFF has been central in propagating the view that some of the country's judges are hired and paid to target political opponents. Even the state capture commission has also been accused of being a political instrument to deal with political opponents. He has accused the chair of the commission of working "in a factional way in favour of white establishments" (Njilo, 2021). In a Women's Day speech in 2019, Malema gave his listeners an impression that judges are favouring "male white Afrikaner lawyers" (Singh, 2019). He further warned that these judges pose a threat to the country's democracy (Singh, 2019). In 2020, the party referred to a court judgement that went against its wishes "as a stolen judgement in that it was obtained through thuggery" (Maughan, 2020: 3; Pambo, 2020). Ndlozi has said that "we are going to lose confidence and respect in the courts and the very concept of the rule of law" because, in his view, court judgements were not making sense (Mtshali, 2020). And in 2021, Malema, in parliament, stated that:

> We cannot continue to bury our heads in the sand against growing and now
> believable allegations that some prominent members of the judiciary are in
> the payroll of the white capitalist establishment…
> We cannot ignore that some of the judges have received bribes through SSA
> Project Justice as well as from CR17 donations, which by all standards and
> measures, amounted to massive corruption, money-laundering and
> racketeering (Davis, 2021; Makinana, 2021).

Malema in true populist fashion warned these judges that "the people will rise against" them if they continued to collude "with politicians to deal with the opponents of the current establishment" (Davis, 2021; Makinana, 2021). Malema is, of course, not new to all of this (see Forde, 2014; Heffernan, 2014; Vincent, 2011). For instance, while defending Zuma, another arch populist, Malema said that "If he is so corrupt and he must be punished, let the voters do that. Why do you want to subject him to the hands of the few, the judiciary, the judges and the media?" (cited in Vincent, 2011: 5).

It needs to be noted, however, that the party accuses the judiciary of being corrupt, of working with dark invisible forces without a shred of evidence. The idea that the judiciary is corrupt and working to serve the establishment is part of the populist ideology of depicting democratic institutions as part of the anti-people establishment (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). In so doing, the populists are highlighting that they, and only them, are the true representatives of 'the people'. They argue that their 'movement' is the only one that can instill democracy in the country for 'the people'. This is all in line with what was discussed as the populist emphasis on the redemptive face of democracy, the notion that 'the people' are the only legitimate rulers (Canovan, 1999). Furthermore, expressing the view that judges are corrupt, without any form of evidence, is part of the populist idea of wanting to 'shock' and to be 'controversial' as means of getting media attention.

The party's tendency to say the most outrageous statements without any form of evidence was also in full display when the party claimed that it had won the Gauteng province during the 2014 national elections. While launching the 2016 Election Manifesto Malema said the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) "stole votes in Alexandra… We defeated the ANC in 2014, they stole our votes" (M&G, 2016). Malema went on to state that the IEC was rigging election results as part of an attempt to "defeat the power of the black nation" (M&G, 2016). In an interview on Al Jazeera, Malema said that if his party's elections are stolen again, the EFF will "remove the government through the barrel of a gun" (Thamm, 2016). In the same interview, he said that "we know for a fact that they lost

Johannesburg and they lost Gauteng" (Thamm, 2016). The party has never produced the 'facts' that Malema claimed to have. It is worth re-emphasizing that Malema, here, is claiming that a less than one year old party bizarrely won an entire province! The fact, however, is that the EFF in the 2014 elections got 10.30%, a far cry from the DA's 30.78% and the ANC's 53.59% votes in Gauteng (IEC, 2014a). Therefore, in order for the EFF to 'defeat the ANC' in the 2014 elections, the IEC would have to steal millions of ballot papers and surely the theft will have to have occurred beyond Alexandra and Johannesburg. If such a large scale of theft can be hidden, then surely the following national and provincial elections will reflect the misnomer or expose the theft. Yet, the 2019 national elections results were not vastly different from the 2014 elections. According to the IEC, in 2019, 52.2% of the electorate in Gauteng voted for the ANC, while 24.53% voted for the DA, and 13.53% voted for the EFF (IEC, 2019). The party was able to accept the 2019 elections with seemingly no issues (EWN, 2019). Malema's claim of a stolen election is part of the inherent deception politics that populists across time and space also thrive on. Secondly, the party's claim of stolen elections, without any form of evidence, is another way of saying democratic institutions such as the IEC are part of the elite establishment that is against 'the people'. The EFF, like other populists across the world over, often feels obliged to blame its self-created misfortunes on the elite. It is part of the victimhood identity that is at the core of populist parties (Tas, 2020). It is also in line with their desire of being seen as 'political outsiders' who have an adverse relationship with the establishment (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017).

The media has probably been the one institution that has been at the receiving end of the EFF's attack more so than other institutions. The party tends to spend its energies on the parts of the media that are critical or expose the political hypocrisy of the EFF. It needs to be noted, however, that the party used to have a relatively good relationship with many of these institutions, including the white centric Daily Maverick, before they started writing news articles critical of the party (Habib, 2018b; McKaizer, 2018; van Onselen, 2019). The relationship with the Daily Maverick, for instance, was so

good that the party's leaders used to even write opinion pieces on the platform, and its leaders would happily appear at the Daily Maverick's events such as the Gathering (see Nicolson, 2016). The relationship turned sower only after media outlets started writing and publishing stories that linked the party to corruption and unethical behaviour (see Amabhungane, 2018; van Wyk, 2018a; van Wyk, 2018b; van Wyk, 2018c). The party, true to its populism, spun the fall out as a matter of a 'cabal' working against the 'the people'. In its press statement on the matter the party said that "Journalists are working with politicians to discredit the EFF" (EFF, 2019a). Malema labeled them "as enem[ies] of the revolution" (Amabhugane, 2019). The party's deputy president, Shivambu, told one journalist that the Daily Maverick "is a political instrument and a communication department of Pravin Gordhan's cabal" (Ngqakamba, 2019).

The EFF also tends not to shy away from focusing its attention on particular journalists. One such journalist is Ranjeni Munusamy who has always had a peculiar political life having had been part of the Friends of Jacob Zuma campaign before returning to journalism (Munusamy, 2012). Yet, the EFF only played up her well known colourful past once she started publishing stories critical of the party. Prior to these critical stories, she was a darling of the EFF as can be seen in her interaction with the party in events such as the Daily Maverick's The Gathering mentioned above. Munusamy (2018 & 2019), then a senior journalist for the *Sunday Times,* is one of the people leading the charge that the EFF is a threat to media freedom. In one of her columns for the paper, she argues that the EFF is "trying to intimidate the media into relinquishing its watchdog role" (Munusamy 2018: 18).

The sudden change of the relationship between the EFF and the media is in line with populists across time and space. This change needs to be understood as part of the "dichotomic love/ hate relationship" that populists have with the media (Moffitt, 2016: 81). On one hand, the populists need the media, as they use it as one of their 'stages' to perform their populism and appeal to their audience (Moffitt, 2016). On the other hand, however, they need to maintain the pretense that they are permanently at

war with the entire establishment. Mazzoleni (2008) argues that the media that is critical of the populist tends to be the one at the receiving end of populist bullying. As Moffitt (2016: 82) argues populists hate "media that opposes them or is critical of them". Moffitt (2016) argues that this media gets to be depicted by the populist as part of the elite establishment that exists sorely to serve the elite interests. This is why the EFF suddenly turned against media institutions and personnel that it used to be in a 'love' relationship with.

5.3 Militarism, violence and the revolution

The EFF amplifies its image as a 'revolutionary movement' with a large dose of intimidation and violence. As a result, the protests discussed above often go hand in hand with an element of violence and or threats of violence. It is the kind of violence that is aimed at symbolic depicting the EFF as a party of 'revolution'. The violence and intimidation that the party uses in its protests and against opponents is not accidental, but rather is at the core of the party and is part of the 'modelling' that Malema spoke about above. The party embodies violence. This embodiment is in its name (fighters), the name of its structures (commands), the way members call each other (fighter), and the language generally used by the party (Pauwels, 2019). The party deliberately created this violent and military image of itself intentionally, as evidenced by Malema statement below (Shivambu 2014: 243):

> So we agreed that this is how we are going to call ourselves to give people a
> sense of a fight which is going on, and they must not relax and think that we
> have arrive…
> They know we are fighters, we must fight to change the living conditions of
> their people, so we will always strive for a different type, you know, presence
> which will make us unique.

The quote above reveals, amongst others, two things that Tas (2020) highlights about populists, namely politics of victimhood and a siege mentality. Victimhood has already been discussed above, and in the above quote is reflected by the notion that there is an ongoing 'fight', and hence people

must respond by fighting back against the enemy. According to Tas (2020) the victimhood narrative of populists often goes hand in hand with a 'siege mentality', hence Malema above alongside victimhood talks about fighting back. Paraphrasing Bar-Tal & Antebi (1992), Tas (2020: 7) argues that a siege mentality is a collective "belief that the in-group is encircled by enemies and in immediate need of self-defence". The EFF plays this part of 'self-defence' very well, hence the sentiment that they, as fighters, must participate in the ongoing fight rather than 'relaxing'. The usage of victimhood and siege mentality also enables the populists to justify their actions and behaviour as a response to the 'evil' elite. The populists use these to avoid accounting for any of their actions on the basis that theirs are minor compared to the ones committed by the other side. In this framework, any critique, and or opposition to the populists is seen as siding with the 'enemy', while the party is seen as a representative and the ultimate voice of the people (Tas, 2020). Hence it is not accidental that the party's theatrics are often clouded with violence that is often said to be a revolutionary act.

The glorification of violence and militarism often goes hand in hand with expressions such "Vote EFF because EFF is not afraid of white people" (PoliticsWeb, 2019), or "we don't want people who are scared of whites" (Sindane, 2013), "We are not scared of the police" (Pheto, 2020), "We are not scared of the army… We are not scared to fight… We will fight", (Mabuzo, 2016). Malema, as already seen above, has also said that the EFF is prepared to take the country into a civil war in order to bring about what he and his party call real freedom. According to Malema, the EFF will eventually "run out of patience very soon and we will remove this government through the barrel of a gun" (Thamm, 2016). Parties such as the ruling party, on the other hand, are depicted as being timid, sell-outs and "scared of white people" (Citizen, 2020b). Unlike political parties who are supposedly scared of fighting, the EFF is not because, as Malema has said, "Part of the revolutionary duty is to fight and we are not ashamed if the need arises for us to take up arms and fight" (Aljazeera, 2016).

The EFF not only talks violence, but also acts it out. Consequently, apart from the 'physical confrontations' discussed above, the party's leadership has a tendency of using violence in order to get their way. For instance, the party's current Secretary General, Marshall Dlamini was caught on camera assaulting a police officer in parliament during the 2019 State of the Nation Address (Meyer, 2019). Dlamini's predecessor, Godrich Gardee was also caught on camera assaulting a member of the EFF's Student Command. Malema, supporting Gardee's actions, stated that he "would have done worse than what the SG did for that office of the EFF is not a playground… we'll make you meet your maker, quickly" (Somdyala, 2019). Malema, in other words, was saying that he would have killed the person who was assaulted by Gardee. The deputy president of the party, Floyd Shivambu was also caught on camera manhandling a journalist who took pictures of him in parliament. Shivambu later apologised for what he called his "impatience" and stated that there are "more important issues to speak about in the public discourse" than a Deputy President of the 2nd biggest opposition party attacking a journalist in front of other journalists in parliament (Pather, 2018). Malema also has a pending assault case after he and the former spokesperson, Ndlozi manhandled a white police officer.

The violent nature of the EFF has obviously led some analysts to conclude that the party is a "threat" to the country's democracy (Suttner, 2019). Legardien (2018) writes that rather than deepen democracy, the EFF is more likely to take "us back even further, to the rise of the thuggery, violence and intimidation of Nazi Germany". Habib (2018b) argues that the party's violent nature reflects its racist side. To be fascist, argues Habib (2018b), you do not need to be of a certain age or race, you become one based on your behaviour and most importantly on one's ideology. Like fascists in other places in the world, he argues, the EFF 'racism', macho-culture, use of violence and bullying are traits that are associated with fascists the world over (Habib 2018b).

The characterisation of the EFF as a fascist and or neo-nazi organisation is, of course, widespread in popular media (see Buccus, 2018a; Habib, 2018a; Habib, 2018b; Mashele, 2018; van Onselen, 2018a). According to Buccus (2018a):

> There are aspects of the EFF's conduct, and statements that it has made, that can and should be described as fascist. It's militaristic political image, the cult around its leader, its authoritarianism, its xenophobia, its sexism and its racial chauvinism are all typical of fascist movements. However, the EFF is not consistently fascist. There was certainly nothing fascist about holding Zuma to account in the name of the Constitution. The EFF is therefore, an unstable and contradictory political project with fascist elements.

He further goes on to say that the "EFF must be opposed by all democratic and progressive forces in South Africa. They may not be a fully-fledged fascist project but they could easily move in that direction" (Buccus, 2018a). According to Buccus (2018b), the EFF is a party that poses "a clear and urgent threat to our democracy" and hence will lead the country straight "into the abyss". A *Sunday Times* (2018a: 14) editorial expressed a similar sentiment when it argued that the "unruliness and intolerance" of the "hooligans in red overralls and hard hats" is posing a threat to parliament, and the country in general. The editorial, entitled 'Don't confuse violent thuggery and race-baiting with vibrant politics' also went as far as to refer to the EFF as thugs (Sunday Times, 2018a: 14). Mthombothi (2018), a *Sunday Times* columnist, is of the view that the "EFF thugs" only know the language of "chaos and lawlessness".

Buccus's (2018a) main issue with the EFF and its leadership is based on what he calls the "throwing out [of] non-racism as a political principle". The EFF's position on non-racialism has also led scholars such as Habib (2018a & 2018b) to call other non-racialism believers to unite and "stand up to the EFF's politics of hate". The *Sunday Times* (2018b: 22), in another editorial, also called for the country

to unite against Malema's efforts to divide the country along racial and tribal lines. Buccus (2018b), talking to the ones who are against the EFF, states that "No-one who stands up to the thuggery of the EFF should feel that they are alone" because "they have the support of the democratic majority". Judith February (2018a) referred to this 'democratic majority' as "all of us, as citizens" who need to defend "our democracy" from the threat that is posed by the EFF.

In a *Sunday Times* opinion piece, Milton Shain (2018) argues that the "racial nationalist" Malema, does not possess the "innovative thinking associated with serious fascist thinkers", or as van Onselen (2019) calls them the "great fascists", that is European fascists. Malema's rhetoric, according to Shane, is "Africanist in a racist sense". Shain (2018) goes on to say that Malema, who "holds a sword over whites" might one day lead a genocide against whites. Brij Maharaj (2018), continuing in the same line of thought, argues that the leadership of the EFF hates Indians to the point of "trying to succeed where the NP had failed" in terms of sending them back to India.

Prince Mashele (2018) goes as far as to say that the constitution of the EFF reads like pages from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. He argues that similar to "the Nazi Party, the EFF is evidently a national-socialist party. The difference, he argues, is that the EFF's "nation" is not Aryan, but "purely black" (Mashele, 2018). He sees the pro-black agenda of the EFF as a problem in the country's efforts to celebrate diversity (Mashele, 2018). Mashele (2018) also argues that the party's take on race issues further serves its fascists agenda by displaying an antipathy towards whites, Indians, and coloureds.

With Zuma gone, the *Sunday Times* (2018b: 22) editorial argued, "Malema's true colours are emerging again. He is coming after us – all of us". On the same day, the *Sunday Times* published a column by Ranjeni Munusamy (2018) characterising the EFF and its leaders as destroyers of nations and of people's lives. Some of the 'true colours' that are often associated with the EFF is that of being anti-press freedom, as discussed above.

Nieftagodien (2015: 26) who views the EFF as a legitimate left formation is also critical of the authoritarianism within the party, argues that the party's "left impulses are constantly undermined by inherited practices of authoritarianism and populism". Southall (2014: 91) refers to the EFF's authoritarian as "Mugabe-style radical nationalist populism". Forde (2014), a biographer of Malema, has described Malema as a "womb-to-tomb dictator" (2014: 153), and "a man who is more committed to himself than to the ideals of socialism…" (2014: 170).

There is no doubt that the EFF is certainly an authoritarian and a violent populist party, however, I maintain that simply labelling them as fascists stifles the debate around the party's political identity and what the party represents, as thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, most people who characterise the party as a fascist political formation are usually people who hate the EFF for discussing race and racism outside the white centric non-racialism dogma. More than anything else, they hate the EFF for talking about race outside the constraints of non-racialism, which, as discussed above, are there only as a mechanism to maintain the racial polity. It is a racial polity that is based on racial hierarchies with whites at the top and the most privileged of all social groups, and blacks as a social group at the bottom of the hierarchy. These modern day defenders of non-racialism, blinded by their loyalty to the racial polity that benefits them, therefore label the EFF's critique of non-racialism as fascism and racist. As was earlier discussed, non-racialism has always been used as a tool to silence black radical thought. Hence, most of the literature that tends to characterise the EFF as fascist tends to be from the modern day defenders of the problematic non-racialism discourse (see Buccus, 2018b; February, 2018a; Habib, 2018b; Legardien, 2018; Maharaj, 2018; Shain 2018). These are people who in fact stifle and silence a serious and honest discourse about race and racism in South Africa. As was the case with the old defenders of non-racialism, the modern day defenders are also happy with the white racial polity that continues to reign supreme in contemporary South Africa because they mostly also benefit from it.

Furthermore, as was previously argued, the charge that the EFF is fascist is theoretically limited and hence does not help us much. The fact that the EFF is violent does not automatically make it fascist. The EFF has made violence part of its identity because the party styles itself as a "present-day liberation army" (Pauwels, 2019). Therefore, the violent nature of the EFF needs to be understood as part of its populism act and performance, as argued above. One can indeed problematize and critique the politics and violence of the EFF without characterizing the party as a 'fascist' or dishonestly accusing the party of being racist against the beneficiaries of the existing racial polity.

The party engages in violence and is a glorification of violence because of the misconception that violence symbolises revolution and one's commitment to justice (Pauwels, 2019). It goes without saying, of course, that the party is naive in this thinking. It is naive because it fails to understand the fact that South Africa is what it is today because of the 'culture of violence' (Marks & Anderson, 1990) that was imposed and characterised the South African townships during colonial and apartheid years (Breetzke, 2012; Kynoch, 2008; Steenkamp, 2005). Research confirms that political violence leaves a mark on the entire fabric of the society, hence long after the conflict, violence remains within the broader society, as has been the case in South Africa (Breetzke, 2012; Kynoch, 2008; Steenkamp, 2005). According to Steemkamp (2005), violence continues in post-conflict societies because the normalised culture of violence during the political conflict affected norms and values of the whole society at a personal and at an institutional level. The culture of violence leads to a situation whereby long after the political conflict has ended violence "loses its political meaning and becomes a way of dealing with everyday issues: it becomes 'trivialized' or 'everyday', and becomes a socially acceptable mechanism to achieve power and status in society" (Steenkamp, 2005: 254). What this means is that while violence is often the tool of choice used by groups in a political conflict, "it creates a real threat to the creation of a peaceful society in a post-war setting" (Steenkamp, 2005: 265).

The townships are what they are because successive colonial governments normalised violence whenever it was dealing with black people of this country (Kynoch, 2008). Colonialism works the way it works, and as a result, townships remained war zones even when the colonial state was not the one directly perpetrating violence (Mamdani, 1996). Consequently, violence such as 'necklacing' were acts that were performed largely in townships (Moosage, 2010). Violent crimes in post-apartheid South Africa mostly occur in places where colonial and apartheid government imposed a 'culture of violence' (SAPS, 2020). Furthermore, the colonial state violence continues to be used as a political solution against problematic blacks in the post-apartheid era (Pithouse, 2016). The post-apartheid state has done little to curb the culture of violence in the townships. In glorifying violence, the EFF compounds the problem, as opposed to solving it. It amplifies this problem through normalising violence and intimidation as forms of solution as discussed above. And the biggest problem with the use of violence is the fact that its impact continues long after the political 'revolution' has passed. As the townships show, its long-term effects impact the people at the bottom of the social structure more so than the privileged spaces that the political leaders occupy (Breetzke, 2012; Kynoch, 2008; Steenkamp, 2005).

5.4 The leader as the people

Leadership is central in populist parties, as is the case with other political formations (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). Populist parties are often associated with 'strong leaders' and or 'charismatic strongmen' who have a fairly large following and with an ability to mobilise a large number of followers (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). The image of a populist leader "is carefully constructed" so as to reflect them as the representations of 'the people' (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 63). Hence their speeches and their behaviour in the political theatre are often part of the well constructed image. Furthermore, because the leader of the populist party is so central to the party's image, as they often embody the party, they "tend to rule on the basis of a "cult of the leader", which portrays him as a masculine and potentially violent figure" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 63). Since populist parties pride themselves on simplicity and directness, their leaders often embody these characteristics as

well, hence the image of a populist party is that of a man who is decisive and is not afraid to act (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). Taggart (2004: 276) argues that the charismatic strongman that the party is built around ends up creating "problems in transferring authority to new leaders".

As will be seen below, the leader of the EFF, Julius Malema is also someone who presents himself, and by the party he leads, as a strong and decisive leader. Malema is also charismatic and knows how to attract media attention. The EFF under Malema also seems to be falling into the 'cult of the leader' syndrome. Malema embodies the party he leads so much that one newspaper columnist argues that "the EFF is, ultimately, a mere extension of Malema's personality" (van Onselen, 2018a). This 'extension', argues van Onselen (2018a), is due to the fact that the EFF:

> was forged by him, in his own image. A monument to one man. And it has adopted his personality as a result. Most political parties take on, in one form or another, the personality traits of their leader. But, through time and change, they have a set of other influences – previous leaders and external set of voices, wise elders, who have helped shape the party – to keep it focused on principle. The EFF, barely five years old, has none of that. There is only Malema, inside and outside the party, he is the Alpha and the Omega, and the EFF's heart beats in time with his own.

Malema is so key to the existence of the EFF to the point that all the people in the leadership structure can change at any time, but seemingly not him. A case in point is how in the party's internal contestation for positions, the one position that is never contested is that of the leader. People who occupy positions such as chairperson, treasury, secretary general have proven to be relatively changeable, as was seen in the party's 2nd elective conferences in late 2019 (Cele & Nyathi, 2019). There were even murmurs about contesting the deputy president position in the 2nd elective

conference (Cele & Nyathi, 2019; Saba, 2019). But the one position that was never in question is that of the leader of the party (Nyathi, 2019a).

The importance that the party places on its leader, Malema, is so great that they even have endearment names for him such as 'CiC' or 'commander in chief', 'son of the soil', and "Maolema' (Poplak, 2014). While still a member of the EFF, Mngxitama once advanced an argument that "Julius is our best gift" (Poplak, 2014). He argued that Malema was the necessary "unifying symbol" that South Africa needs in the continuing struggle for freedom (Mngxitama, 2014a). In his defence of Malema as a 'unifying symbol' Mngxitama endorsed the idea that the struggle needs someone like Margaret Thatcher, a role that is apparently played by Malema. The party's second in command, on the other hand, compares Malema to the likes of Lenin, Che, Sankara and Chavez (Shivambu, 2014).

The rank and file members also often view Malema as a God-sent who has been sent "to lead us to freedom" (Mngxitama, 2014a). This came out clearly at the party's second elective conference, whereby a large number of members went to the extent of bowing and kneeling to their 'son of the soil', as if worshipping the golden calf (Citizen, 2019). The party's communications manager, Sixolisile Gcilishe would later write on twitter that "Bowing to him is a sign of thanksgiving, appreciation and because we are at [a] loss for words, we bow" (CurrentAffairZa, 2019). Such gestures, and sentiments, of course, further confirm the 'cult of the leader' syndrome within the party. The other problem with leaders who are cult-like is that, apart from the problem of transferring power to the next leader, there are also questions about the nature of democracy within the political party itself. Although the issue of internal democracy within the EFF is thoroughly discussed below, for now, it suffices to say that the party and its leader favour a strict top-down authoritarianism over participatory democracy (Pillay, 2014b; Nyathi, 2019b).

As a leader of a populist party, Malema also has the know how of the performative populism. According to Glaser (2013: 143) Malema "allows his populist instincts to guide him". It is these instincts that have led him to be known as one of the "most astute politicians" of our time (Gunner, 2015: 333). Like the party he represents Malema often presents himself as the savour of 'the people' from oppression and enslavement by 'the enemy'. Part of Malema's image managing process involves presenting himself as a direct opposite of the 'negotiated revolution' that Mandela embodied (Posel, 2014). Hence he is able to utter statements such as "We are not going to compromise like Madiba did" (ENCA, 2015). While Mandela espoused a non-racialism discourse, Malema and the EFF, on the other hand, often claim the radical strand of black nationalism as was discussed in the previous chapter (Posel, 2014). In other words, unlike Mandela, Malema and the EFF have an on (embrace it) and off (reject it) relationship with the non-racialism discourse that has been a tool of perpetuating and protecting whiteness. While Mandela is represented as a loving dove, Malema's politics are centred on spectacle and confrontation. He is not afraid to confront whites and racism in a manner that is considered to be confrontational (Posel, 2014). He perfectly fits the description above of a populist leader who wants to be seen as a "man of action, rather than words, who is not afraid to take difficult and quick decisions" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017: 64).

5.4.1 Leadership, not the people, knows best

The EFF's ambivalent relationship with democracy and its inherent chameleonic populist politics is also noticeable in its internal dealings. The party that claims to be a direct representative of the people, internally practices what it is supposedly fighting against externally. Such inconsistencies and deception are not hard to fathom when we view the EFF as a populist party above all else. As was earlier noted, populists are not committed to any single ideology or political viewpoint. Rather, their views and actions at any particular time are influenced by the moment, the mood of the leader and what they seek to gain at any point in time. This is why the party is able to continue to be many things to itself and to many people. For instance, below we see a party that claims to be for the people and people centred practicing an elite form of governance within. While the party claims to be a party of

the people, it operates in a strict top-down manner whereby the top structures overpower and over rule the bottom structures (Veriava, 2015). This top-down structure is also noticeable in the EFF's adoption of a state-centric and "vanguardist interpretation of 'Marxist-Leninism'" as opposed to a participatory understanding of socialism (Naidoo, 2015: 7). This interpretation is one that leans "towards a vanguardist/ oligarchic mode of struggle, which placed power within the hands of the leadership, and followers followed" (Naidoo, 2015: 7).

The EFF describes its top-down structure as a form of democratic centralism. One senior leader of the EFF told me that democratic centralism, in the EFF means that "the powers of the upper structures are binding on the lower structures" (Participant 1). He further went on to state that (Participant 1):

> You can't have an organization without democratic centralism. And there is
> no political organization in the world without democratic centralization. They
> might not call it that. Democratic centralism means that once decisions have
> been taken, there can't be some federal arrangement internal of someone
> saying that, well, you have launched a manifesto, but we don't agree with
> nationalizing of mines. Democratic centralism means we read from the same
> script. No one else must try to be creative with the policies and practices of
> the organization. Democratic centralism keeps organizations together.

Democratic centralism, in other words, is a very clear top-down approach and those at the bottom cannot take decisions that contradict those made by the top structure (Lodge, 2004). In other words, democratic centralism is "premised on the belief that a unified, hierarchical organisational structure, whereby advice flowed from the bottom up and decisions from the top down, is the most efficacious" (Johnson, 2003: 324). The constitution of the party explains that democratic centralism means "that the individual is subordinate to the organisation, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, and decisions of the upper structures are binding on the lower

structures" (EFF, 2014: 5). The discussion document to the party's second National People's Assembly explains that democratic centralism means once a decision has been taken "there is no expression of minority reports and perspectives that contradict the adopted position" (EFF, 2019c: 25). Furthermore, decisions made by the higher structures "should be implemented and adhered to without any form of defiance" (EFF, 2019c: 25). It will become clear that the EFF's democratic centralism contradicts its positions, as stated in its constitution, of being a party that believes in "the dictatorship of the people in place of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie" (EFF, 2014: 3; Shivambu, 2014: 76). This is a contradiction simply because within the EFF the 'dictatorship of the bourgeoisie' supersedes that of 'the people'. As illustrated below, the EFF believes that this leadership knows what is best for the organisation more than the rank and file, who supposedly form part of 'the people'. Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, speaking as the spokesperson of the party, made this clear when he said "The leadership knows what is in the best interests of the EFF" (Nyathi, 2019b).

The EFF's democratic centralism has seen 15 out of the first 25 Members' of Parliament (MPs) resign or being expelled from the party. A fact which has led van Onselen (2018b) to conclude that there is an "extraordinary turnover rate among EFF MPs in parliament". According to van Onselen (2018b), some of those who have resigned have often been instructed to do so by the leadership of the party. One such member was Emmanuel Mtileni who, in 2016, was told by the party through a "telephonic instruction" that he would no longer be an EFF MP (Makinana, 2016). Like those who defy the "highest order" (Nyathi, 2019b), Mtileni was eventually expelled from the party (Makinana, 2016). Some of the MPs, such as Andile Mngxitama, Mpho Ramakatsa, and Khanyisile Litchfield Tshabala were all expelled with immediate effect by the EFF in April 2015 for supposedly defining themselves outside of the party, and for bringing the party into disrepute (Mpofu, 2015).

Another former MP, Thembinkosi Rawula resigned from the party after claiming that the EFF was not practising what it was preaching. He accused the party that he represented in parliament for years

of being corrupt and of being run like a dictatorship. Interestingly, Rawula's Damascus moment followed what the party called 'an open democratic process' that meant he will no longer serve as an MP. Ndlozi, then the party's spokesperson, responded to Rawula's allegation on ENCA (2019) by saying:

> When you lose a position on an open democratic process where members say we don't want you to go to parliament anymore. You throw your tantrums and lie about the organisation, not only do you lie about the organisation, you go outside and join a long queue of Stratcom propagandist who have been at pains to try and discredit an alternative that black people have, only because they don't agree with our radical policies… So good riddance, we really welcome his resignation.

If Rawula failed to accept an 'open democratic process', Lungile Gabuza was guilty and later expelled for embracing it. Gabuza was expelled for questioning the leadership's 'direct order'. Her crime was for questioning a 'direct order 'to make way in parliament for another member who was favoured by the leadership rather than the 'members' that Ndlozi above is talking about. According to the 'open democratic process', that, according to Ndlozi's statement above, decides who goes to parliament, Gabuza was next in line to take up a parliament seat. However, the Central Command Team, the ones who supposedly know best, had a different candidate in mind "who is believed to be the party hierarchy favourite" (Nyathi, 2019b). In an attempt to understand the process, Gabuza, according to the *Sunday Times* asked the party "to provide her with reasons why she should "lie" to National Assembly speaker Thandi Modise, as the letter drafted by Gardee on her behalf stated that she was not available" (Matiwane & Makinana, 2019). The *City Press* reports that a provincial bearer told Gabuza that "You are just an ordinary member and you are starting a fight you will not win" (Nyathi, 2019b). The party's national spokesperson argued that "The leadership knows what is in the best interests of the EFF. All who refuse to be led by our leadership only have two options: to wait for the

conference and to be removed. In which case they still have to comply with any of their [leadership] decisions till then. Or leave the EFF, period," (Nyathi, 2019b). During the party's press conference on the 21st of November, Malema told her that "she and all her friends combined can go to hell". It is important to emphasise that Gabuza's crime, which she must now "go to hell" for, was for embracing the 'democratic process 'that the party had praised while demonising Rawula. This, of course, only makes sense when we understand the EFF as a populist party that is chameleonic and able to change positions based on the mood of the leadership and political interests at the time more than anything else.

Gabuza, the *Sunday Times* reports, is not the only candidate who was asked to suspend the democratic process in favour of democratic centralism (Matiwane & Makinana, 2019; Matiwane, 2019). Phillip Mhlongo is one of these, but unlike Gabuza, he "saw no reason for not complying" (Matiwane, 2019). Many others are said to be scared of expressing views in the party, one member reportedly told the paper that "if you do not agree with a particular view, you are treated differently and that is what is happening here" (Matiwane 2019).

In 2017 the party expelled 6 of its councillors in Mogale City. This is after the 6 members 'votes helped in approving the ANC budget in the municipality. They too were expelled after defying the 'highest order 'from the party. Simanga Mkhumbeni, one of these 6, told one newspaper that "We submitted demands as the EFF in July to the municipality to ensure they were incorporated into the final budget to address the needs of the poor… That budget will benefit our people, it's the programme of the EFF" (Naki, 2017). According to the hierarchy of the party, however, in voting for the ANC, the six councillors "essentially betrayed our revolutionary tenant" of not voting with the ANC (EFF, 2017). The 'revolutionary tenant 'in this case seemed to be at odds with the 'needs of the poor'.

None of the people who have been forced out of the EFF, or in a position within the party have successfully overturned, legally or through internal channels, the 'highest order 'of the party. This is largely because the hierarchical nature of the party demands its rank and file to have 'maximum discipline 'within the party. The first point on its code of conduct the party states that "democratic centralism and revolutionary discipline" are "the two most paramount and non-negotiable principle which inform" the code of conduct" (EFF, 2014: 15). The same document clearly states the hierarchical rule within the party, the ones below listen to the ones above at all times. Following his election as the president of the party at its 2nd national elective conference in December 2019, Malema reminded those who might have forgotten that "we're in charge here, we are not playing games" (Cele, 2019a). One EFF MP described Malema to the *Mail and Guardian* by saying "When he is angry you can't tell him anything" (Hunter, 2015).

The point being made here is that the notion that the party is some sort of an egalitarian 'people's' party, or whereby the leadership is guided by the masses is nothing short of a deception. The truth is that the EFF is a party where leaders dictate, rather than the people. This is but another fact that illustrates that the EFF, as previously argued, never took Fanon seriously even though it claims its ideology is partly shaped by his thoughts. If it did, the party would be far more cautious of repeating the pitfalls that Fanon (2001) warns about in the *Wretched of the earth*. It is in this very book where Fanon (2001: 149) warns that nationalism in the form of a political party is more meaningful and of much better use when it is the "tool in the hands of the" whole nation rather than a selected elite. In the hands of the people, the party ceases to be another "instrument of power in the hands of the bourgeoisie" or another "means for private advancement" for the leaders (Fanon 2001: 138). In the EFF, as the discussion above has demonstrated, the party is in the hands of the few who apparently know best. And the chameleon nature of the EFF means that it is not the "trustworthy political party" that Fanon (2001: 149) said is needed in the post-colony in order to completely break from colonialism and its manifestations.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter critically examined some of the ways in which the EFF performs its populism. In other words, the chapter illustrated that the party practices populism in multiple and interconnected political fronts. The chapter focused on three of these, namely how the party applies the idea of being a people's party, how the party puts into practice the idea of being a radical and revolutionary party, and lastly how its leader and leadership take on the role of a messiah of the people. It argued that these characteristics are central to the party's desire of wanting to be seen as the ultimate people's party in the country. Protests, violence and controversial statements, the chapter argued, are used by the party to somewhat signify, firstly, that it is not 'scared' of the enemy and secondly, they are meant to further signify the party's commitment to the supposed revolution that it is fighting. The chapter also highlighted the pitfalls of glorifying violence as a revolutionary necessity by arguing that violence often always ends up victimising the people it is meant to liberate, both in the short and long term. Furthermore, the chapter also argued that the EFF's thin ideology is noticeable not only on external but also in its internal dealing. It is the thin ideology, as explained earlier, that enables the party to be chameleonic and change whenever it benefits the party's leadership. The following chapter will argue that the EFF's thin ideology is not only limited to performative acts of populism discussed above but also what is supposed to be the party's key policies.

Chapter 6: Economic Freedom: A programme that embodies the thin ideology

6.1 Introduction

One of the key arguments of this thesis is that populism of the EFF is not only performance and or style based, but that it a thin ideology. This thinness, I argue is noticeable in the party's entire body politics, as seen in the previous chapters. In fact, the party is an embodiment of a thin ideology. In this current chapter, I demonstrate that the thinness of the party's ideology is also reflected in what, on paper, is meant to be its key policies. The party refers to these policies as its 'seven non-negotiable cardinal pillars' (Shivambu, 2014). This chapter is a critical analysis of these key policies. Looked at holistically, the chapter is a critical analysis of what the EFF stands for based on the party's literature. This analysis is necessary as it helps us to get a deeper understanding of the party's populism beyond its sometimes spontaneous populist activities. This chapter is broken into a number of sections with each being dedicated to one of the 'cardinal pillars'. The 'land question' ('pillar' 1) and the 'nationalisation question' (pillar 2) evidently receive a lot of attention because these are the two themes that the EFF often uses in its attempt to distinguish itself from the rest of the political parties. These are also the two themes that are at the centre of the party's notion of 'economic freedom'. Therefore, the chapter is an analysis of these and the rest of the seven key policies of the EFF. It needs to be noted that no study, to the best of my knowledge and as was illustrated in the literature review chapter, has done what this chapter does in terms of closely examining the key policies of the EFF. This, therefore, makes this chapter and the thesis in general unique and a significant contribution to the understanding of the EFF.

6.2 The politics of economic freedom

The EFF has popularized the phrase or idea of 'economic freedom in our lifetime'. A phrase which is a spinoff from the Youth League of the 1940s who called for "freedom in our lifetime" (Sipuka,

2012). The idea of 'economic freedom in our lifetime' was also used by the ANCYL, under Malema's leadership (Sipuka, 2012). The party prides itself on existing in order to deliver what it calls 'economic freedom' to 'the people' (Shivambu, 2014). The party presents 'economic freedom' alongside, but distinct, from what it calls 'political freedom' (Shivambu, 2014; EFF, 2019c). The party's founding manifesto, for instance, states that "The reality, nonetheless, is that the political freedom attained symbolically in 1994 through inclusive elections have not translated into economic freedom, which must empower and assist the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa to be liberated from economic and social bondage" (Shivambu, 2014: 118). The founding manifesto further claims that "Political freedom without economic emancipation is meaningless" (Shivambu, 2014: 120). In its 2019 elections manifesto, the EFF presents its form of freedom as the "true liberation of our people" (EFF, 2019c: 6). The distinction between what it refers to as 'economic' and 'political' freedom is, of course, part of the party's populism discourse. In creating this dichotomy of 'political' versus 'economic' freedom, the party is attempting to situate itself in the political scene, as existing for what it calls 'economic freedom'. The aim of this 'economic freedom' is, we are told, to "assist the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa" so that they can be "liberated from economic and social bondage" (Shivambu, 2014: 118).

The EFF's argument that post-apartheid South Africa is yet to experience economic freedom is not totally farfetched because South Africa remains a deeply unequal country, with black people being the worse off in the social and economic spheres. However, the distinction between what it calls 'political' and 'economic' is both misleading and, once again, reflects the party's lack of understanding of how the racial polity operates. As argued before, both the historical and contemporary problems in the country are not narrowly 'economic' matters as the non-racialist school of thought would deceptively want us to believe. Therefore, for one to speak of an 'economic freedom' as distinct from 'political freedom' is deceptive. It is deceptive for a number of reasons.

For instance, the constitution of the republic, the one document that operates more like the country's rulebook, is not necessarily 'economic', yet it affirms a certain polity. More than targeting an economic elite, the constitution has clauses that benefit the whites as a social rather than as an economic group. First of all, the constitution of the country is premised on the morally bankrupt idea of non-racialism. As already argued, non-racialism stifles and impedes an honest race and pro-black transformation agenda in the country. What this means is that, as will be seen below, due to the constitution, the state cannot practically implement a pro-black land reform. Therefore, the constitution is more of a political, rather than an economic document. The point being made here is that the distinction between 'economic' and 'political' freedom is unhelpful, to say the least.

Secondly, the problems facing post-apartheid South Africa cannot honestly be reduced to a strange phenomenon of 'economic freedom', even the ones that manifest as economic or class terms. Such a reduction cannot be honestly sustained because it is oblivious to the fact that blacks are systematically disempowered as a racial group rather than as an economic class (Césaire, 2010). And secondly, it cannot be sustained because the freedoms and privileges enjoyed by the beneficiaries of the racial polity are due to the political arrangement of the country. A political arrangement that translates into the economic inequalities. This is a political arrangement that is enshrined in the constitution of the republic. The constitution is a political document rather than a narrow economic policy document, of course.

Rather than the non-racialist idea of 'economic freedom', it might be helpful to talk about the continuing significance and dominance of the racial polity which is also affirmed in the country's constitution. Factoring the racial polity helps us to better understand the reason why whites continue to be the most privileged social group in the country. It is a privilege that sees them command huge dominance in all other spheres in the country, included the economic sector. Whites "kept the best land, the mines, manufacturing plants and financial institutions" (Bond, 2014b: 146), due to the racial

polity. Post-apartheid South Africa provided the white industrialists, and businesses "a new round of capital accumulation" (Bond, 2014a: 198). They are the ones who "benefited most from the economic policies adopted during the 1990s" (Bond, 2014b: 146). Gibson (2011: 150) argues that "Today it is clear that the main beneficiaries of post-apartheid economic redistribution have been (and continue to be) South Africa's banks and multinationals, now even freer than they were under apartheid". Therefore, the point being made here is that the idea of 'economic freedom' conveniently does not tell the whole story. The absence of a whole story is of course in line with the thin ideology of populism.

Be that as it may, the EFF ideologically depicts itself as the only political party with solutions to the ANC's failures to address the legacies of colonialisam and apartheid. The EFF, argues Booysen (2015: 229) "positions itself as the party to fill the delivery gaps" that have been left by the ANC government. The EFF's seven key policies are meant to be the party's ultimate solution to the country's inequalities. In the 2019 elections manifesto, Malema tells the reader that 'true liberation' will materialise due to the party's "seven cardinal pillars, which constitute the core of our approach to genuine revolutionary transformation of society for the better" (EFF, 2019c: 9). According to Malema these 7 key policy points "will end the suffering of our people" (Shivambu, 2014: 166). In analysing the cardinal pillars, the chapter thereby analyses the validity of this claim. These 'seven cardinal pillars' that the party proposes are (Shivambu, 2014: 130-131):

1. Expropriation of South Africa's land without compensation for equal redistribution in use.
2. Nationalisation of mines, banks and other strategic sectors of the economy, without compensation.
3. Building state and government capacity, which will lead to the abolishment of tenders.
4. Free quality education, health care, houses and sanitation.
5. Massive protected industrial development to create millions of sustainable jobs, including the introduction of minimum wages in order to close the wage gap between the rich and the

poor, close the apartheid wage gap and promote rapid career paths for Africans in the workplace.

6. Massive development of the African economy and advocating for a move from reconciliation to justice on the entire continent.

7. Open, accountable, corrupt-free government and society without fear of victimisation by state agencies.

6.3 Land Expropriation without compensation
6.3.1 Land the 'original sin'

Land was central in the colonial and apartheid project in South Africa (Kepe and Hall, 2018). According to Lahiff (2007: 1578), the "extent of dispossession of the indigenous population in South Africa, by Dutch and British settlers, was greater than in any other country in Africa, and persisted for an exceptionally long time". A dispossession that continued for decades and that also led to the forced removals of black people from their homes and "into overcrowded and impoverished reserves and townships" (Aliber & Mokoena, 2003: 330). So central was the land to the colonial project that land dispossession, is often regarded as the 'original sin' of colonialism (Thabo Mbeki Foundation (TMF), 2018: 8). In a pamphlet produced by the Thabo Mbeki Foundation, it is argued that this 'original sin' involved "the deprivation of that African majority of its sovereignty, independence and freedom" and that it eventually led to "massive land dispossession" of black people in a land they considered their own (TMF, 2018: 8). Thwala & Khosa (2008: 52) correctly state that "Land was a major point for establishing the colonial and apartheid state economies. Access to land was used as a political and social engineering tool, shaping both the cultural fabric of South African society and the landscape that exists today."

One of the most successful tools used to deprive black people of their own country was the Land Act of 1913. It was the Land Act that "was extraordinarily successful in proletarianising the great majority of Africans and creating large reservoirs of cheap and docile African labour for white farmers and the

mining industry" (Terreblanche, 2002: 260). du Toit (1981: 19) writes that the Land Act resulted in dispossession of "large numbers of settled African farmers and turn[ing] them into a landless proletariat". The Act was part of the government's strategy to "restrict independent black farming" so as to further proletarianize black people (Davenport, 1987: 392). Davenport (1987: 393) further argues that the Act was also "designed to curb black farming practices" while promoting white farming". The Land Act of 1913 "represented a significant moment in the consolidation of white power over land and other resources" (Walker, 2014: 659).

The implications of the Land Act, when not seen merely as a momentous event of 1913, are not only limited to who owns and who does not own the land today, as important as that question is. But its implications can be seen in who is poor in South Africa, and which geographic areas are poverty stricken (Hall, 2014). In other words, its effects are also noticeable in terms of which areas are developed and which ones are underdeveloped. As Hall (2014: 7) correctly states that a:

>"child growing up in poverty in Khayelitsha is a victim of the 1913 Land Act, as a child growing up in Lusikisiki, or a child growing up in poverty on a white-owned farm in the Kwazulu-Natal Midlands. The wealth of the cities, of the mining, industrial and technological hubs, are as much the product of the existence of labour reserves and cheap migrant labour as the commercial farms."

The colonial and apartheid government onslaught against black ownership effectively led to a situation whereby "By the mid-20th century most of the county, including most of the best agricultural land, was reserved for the minority white settler population, with the African majority confined to just 13% of the territory, the 'native reserves', later known as African Homelands or Bantustans" (Lahiff, 2007: 1578).

6.3.2 Land reform in the post-colony

The centrality of land in the colonial project means that land was also central in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid (Kepe & Hall, 2018; Hall, 2004a; Hall, 2004b; Mngxitama, 2006; Ngcukaitobi, 2019; Ntsebeza, 2007). It is for this reason, then, that land reform was meant to be one of the top priorities for the post-apartheid government (Ntsebeza, 2007). As one of the basis and tool of oppression, land should also be the measure of how far the post-apartheid government has gone in terms of fundamentally transforming and decolonising the country (Kepe & Hall, 2018; Mngxitama, 2006).

Yet, the pace of land reform in post-1994 South Africa has often been described in phrases such as "painfully slow" and "frustratingly slow" (Hall & Ntsebeza, 2007: 3 & 9). The ANC government has repeatedly failed to meet its own targets a number of times over the years (Hall & Ntsebeza, 2007). At the dawn of democracy, the new government set the target of distributing 30% of the agrarian land in the first five years (Hall, 2007; Lahiff, 2007). Yet only 1% of the land had been transferred into black owners from white landowners in those first five years after 1994, and "a mere 3 per cent land had been transferred to African hands" in the first decade (Ntsebeza, 2007: 119). As of 2018, plus-minus "9.7% of commercial farmland has been acquired or redistributed (though there are some doubts about official statistics; the real figure could be lower)" according to Hall (2018; Cousins, 2016). The "land crisis" that began with the conquest of the land that became South Africa continues well into the post-1994 moment (Hendricks, Ntsebeza & Heliker, 2013: 1). Hence, Hendricks *et all* (2013: 1) argue that "In fact the very bases of colonialism and apartheid remain intact, since racialized inequalities in both access to and ownership to land persist in the present".

A number of viewpoints exist as to why land reform in post-apartheid South Africa has largely been a failure. The market driven 'willing buyer, willing seller' principle that the government relied on for a long time has often been highlighted as one of the reasons for the slow pace of land reform (Hendricks, 2013; Lahiff, 2007; Ntsebeza, 2007; Thwala, 2006). The principle of 'willing buyer,

willing seller' was cemented as the government's key approach to land reform in the White Paper on South African Land Policy of 1997 (Lahiff, 2007). This market based approach was on the advice of World Bank and supported by commercial farmers in South Africa (Hall, 2010; Mngxitama, 2006). The willing buyer, willing seller approach was also as a result of both the negotiated pre-1994 settlement between the ANC and the apartheid government to protect white property rights and also a result of the neoliberal turn of the former liberation movement (Hall 2004a; Hendricks, 2013). The market based approach "effectively granted landowners absolute discretion over participation in the land reform programme" (Lahiff, 2007: 1585). In other words, the approach put the landowner on the driving seat of land reform as it relies on the farmer to be, first, willing to sell (Hendricks, 2013; Ntsebeza, 2007). Even the governing party and its alliance partners have blamed this market approach for the slow pace of land reform (Hendricks, 2013; Ntsebeza, 2007).

The other view is that land reform has thus far failed because of a lack of political will (Cousins, 2017; Kepe & Hall, 2018: 133; Lahiff, 2007; Hall, 2004a; du Toit, 2019; Walker, 2005). This is, firstly, apparently noticeable from the fact that the "declining budget" allocated to land reform has never been allocated more than 1% from the national budget (Kepe & Hall, 2018: 133). The post-apartheid government has consistently directed only "meagre resources" towards land reform (Hart, 2002: 11). This viewpoint argues that land reform has been poor in South Africa not necessarily because of the guaranteed protection of property rights, but because the state has failed to exercise the right to expropriate land, as stipulated in the constitution (Hall, 2004a; Ngcukaitobi, 2019). Those who hold this view argue that the protection of property rights makes land reform complex but not impossible because the constitution makes room for the state to expropriate land (Cousins, 2017; Hall, 2004a). Cousins (2017) argues that the constitution enables the government to expropriate land as a means of addressing land reform. According to Lahiff (2007: 1579), the constitution of the country, "places a clear responsibility on the state to carry out land and related reforms" and allows the state to expropriate "property for a public purpose or in the public interest, subject to just and equitable

compensation, and states explicitly that 'the public interest includes the nation's commitment to land reform, and to reforms to bring about equitable access to all South Africa's natural resources'. Therefore, the argument is that the impediment is, in essence, "political, not essentially legal or constitutional" (Hall, 2004a: 661). While the protection of property rights in the constitution limits, and impedes land reform, the state's neoliberal agenda has also led to land reform failure (Hall, 2004a). The government's rhetoric of seeing land reform as an important aspect of the decolonisation agenda has not translated into more deliberate efforts to accelerate the land reform programme, if anything land reform is often treated as of "secondary importance" (Walker, 2005: 806). The rhetoric also hides the fact that the land reform programme has failed also due to being mismanaged and neglected by the government (Ngcukaitobi, 2019; du Toit, 2019).

And lastly, some scholars correctly argue that the failure of land reform lies with the constitution of the country (Hendricks, 2013; Ntsebeza, 2007). These scholars reject the lack of political will argument, and correctly say that the problem is and begins with the constitution. Hendricks (2013) argues that the market approach is very much in line with the constitution. He argues that the constitution and the principle of willing buyer, willing seller are both premised on the idea that the landowner ought to be compensated, factoring in the market value of the property (Hendricks, 2013). Apart from the challenge of determining the monetary value due to the landowner, there is also the fact that the constitution empowers landowners to "defend their private property against the government", argues Hendricks (2013: 33). These are the challenges that, according to Ntsebeza (2007: 108), make it impossible for the country to have anything resembling a massive and "comprehensive land redistribution programme" under the current constitution. Therefore, the argument is that, rather than enabling land reform, the constitution constrains the land reform process and in so doing entrenches "land rights acquired through colonialism and apartheid, as the property clause does" (Ntsebeza, 2007: 108). To Hendricks (2013: 38), "The constitution as it pertains to land rights is a reflection of the conflict between the full citizenship of blacks and the preserved privileges

of whites". What Hendricks (2013) is hinting at is the fact that white privileges are preserved in the constitution at the expense of black South Africans.

6.3.3 The EFF on land reform

The EFF also shares the view that the protection of property rights in the country's constitution disables efforts to resolve the land question (Shivambu, 2014). The party, hence, argues against the protection of private property rights and for the constitution to clearly give the state powers for 'expropriation of land without compensation'. Its former national spokesperson Mbuyiseni Ndlozi (2018) writes that the "central kernel" of the EFF "is that land must be expropriated without compensation, to resolve the historic and colonial question of the land dispossession of black people". He further writes that the party takes land seriously "because with the land is essentially the question of 'who belongs'. There is no other aspect of social life that best demonstrates this fact than the land" (Ndlozi, 2018). Mngxitama (2014b), writing as an EFF MP, says South Africa is a country "with deep problems – all of them linked to the original land theft". Its former chairperson, Advocate Dali Mpofu argues that the party "champions above all the return of the land" (Shivambu, 2014: ix).

The EFF's founding manifesto advocates for state ownership of the entire South African territory. In its 2019 elections manifesto, the party tells us that its plans, once in government, is to expedite the process to amend the constitution to enable the state to expropriate land without compensation (EFF, 2019c). The land that will be expropriated without compensation will be from everyone who currently owns land in South Africa, both black and white people (Shivambu, 2014). Once in state ownership, the land will apparently be distributed equally, and those who intend to use a particular area of land will have to apply for the license from the state in order to use the land (EFF, 2019c; Shivambu, 2014. This means that the current landowners will have to apply to the state to continue to use the land, once land has been expropriated. The party says that the license will be "for a maximum of 25 years", and the renewal of the license is subject to the state's decision (Shivambu, 2014). The party also believes that state ownership of the land will also help in ensuring that land is used mainly to further

advance the country's developmental agenda (EFF, 2019c; Shivambu, 2014. The EFF's imaginary state will have the power and "right to expropriate in instances where the land is not used for the purpose applied for" (Shivambu, 2014: 133). In other words, permission to use the land can still be withdrawn even after the lease has been granted.

As noted above resolving land ownership in the post-apartheid South Africa is part of the decolonisation process, more so because the country's arable land continues to be largely in the hands of white owners (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, 2017). While this state of affairs certainly needs to be addressed, it is important to note that state custodianship of the land does not necessarily equate to decolonisation (Kepe & Hall, 2018). State ownership and ownership by 'our people' are different as can be seen in the fact that the state has had no qualms from forcefully removing people occupying state land (Hart, 2014). The kind of state ownership that the EFF is advocating for would have seen cases such as the Xolobeni one favour the government over the community. All of this being in line with the fact that it is the state that has the power to decide how land is to be used, by whom and for how long (EFF, 2019c; Shivambu, 2014). Furthermore, it is not clear how the EFF's position on this matter resolves the question of belonging that Ndlozi (2018) associates with the land question when the state is the owner and custodian, as opposed to people's ownership. Nor is it clear how the land is 'returned', as argued by Mpofu above, when the state becomes the sole owner of the land. As argued previously, the state is not 'the people'.

Furthermore, what the EFF is proposing, in terms of state ownership of the land, is already being practiced by the current government in some cases. Hence Cousins (2016) argues that the "threadbare nature of EFF thinking on land" is similar to what the ANC is already doing in some instances. The government's 2006 Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) does what the EFF is proposing, as the state remains the landowner. PLAS is a top-down approach where the state can tell the land occupants how to use the land, and failure to use it productively can lead to a farmers' removal from

the land (Kepe & Hall, 2018). The government, since 2011, is using a model whereby the state purchases land, on the market, and leasing it to beneficiaries (Hall & Kepe, 2017). The state remains the landowner, and the beneficiaries can lease the land for up to 30 years, which can be renewed for another 20 years (Hall & Kepe, 2017). The state will only consider transferring the ownership of the land after this accumulative 50 years (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Hall 2018). Leasing of land is, according to some, a move away from the decolonial agenda of securing land tenure for black people (Hall & Kepe, 2017; Kepe & Hall, 2018). Kepe and Hall (2018) argue that it is a continuation of the colonial project where black people and black farmers do not have guaranteed land tenure. This, therefore, means that the EFF's "sketchy quality" proposals on resolving the land question "leads one to doubt that they would be an improvement on the ruling party" (Cousins, 2016). So although the party claims to be synonymous with land, the EFF has not really thought of land reform beyond what the ANC seems to be doing. The difference being that the EFF uses a lot of radical sounding catchphrases as their choice of spice in order to present themselves as far apart from the ANC.

6.4 Nationalisation of mines, banks and other strategic sectors of the economy

The EFF's second 'pillar' advocates for the nationalisation of mines, banks, and other strategic sectors of the economy. This is another point that the EFF takes pride in and is often presented as important as the 'expropriation of land'. Similar to the above discussion on land, the EFF's stand on this core pillar is also not unique to the EFF, nor is the party clear on what it is proposing. In other words, its proposal is as sketchy, if not worse, than its one on land. Before critically analysing the EFF's proposal, it is however useful to first understand the history of the mining industry in the systematic underdevelopment of black South Africa. This history is important because a decolonial agenda, apart from resolving the agrarian land issue, has to change the trajectory of the mining sector so that it plays a crucial new role in the development of the entire country.

During the late 1800s to 1924, the country underwent significant economic and political changes. Politically, the country was, of course, still under the control of whites but now under the unified

banner of the Union of South Africa from 1910 (Terreblanche, 2002). On the economic side, the country experienced huge changes and transformation due to the mining revolution with the first diamonds being discovered in 1867 in today's Northern Cape and followed by the discovery of gold in 1884 in today's Gauteng (du Toit, 1981). These changes had massive implications some of which "not only extended the racially based system of agricultural capitalism first established in the Cape to the North but also institutionalised a fully fledged system of racial capitalism in all sectors of the South Africa economy" (Terreblanche, 2002: 239).

Gold mining was the country's "first really large-scale capitalist industry" (Johnstone, 1976: 2). The mining centred industrialisation in South Africa determined and shaped a number of contexts in South Africa (Bundy, 1992). It was in the mining sector where the "first and most extensive industrial institutionalisation of racial discrimination" took place (Johnstone, 1976: 2). According to Johnstone (1976: 2) "The gold mining industry stood at the centre of the structure and evolution of the modern South African social formation". Over the years the industry cemented its instrumental role of being at the forefront of shaping and forming South Africa's political and socio-economic structure (Johnstone, 1976). The systematic racialised inequality that it brought with it came to influence and become a key characteristic of the country's development trajectory (Bundy, 1992). It was, after all, in the mines, that white workers were paid more than black workers; it was in the mines that black workers were made to stay in the compounds institutionally separated from their families; it was in the mining sector where, for decades, the salaries of the black workers did not increase, while that of white workers doubled (Bundy, 1992). The mining industry viewed blacks as a source of "ultra-cheap labour" and made it its priority to ensure that this never changes (Johnstone,1976: 26). The mining industry in South Africa, therefore, has often been at the forefront of institutionalising black underdevelopment.

The mines also played a fundamental role in the process that led to the mass dispossession of black people, that made the likes of Sol Plaatjie to be treated "like a pariah in the land of [their] birth" (cited in Terreblanche, 2002: 264). Writing about the early years of industrialisation in South Africa, Bundy (1979: xiii) argues that this "was the crucial period in the transformation of the bulk of the rural African population from their precolonial existence as pastoralist-cultivators to their present existence as sub-subsistence inhabitants on eroded and overcrowded lands, depended on survival upon wages earned in 'white' industrial areas and on 'white' farms". The mine owners played a fundamental role in ensuring that black peoples' land ownership was completely minimised so that blacks can be reliant on the very low wages of the mines (Feinstein, 2005). The state together with the mining companies was central in putting mechanisms into place to ensure that blacks were not self sufficient because it was decided that the role of black people under white rule was to be the perpetual source of cheap labour (Feinstein, 2005). Feinstein (2005: 48) writes that "laws and practices were imposed to destroy the peasantry and create a rural proletariat".

The mining and the farming industry urged the state and government "to use extra-economic coercion to deliver cheap and docile African labour" (Terreblanche, 2002: 257). A chairman of the Association of Mines, in 1897 told a Commission of Enquiry, that he was going to enforce cheap labour "by simply telling the boys their wages are reduced" (George Albu quoted in Feinstein, 2005: 63). He further told the Commission that blacks should be compelled to work because "Why should a nigger be allowed to do nothing" (quoted in Feinstein, 2005: 63). "By 1903", writes du Toit (1981: 9) "it was explicitly recognised by the gold mine owners that any economic independence on the part of the African population meant an interruption in their flow of labour". This then necessitated an institutional move that would ensure that a "large part of the African population would have to remain tied to limited pieces of land, on which they would be unable to support themselves. Only then would they be forced to continue offering themselves for employment in large number and for whatever wages they could get" (du Toit, 1981: 9). The then President of the Chamber of Mines, in 1912,

opined that "What is wanted is surely a policy that would establish once for all that outside special reserves, the ownership of land must be in the hands of the white race" so that the blacks can continue to be the source of the cheap labour (Johnstone, 1976: 27).

6.4.1 EFF on nationalising the mines

It is for these reasons then that a serious decolonisation project in South Africa also needs to fundamentally change the mining sector, for the systematic benefit of the entire country (April ,2012; Kabemba, 2014; Nicol, 2013). A political system that allows industries such as mines to continue as they have done over the years, which is to operate by maximising profit, at the expense of black workers and the country as whole, is a perpetuation of the past injustice and is anathema to a decolonial project (Kabemba, 2014). This explains why from 1994 onwards, mining was identified as one of the sectors that needed to be changed so that it contributes to the development of South Africa by benefitting the people of the country (April, 2012; Kabemba, 2014). Hence, the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) of 2002, which came into effect in 2004, made the state the owner and custodian of the minerals in the country (April, 2012; Kabemba, 2014; Leon, 2012; Nicol, 2013).

The adoption of MPRDA shifted the ownership of the minerals in South Africa from private ownership and into state ownership (April, 2012; Kabemba, 2014; Leon, 2012; Nicol, 2013). In other words, the Act essentially ended the private ownership of minerals in the country and "effectively nationalised minerals beneath the ground" (Macmillan, 2017: 276). The rationale to reform the mining sector and the eventual adoption of the Act was supposedly to make the sector benefit more than a few South Africans (April, 2012; Kabemba, 2014). In other words, it was said to be designed to make the sector benefit the people it had previously played a role in under-developing.

Despite its declining role to the South Africa economy, the mining sector remains a key industry in the country, producing over 50 different minerals that are exported throughout the world (April, 2012;

Leon, 2012; Macmillan, 2017). It is a key industry in terms of its significant contribution to the GDP, and the large number of people employed directly and indirectly from the sector (April, 2012; Kabemba, 2014; Leon, 2012). According to Leon (2012: 6) the "centrality of mining to South Africa's economy is illustrated by the fact that nearly 60 per cent of the country's export revenue is attributable to mining, mineral and secondary beneficiated products".

The MPRDA nationalised the minerals, but the mining operations and the mining companies are privately owned. The sector remains largely untransformed in terms of ownership, top management (54.3% white) and senior management (51.6% white) (Bowman, 2019; DoL, 2019; Macmillan, 2017). Importantly, despite the nationalisation of the minerals, through MPRDA, the working conditions of the miners, their wages, their living conditions of the areas around the mines remains more or less the same from what they used to be prior to 1994 (Macmillan, 2017). The miners continue to be subjected to exploitation, and poor pay, hence the Marikana massacre happened amidst workers demanding better salaries, R12 500 to be specific (Alexander, 2013; Macmillan, 2017; Maseko, 2015). It should go without saying that these are by and large black mineworkers. Maseko (2015) argues that the living experience of a black mineworker in post-apartheid South Africa is still one without dignity and humanity.

Realising the continuing pattern of the old, the EFF comes in, first claiming, as discussed earlier, to be a product of the Marikana miners, proposing to nationalise not just the minerals, but the mines as well (Shivambu, 2014). The EFF seems to understand the importance of changing the role of the mining sector, not unlike the ANC, it must be noted, as part of the decolonisation process. Malema (2016) in his Oxford Union speech said that "No one should continue with the exploitation of our minerals, without our involvement". From the speech, it is not immediately clear who 'our' specifically refers to, but to be fair, in the same speech Malema (2016) mentioned the exploitation of black workers and the awful living conditions of mine workers and their families. In the same speech,

Malema (2016) stated that "We have a situation in South Africa where white owned capitalism or economic system has been exploiting our people and our people have not been benefiting from the mineral resources in our country". As stated above, the mining sector continues to be largely white in terms of ownership, and its top and senior management is white dominated, while the exploited workforce is largely black. Therefore, Malema seemed to be speaking against this state of affairs. For change to happen in the mining 'our involvement' becomes a necessity, according to the EFF. The key documents of the party are on this involvement.

The party, in its founding manifesto, therefore, proposes 'the nationalisation [of] mines' (Shivambu, 2014). The party argues that "state ownership and control of strategic sectors of the economy should be the foundation for sustainable economic transformation in South Africa" (Shivambu, 2014: 135). The party argues that adequate redressing of the past injustices cannot happen without this happening, therefore in its 2014 election manifesto, it speaks of the "Discontinuation of private ownership of mines" (Shivambu, 2014: 198). In place of private ownership, the founding manifesto proposes what it calls "ownership of the people as a whole" supposedly under a state owned mining company (Shivambu, 2014: 135). In its 2014 election manifesto, the wording on the ownership changes into "The EFF Governments's approach to nationalisation is that it should result in democratic and socialised ownership and control of the means of production by the workers, to avoid a situation where the state will exclusively own the means of production and suppress workers's interests and aspirations" (Shivambu, 2014: 198). Furthermore, the same manifesto, also states that the "Discontinuation of private ownership of mines will be located within an intention and programme to have democratic workers's ownership and control of mines and mining in South Africa" (Shivambu, 2014: 198). The 'nationalisation of mines' section in the 2014 election manifesto omits the creation of a state owned mine company, although "state owned and controlled mines" is mentioned repeatedly. The 2019 election manifesto, much like the party's 2nd National People's Assembly Discussion document of 2019, completely drops the rhetoric of 'worker ownership and

control' and clearly places the state as the owner and controller of the sector (see EFF, 2019b; EFF, 2019c). Therefore, the 'our involvement' that Malema was talking about at Oxford seems to have been the state's involvement over and above the workers and or their communities.

The EFF, after all, is a state centric party, and everything about it suggests that it operates in a strict top-down structure (as previously discussed). It is, once again, important to highlight that a 'state-owned' entity is not a 'ownership of the people'. If state ownership was the same as 'ownership' of the people, then current state owned entities, including the minerals of the country are currently under 'people' ownership. Of course, it is preposterous to depict state ownership as anything but state ownership. The EFF knows this hence the 2014 anifesto warns against "a situation where the state will exclusively own the means of production and suppress workers's interests and aspirations" (Shivambu, 2014: 198). But since it has a populist identity, hence chameleonic, it is able to claim to be on all sides of the discussion, without necessarily committing to any.

Furthermore, what the party calls its second pillar is silent on how the state should take total control of mining companies. The silence leaves one wondering whether the mines will also fall under the 'expropriation without compensation' rule or not. In its founding manifesto, the party states that "The ownership of mineral wealth should be considered through various means, prime being the expropriation of the current minerals-production processes in South Africa", alas without saying whether with or without expropriation (Shivambu, 2014: 135). It needs to be pointed out that this point from the founding manifesto, written in 2013 (repeated in its 2019 election manifesto, as well as in its 2019 NPA Discussion Document), not only omits the process of nationalising the mines, but also misleadingly suggests that the 'ownership of mineral wealth' is in private hands. As already discussed above, the minerals of the country were nationalised in 2004 long before the EFF came into the political scene, therefore the only nationalisation that the party should be talking about is that of mining companies, particularly the process of nationalising these.

Lastly, assuming that the EFF government is expropriating the mining companies and operations without compensation, does it expropriate all of the existing ones in the country? The 2014 and 2019 election manifestos also do not necessarily help us untie this knot. Page 89 of the relatively thick 2019 election manifesto, for instance, clearly states that "The EFF government will nationalise all mines and mineral wealth in South Africa by the year 2023" (EFF, 2019c: 89). But a couple of pages later, it is stated, in the same manifesto, that "The EFF government will force mining companies that left denuded mining landscapes to invest in the rehabilitation of these mining areas" (EFF, 2019c: 91). The confusion here is if 'all mines' are nationalised by 2023, which private mining companies will be "forced" to invest in mining areas? In its 2014 election manifesto, the party spoke of ensuring that "60% of existing Mines and mining activities are owned by the State" (Shivambu, 2014: 198), so it is possible that if only 60% of the existing mines, then it is the other mines who make up the 40% that will be 'forced'. But while mentioning the idea of wanting to nationalise 60% of the existing mines, the document is silent on what measures will be used to determine which mines to be nationalised and which ones not to. None of the documents tell us the process that will be followed to nationalise 'all mines' or '60 % of the existing mines'. Without details, we are left with only slogans that do not help us understand whether we are dealing with a revolutionary movement or its impostor. A serious decolonial movement does not reduce politics to sloganeering. Focusing on good sounding slogans, and the failure to provide details is part of the thin-centered populism that I highlight in this thesis about the EFF.

6.4.2 Nationalising the Bank(s)

Unfortunately, the confusion does not end with the idea of nationalising mines. The party's stand on nationalising banks also has thin details. As was the case with the nationalisation of mines, there are also inconsistencies with the notion of nationalising banks. To begin with, the imagined EFF government will, at least according to its 2014 national manifesto, "ensure that all banks are democratically run and its employees are paid decent salaries" (Shivambu, 2014: 200). It is

impossible to fathom how this idea of 'democratising' banks will work out in a privately owned and profit driven bank. It is not even clear what it means to run a bank 'democratically'. But the EFF is able to utter and use such statements because its populist ideology is meant to depict the party as a people's party.

Regarding the pertinent issue of nationalising, the only existing bank that the EFF will clearly nationalise, judging by its key documents, is the Reserve Bank. This is despite the fact that the party, often uses the plural 'banks' in talking about nationalisation. For instance, in its founding manifesto the party uses banks in plural form, upon reading further, however, the document calls for the "creation of a State Bank" (Shivambu, 2014: 138). The founding manifesto then leaves one with the idea that the only existing bank that will be nationalised is actually the Reserve Bank and, as was the case with the mines, it is not immediately clear whether the party will utilise its 'expropriation without compensation' rule here to force the other private stakeholders out of the bank or not.

The 2014 elections manifesto talks of "nationalisation of private banks" (Shivambu, 2014: 199). The same document further states that the "EFF Government will nationalise all private banks through taking a minimum of 60% ownership and control of all the existing private banks" (Shivambu 2014: 199). These banks will be mandated by the imagined government on how to hire and operate, so as to advance the development trajectory of the country. As was the case with the notion of nationalising the mines, the party sees no point in explaining how its government will 'expropriate' the 60% ownership of the already established banks.

Perhaps in realising the complexities, if not the fantasy, of nationalising 'all private banks' in South Africa, the party changes its tune in the 2019 manifesto. Rather than maintain the illusion of nationalising 'all private banks', the party in 2019 merely talks of "the transfer of ownership of African Bank to a restructured state-owned bank" (EFF, 2019c: 93). Again, there are no details

provided for this move, why this particular bank, or how this transferring process will take place. Nor is the explanation of why the sudden move from 'all private banks' to just one bank being nationalised.

Furthermore, the party in its 2019 elections manifesto, as well as in its 2nd NPA assembly discussion document introduces the idea of creating 4 banks, namely: 'Retail state-owned bank', 'Agricultural state-owned bank', 'Housing state-owned bank', 'Social assistance bank' (EFF, 2019b; EFF 2019c). While the 2nd NPA assembly discussion document provides no details, as per custom, apart from merely listing these banks, the 2019 election manifesto provides some snippets (EFF, 2019b; EFF 2019c). According to the party, the Retail state-owned bank "will be built from the banking assets of African Bank", while the Agricultural state-owned bank "will be built from the banking assets and capacity of the Land Bank", with the Social assistance bank "built from the assets and capacity of the Post Bank", and Housing state-owned bank "will be a new bank" (EFF, 2019c: 93). The sketchy information provided does not explain why, for example, African Bank, Land Bank, and the Post Bank will be rebuilt under new names, nor the necessity of a 'retail' state-owned bank. Strangely, no effort is made to explain the purpose of these banks or why South Africa needs them.

The party's point of nationalising either a bank or banks is consistent with the party's tendency of providing both little details and or of contradictory positions at once. This is something that the party, if it believes what it claims to be and if it is serious with decolonisation and moving the country forward, will have to seriously change. The change will happen only if, of course, the party decides to be serious and committed beyond the catchy and radical sounding 'pillars'. In other words, the change will have to begin with transcending its populist identity and ideology.

The EFF's clumsiness or lack of seriousness as seen through scant details on banks does not mean that the idea of having state-owned banks is nonsense. For instance, the role of state-owned banks

was instrumental in helping advance the developmental trajectory of some East Asian countries. In South Korea, for instance, "the state had a majority holding in all the major banks until the 1980s", while in Taiwan, the state "dominates the financial sector by owning all but three of the major banks" (Jenkins, 1991: 206). Having control over the financial system helped some of the countries to access much needed funds, as there was "serious scarcity of capital during the initial state of development" (Lee & Lee, 1992: 117). Lee & Lee (1992: 117) contend that "In the absence of effective capital markets, the state used its control over the banking system to channel domestic and foreign savings to selected industries or firms". Therefore, an efficient state bank or banks is probably needed in South Africa. But whether a populist party such as the EFF is the best political party to bring this about is a different question due to the authoritarian and chameleonic identity of the party.

6.4.3 Other strategic sectors of the economy

Lastly, apart from mining, and the bank(s?) the founding manifesto, states that the "other strategic sectors of the economy" that should be nationalised "include minerals, metals, banks, energy production, and telecommunications and retain the ownership of central transport and logistics modes such as Transnet, Sasol, Mittal Steel, Eskom, Telkom and all other harbours and airports" (Shivambu, 2014: 135). These are the sectors that fall under what Fine and Rustomjee (1996) refer to as the minerals-energy complex. According to Fine and Rustomjee (1996: 5), the minerals-energy complex "lies at the core of the South African economy, determining not only by virtue of its weight in economic activity but also through its determining role through the rest of the economy". It does need to be stated, however, that most of what the EFF is proposing here (i.e. energy production (through Eskom), telecommunications (through Telkom), minerals (through Sasol and the state-owned mining company AEMFC) are already in existence, with some partially privatised such as Telkom. Importantly, the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) of 2002 already gave the state ownership and custodianship of all the minerals and petroleum in the country, a fact that the founding manifesto of the EFF is aware of (Shivambu, 2014). So, again, rhetoric and populism aside, it is not clear what the party is proposing here that the ANC is not already doing. The

country already has state-owned enterprises, however badly run some of these are currently, so it is then questionable whether the EFF is really the alternative that it presents itself to be. And if it is an alternative, it is an alternative to what and proposing to replace it with what? Unfortunately, the literature of the party, apart from the nice catchy slogans is thin and does not provide details hence we do not know what makes it that much different from the policies of the current government.

6.5 Building state and government capacity, which will lead to the abolishment of tenders

The successes and failures of a developmental state are largely determined by each country's internal dynamics, power relations between the state and the oligarchs, history, and most importantly the strengths and weaknesses of the state (Evans, 1995; Jenkins, 1991; Kohli, 2004; Lee & Lee, 1992; White and Wade, 1988). Therefore, it makes absolute sense for any state and or government that is serious about constructing an effective developmental state to strengthen its capacity. According to Jenkins (1991: 204), "Effective state intervention to promote industrial developmental involves the construction of an adequate bureaucracy which is able to implement government policy".

The newly industrialised countries (NICs), such as the ones in East Asia succeeded in being effective developmental states not only because of state intervention, but, more importantly, the manner of the intervention of the state (Evans, 1995). As Evans (1995) correctly argues, state intervention in the economic development of countries is given, but the pertinent question is the manner of involvement of the state. Incapacitated and or ineffective states have largely failed to develop and industrialise their countries (Kolhi, 2004). So it is sensible for the EFF to have a 'pillar' on state and government capacity. For these reasons, the party correctly states that to drive development, the country needs trained and skilled public sector personnel in order to advance the development of the country.

The party sees this 'pillar' as playing a central role in its drive to industrialising the country. This, after all, is the 'pillar' that seeks to abolish the very problematic tendering system and put in its place

state-owned enterprises to do governments' work. The party envisions that the private companies that are, in the post-apartheid era, infamous for either producing poor-quality work or for not finishing the projects after receiving millions of Rands from the government, will be replaced by state-owned enterprises. Having state-owned enterprises to build the country's infrastructure is important since these enterprises will know their role in making South Africa a successful developmental state (Shivambu, 2014). This move, according to the founding manifesto, will also help in creating sustainable jobs, unlike the current setup where workers face the possibility of being unemployed every time the project concludes. And importantly, bringing the tender system to an end will also significantly curb the corruption that has long been associated with it.

To this end, the EFF proposes the establishment of 6 more state enterprises for the country (Shivambu, 2014: 140):

1. A state owned housing-construction company.

2. A state owned roads-construction company.

3. A state owned cement company.

4. A state owned pharmaceutical company.

5. A state owned mining company

6. A state owned food-stocking company (to regulate prices of basic foodstuffs and guarantee food security for all).

It does need to be stated, however, that some of these already exist under the current government, such as a state-owned mining company, and a state-owned pharmaceutical company.

Efforts to further industrialise the country should certainly be welcomed for the betterment of the country and ultimately its people. This is particularly the case when these efforts are meant to be led by a state that is supposedly not profit driven. The world over, industrialisation is, rightfully, seen and regarded as a major method of bettering and improving countries (Kemp, 1989). Industrialisation

is a very useful way of developing the country, and of moving it one step closer towards poverty alleviation, as it ultimately raises the standard of living in general. State driven industrialisation helps create jobs and often raises income levels. The countries which have high levels of life expectancy, countries which are economically sustainable where citizens enjoy certain relative privileges, are industrialised (Kemp, 1989). Countries which have failed to industrialise, on the other hand, are relatively poor and with lower standards of living. As Kohli (2004: 8) opines "Industrialization involves social change. While its narrow outcome is an increase in industrial production from existing or new factories, a broader set of changes have also generally accompanied, if not preceded, industrial development". Therefore, the message "is plain and simple: to overcome poverty and economic backwardness a country must industrialise" (Kemp, 1989: 11). Due to the advantages that industrialisation brings, developing countries have sought to industrialise "as a means to raise the living standards and to ensure national independence" (Kemp, 1989: 11).

6.6 Free quality education, healthcare, houses, and sanitation

The party's fourth 'pillar' is on 4 separate issues. In this section, I focus more on the last 3, namely healthcare, houses and sanitation. The proposal of free quality education is a well-known argument. In fact, since the beginning of the 2019 academic year, the current government began its phasing in of free 'quality' education that the EFF is proposing. Education is, of course, crucial in efforts to further industrialise the country, and in making the South African state an effective developmental state. The people who will be managing the 'nationalised' banks and mines need to be educated people who know what they are doing. To this effect, the party's founding manifesto states that "Skills, education, and expertise are an important feature of sustainable industrial and economic development for any economy" (Shivambu, 2014: 141).

6.6.1 On Health

Despite the serious challenges facing the country's healthcare sector, the founding manifesto does provide details on how to improve it. In fact, there is only one bullet point under health. The party, in

its founding manifesto, offers no alternative or effective healthcare system that has worked in other developing countries across the world. The founding manifesto, in essence, only has a few basic ideas, which are: building "massive capacity in health care"; ensuring that health practitioners are remunerated well to compete with the private sector; regulating "the cost of medicine and healthcare provision in order to prevent private hospitals from overpricing medical care"; and improving "the quality and quantity of health care services" (Shivambu, 2014: 143). The details of how this is going to be done are, of course, missing. The establishment, "with speed", of the state-owned pharmaceutical company is also brought up again under healthcare (Shivambu, 2014: 143).

In the 2014 elections manifesto, the EFF continues not to offer any form of the healthcare system, apart from saying that the party's "Government will expedite the implementation of the National Health Insurance" (Shivambu, 2014: 182). The party only offers a healthcare system in its 2019 elections manifesto (EFF, 2019c). It is in this document that the party states that its government will put emphasis on the "primary health with a commitment to attain universal health coverage, with the intention of decreasing infant mortality rates and increase the life expectancy of all people in South Africa" (EFF, 2019c: 66). In other words, the government will put into place a "healthcare system that focuses on primary health care" (EFF, 2019c: 66).

The party's 2019 elections manifesto stance on primary healthcare and equal access to healthcare is also repeated in its discussion document for the party's second National Peoples Assembly. It is in this document whereby the party proposes that: "How we view the provision of healthcare and the conceptualisation of the National Health Insurance Bill has to be revised" (EFF, 2019c: 106). It is further stated that the "National Health Insurance (NHI) is flawed when one considers the successful healthcare project being undertaken in Cuba. The underlying principle of the NHI, which is the provision of universal healthcare is commendable and ought to be supported" (EFF, 2019c: 115). The party argues for the NHI to shift its focus to primary healthcare. This is also the document whereby

the party's admiration and praise for the Cuban healthcare system focus on primary healthcare as a form of prevention against serious illness come through.

As we have seen with the other issues that the EFF is supposedly advocating for, there is also not much that separates the EFF's stance on health from the ANC government. For instance, Primary Health Care has been central to the ANC government since 1994 (Rispel & Moorman, 2013; Rispel, Moorman & Munyewende, 2014). And even the EFF's mixed stance on the NHI offers no alternative, even though they argue that it is 'flawed', they do not offer any alternative system. The 'superior logic' that the party prides itself for, has thus far, not made its way into the key issues that the party claims to stand for.

6.6.2 On housing

On housing, the party, is, again found clearly wanting. For a party that sees itself as being synonymous with land, it is troubling to find that its standing on housing does not seem to be informed by the realities and politics of human settlement in post-apartheid South Africa. Even more worrying is the fact that the struggle for housing and shelter in the post-apartheid era has often been the biggest concern for those who reside in informal settlements (see Alexander, Runciman & Ngwane, 2014; Levenson, 2017; Oldfield & Greyling, 2015; Pithouse, 2008). So big that some of the main post-apartheid social movements have been formed around the struggle for decent shelter and housing (Gibson, 2011; Pithouse, 2008). The struggle for housing, in post-apartheid South Africa, is in fact linked to the struggle for land (Gibson, 2011; Thorn & Oldfield, 2011). Therefore, it is absolutely shocking for a party that claims to be synonymous with the land and for 'the people' to not advance a programme of how it will address the country's housing crisis. This further demonstrates that the EFF is not a social movement-oriented political party that it often presents itself to be.

In its 2014 manifesto the party commits to providing "quality, spacious houses to all the people", and the immediate bullet point after this statement commits to subsidising "housing finances for middle

income earners" (Shivambu, 2014: 182). It needs to be clearly stated that the point on providing "houses to all the people" (also repeated in the 2019 election manifesto) does not say anything about these being given for free to the poor. So, while the 'middle income earners' will surely be subsidised, it is not immediately clear what happens to the lower income earners and the unemployed. Searching in the 2019 election manifesto for answers also, unfortunately, does not help us much. The party rather states that "The EFF government will convert unused state-buildings into affordable housing for the poor, offering people long-term, secured leaseholds to these buildings" (EFF, 2019c: 75). Note how it, again, does not say these will be offered for free to the poor. Does this mean that the poor will no longer receive free houses under the EFF government? The manifestos are not clear, rather in its 2019 elections manifesto the party puts a classic populist spin to Section 26 (2) of the Constitution which currently reads: "Everyone has a right to access adequate housing" (SA Constitution, 1996). The EFF's spin, in its 2019 elections manifesto, states that the "government will ensure that access to a home is made an inalienable right in the Constitution" (EFF, 2019c: 74). How this differs from the current constitution is not explained.

What the party does tell us, in its founding manifesto, though, is that the state-owned housing construction company will build quality low cost houses. Furthermore, the founding manifesto, believes that the "state should further regulate housing finances through providing housing finances that does not exceed a period of 10 years" (Shivambu, 2014: 144). An issue, of course, that largely affects low to 'middle income earners', but not the lower income earners and the unemployed people in shacks. The EFF's take on housing is strange for a party that claims to be synonymous with land. But, as with many of the issues that the EFF claims to advance, the problem lies in the fact that the EFF identity is that of a populist party rather than a social and or labour oriented political party. It is a top-down political party that has expropriated the rhetoric of social movements, but without the social movement politics.

6.7 Massive protected industrial development to create millions of sustainable jobs, including the introduction of minimum wages in order to close the gap between the rich and the poor

This 'pillar' is linked to the second and the third one, namely the one on nationalisation and the one on state capacity. As noted in the discussion on state capacity, industrialisation is key for any society that wants to advance its economy for the benefit of the country and its people. It is through industrialisation that jobs are created. Therefore, this 'pillar' needs to be read alongside the discussion in section 6.3.2 above.

The party, in its founding manifesto, argues that the "industrialisation South Africa should adopt ought to be both export-led and import-substituting industrialisation" (Shivambu, 2014: 144). According to the EFF, the country's "biggest exports to China are natural and raw materials while our imports from China are finished goods and services" (Shivambu, 2014: 144). The party wants this changed. The first step in changing this is by building capacity within the country, again an issue discussed above. It is hoped that this change will further lead to job creation, as the country will, it is thought, "attract industrial and manufacturing investments by corporations that manufacture the goods and services that we currently import" (Shivambu, 2014: 144).

The party also talks about the introduction of minimum wages as a means of decreasing the level of poverty in the country. They argue that "minimum wages are a primary instrument against poverty, serve to lift domestic demand for domestic goods and services, and are one of the important tools through which the people of South Africa will share in the country's wealth" (Shivambu, 2014: 145). The introduction of minimum wages, according to the party will go with the "call for legislation on incomes policy, including regulation of the pay of chief executive officers, directors, chief financial officers, and managers in all sectors of the economy. Laws should be passed that executive pay should be a certain proportion of the wages of the lowest paid workers in respective firms, as one way of dealing with obscene levels of income inequality" (Shivambu, 2014: 145).

6.8 Massive investment in the development of the African economy

The EFF believes that the "state-owned enterprises should heavily invest in the infrastructure and industrial development of the African continent" (Shivambu, 2014: 146). The party states that its approach will differ from how this is currently done by private companies, particularly from the West and recently Chinese state-owned companies. The difference is that the EFF's state-owned companies, supposedly not driven by the desire to maximise profits, will "leave massive footprints concerning skills transfer, the development of the communities where investments happen, the payment of tax, reinvestments, corporate social laws and regulations and the fundamental economic development of these countries" (Shivambu, 2014: 146). In other words, the EFF claims it will not do in other countries what it does not want in South Africa. Economic freedom, according to the party, should not be attained only by South Africans but by all Africans, as envisioned by all serious Pan Africanist movements across time and space.

This 6th 'pillar' of the party, on the surface, makes sense, but not so on deeper and closer reading. The challenge is that if the EFF is promoting nationalising key industries in South Africa, why should it not encourage fellow African countries to do the same without the involvement of South Africa. It then becomes clear that the party sees the country's state-owned companies as playing the role that the West and China are currently playing in most countries on the continent. In fact, the party seems to want to maintain the idea of the South Africa's hegemony in the continent, which some refer to as the "'South Africanisation 'of the African economy" (Daniel, Naidoo & Naidu, 2003: 376). South African corporations are already spread out throughout the continent (Daniel, Lutchman and Comninos, 2007). Furthermore, it seems like the EFF wants the country to play its 'big brother' role on the continent. Of course, ultimately states act in the interests of their countries' selfish needs, so the EFF will not be the first in this regard. However, the populist nature of the EFF makes it a necessity for the party to phrase this in a Pan-Africanist discourse.

6.9 Open, accountable, corrupt-free government and society without fear of victimisation by state agencies

The 7th and last 'pillar' also leaves much to be desired. This is due to the fact that a lot of social problems facing the country are largely attributable to corruption, yet this 'pillar' does not offer us much in how seriously an EFF government will decisively deal with the state and government corruption. Billions of government money meant to go towards the development of the country's infrastructure and its people have been plundered through corruption. Eskom and other state-owned enterprises are in the state it is now due largely to corrupt activities within the company by well-remunerated personnel. There is hardly any government or state department that has escaped one form or another of corruption. So clearly, the country has a serious problem of corruption. A fact well-known by Malema (2016) as seen in his remarks at Oxford Union when he said:

> We have a situation where the levels of corruption in South Africa are actually institutionalized. You get a senior position on the basis as to what extent are you corrupt. If you are anti corruption you'll never get a promotion because the state favors those who are corrupt.

The EFF failure, then, in its founding manifesto, to come up with a basic plan of how to change and ultimately eliminate the culture of corruption is a serious lack of foresight. Being well-remunerated alone will not help the scourge, as it is not only low income people who commit corruption.

While this 'pillar', in the founding manifesto, is weak on the issues raised above, it talks about the ethical responsibility for political parties to reveal their financial backers. And also of how "state agencies should have the necessary relative autonomy, which will rid them from micromanagement and manipulation by politicians" (Shivambu, 2014: 148). Fortunately, the thinness of the founding manifesto on corruption is corrected in the 2014 and 2019 national elections manifestos. In the elections manifestos, the party proposes practical measures to curb and eventually eliminate corruption in state institutions. The party, for instance in both election manifestos talks about setting up special courts for dealing with corruption within the government and the state. The 2014 elections

manifesto states that "The EFF Government will establish State Administration Courts to promptly respond to incidents of corruption and maladministration with the aim of firing and blacklisting corruption state employees and private companies, and recover money lost to corruption" (Shivambu, 2014: 19). Those found guilty, under the party's government, will be sentenced to no less than 20 years in jail. The 2019 elections manifesto goes further by proposing passing "a law that will make all Public Representatives and Servants to forfeit their pension funds and savings if they are found guilty of corruption" (EFF, 2019c: 38). Furthermore, those who have been found guilty will "receive lifetime bans from employment in the public sector" (EFF, 2019c: 39).

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter provided a critical analysis of what the party calls its 'seven non-negotiable cardinal pillars'. It was, in other words, an analysis of the party's supposed programme of building a developmental state that benefits all the people of South Africa. The party views these 'seven pillars' as central in the struggle for what it calls 'economic freedom'. In other words, these pillars, according to the party, will end poverty and racial inequalities, thereby bringing 'economic freedom', supposedly through state ownership of the land, and other key industries.

The overall conclusion from this analysis, however, demonstrates a reality that the EFF, rhetoric aside, does not have a solid plan of how to bring about this 'economic freedom' to the country, let alone the people it claims to represent. The chapter further confirmed what Booysen (2015: 231) calls the party's "ideological incoherence". This is due to the fact that the party, policy wise, is a nationalist populist party that places emphasis on slogans over content and or detail. And, secondly, the EFF does not have a solid foundation that distinguishes it from the current ANC government. In other words, evidence suggests that the EFF provides us with a continuation, if not repetition, rather than a rupture from national liberation politics, particularly that of the ANC. The difference between the two being that the EFF makes more noise about its policies, which are not fundamentally different from the ANC's such as nationalisation of mineral resources and state ownership of the land (Booysen

2015). This noise should be understood as part of the spectacle that is as the core that makes it a populist party above all else.

Chapter 7: The promiscuous soul of a thin ideology

7.1 Introduction

This is the third analysis chapter of the thesis, it differs from the previous two in the sense that the current one is largely a critical analysis of the data collected from participants during the course of this research. One part of the current chapter deals with what the literature on populism refers to as the 'demand side' of populism, namely the reasons that people give for supporting and joining populist parties (Mudde, 2007; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). This section, put differently, is a critical analysis of the reasons why the participants interviewed support and joined the EFF. This part of the chapter argues that the anger and resentment against the ANC is the foremost reason why people join and support the EFF. The chapter further argues that the feelings against the ANC, together with the thinness of the party's ideology attract people to the EFF who champion different political ideologies. What unites the members of the EFF, rather than a single political ideology of the party, is the fact that they are aggrieved by the current status quo, particularly the ruling party. The EFF is so invested in attracting people who are angry with the ANC to the point that it has not developed its own attractive full ideology. The second part of the chapter critically analyses the rationale of the members who have grown disillusioned with the thin ideology sold by the EFF. This section highlights the fact that some of those were lured in by the euphoria and the rhetoric of the party seemed to have realised at a later stage that they joined the EFF thinking it is one thing only to discover that it is many things. The failure to understand the EFF, first and foremost, as a populist party with a thin centred ideological political party and consequently with a unique ability to be anything at any point in time, has now led some of these people who have left the party to label it as another compromised or another party of 'sell outs'. Put together the chapter, then, is a critical analysis of how the party's political identity resonates, or used to, with these different groups of people, and also made some to longer associate with the political identity of the party.

7.2 On joining the EFF: 'fully committed to this thing'

Populist parties often emerge and thrive in societies where there are perceptions of a crisis, whether real or imagined (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Spruyt, Keppens, & Droogenbroeck, 2016). The sense of a crisis can be about the level of corruption, failure of government to address structural issues such as poverty and or social inequalities. More than constituting a crisis, these are often institutional and system failures (Moffitt, 2015). These failures often leave members of the society, particularly the ones on the receiving end and those who identify with them with "deep feelings of discontent" (Spruyt *et al*, 2016: 342). Populist parties often thrive in such societies because they often articulate what the people who are discontent want to hear (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). In other words, populists express views and discontent that already exist in society. Furthermore, populists perform and amplify the notion of a crisis in the societies and countries they operate in (Moffitt, 2015). The process of amplifying and performing a crisis works to the benefit of populist parties and gives them a sense of relevancy (Moffitt, 2015). It is a performance that works effectively to depict the issue as that of the people versus the elite and works equally effective in presenting the populist actors as the legitimate leaders, the voice and the embodiment of the 'real' people and the nation (Moffitt, 2015).

South Africa, as a country that is still struggling with its own colonial legacy, racism and high levels of inequalities, has no shortage of people who are not happy with the status quo and the ruling party (Brown, 2015; Gibson, 2011; Hart, 2014). Consequently, the EFF's argument that the ANC has 'sold out', 'betrayed the people' or that 'real' freedom has not yet been achieved in South Africa existed long before the formation of the EFF (see Gibson, 2011; Southall, 2013). The EFF rather than the inventor articulates and amplifies these entrenched sentiments as part of its effort to resonate and attract people who feel let down, disappointed or betrayed by the current system (Spruyt *et al*, 2016). The members of society that the EFF seeks to resonate with and attract are people who "feel orphaned by the established political actors" (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017: 101). These orphans do not necessarily have to share the same ideological outlook with each other or with the EFF, but they are all in the EFF because the articulation of 'the people' or 'our people' as an "empty signifier" means

that the party is able to "unite different grievances" or people with different grievances (Spruyt *et al*, 2016: 336). In other words, people join and support populist parties not necessarily because they are attracted by its conflicted ideology, but they join due to feeling aggrieved by both the ruling party and the other political parties that are perceived to be part of the establishment.

It is for this reason then that the participants in this study all seemed to have joined the EFF mostly because of their grievances with the ruling party. They seem to have joined or actively supported the party because of feeling let down or not listened to by the ruling ANC, more than anything else. For instance, Participant 9 ended up actively supporting the EFF because she felt the EFF was the 'voice' of the marginalised. She told me that

> Then the EFF came through and it promised us all... they said we are here, we
> are the voice of the voiceless, we are the action that is needed in the frontlines
> of politics where people are looking to be heard and to be acknowledged.

Participant 3, on the other hand, joined the EFF after being discontent with the ANC's pace of transforming the country, particularly the living conditions of black people. She argued that:

> We still find black people leaving in slums, leaving in shacks, still not having
> access to jobs, still not having access to business or opportunities, or even
> business funding. So we needed a movement that spoke to those issues and
> that articulated some of the things that the ANC was saying but not
> implementing such as the expropriation of land…
> …It's important for us to express that anger. To say no we no longer want the
> ANC in government. We are angry with the ANC because it hasn't delivered
> on what it said it would.

In other words, what she is saying is that the failure to implement the policies they spoke about meant that the ANC government is not genuine. She was not alone in joining the EFF due to distrusting the commitment and sincerity of the ANC. Participant 8 expressed the same sentiment by saying:

> I didn't believe in the ANC's capacity to pursue what they say they want to pursue genuinely anymore. I just stopped believing in what they were doing... I didn't see that they were committed to that…
>
> So like I said to you earlier, when I started picking up that the ANC is not fully committed to this thing I then drew my own conclusions… and all of that basically led to me deciding no there should be a different option, there should be a different way out.

The 'different way out' for these participants was the EFF. In their study, Mannarini, Rochira, Ciavolino, Russo, & Salvatore (2020) argue that other than anger, distrust of the incumbent is another factor that often leads people to join and support populist parties. This proves to be the case with both participants 3 and 8. It is a level of distrust that comes as a result of being disappointed by the ruling party. Joining the EFF, then, was a way of expressing their dissatisfaction both with the ANC as well as with the status quo. The EFF, for them, proved to be the 'movement' that 'articulated' the issues they are concerned about. Scholarship on the 'demand side' of populism highlights that members of the society who are unhappy or angry about the status quo are often the ones who join populist parties because these parties often speak as if they are speaking for the marginalized (Mannarini *et al*, 2020; Rico, Guinjoan, & Anduiza, 2017). The EFF, despite its thin ideology and flexible policies, is able to attract people like the above participants because it gives them the impression that the party is for the marginalized and that it is 'committed to this thing'.

Rico *et al* (2017: 447) further argue that members of society who support and or join populist parties often do so as a means of "correcting" the injustice they feel or perceive. Mannarini *et al's* (2020)

study also found that people supported and joined populist parties because they felt they were participating in an act of restoring democracy. This makes sense because as argued earlier, populist parties pride themselves as the upholders of real democracy (Canovan, 1999; Spruyt *et al*, 2016). This sentiment was also expressed by the members of the EFF that were interviewed for this thesis. For instance, Participant 5 joined the EFF as a means of protesting against the ANC and the status quo. His argument was that the EFF was going to correct the injustices that the ANC has failed to correct in the post-1994 era. Participant 5 argued that the issue was not only with the ruling ANC but with the other established political parties as well. He spoke of the EFF as a political outsider to the establishment. Participant 5 noted that:

> Look, the EFF to me is a party that represents a new vision because the Africans in particular since the democratic dispensation they have been dejected they can't participate meaningfully and effectively in the economy mainstream therefore the seven cardinal pillars of the EFF represent a hope, a new path for Africans.
>
> …. Look, eh … the ANC, the ruling party in particular it hasn't ensured that Africans participate meaningfully in the economy… And I am saying that it can't be, I mean 25 years past the democratic dispensation that we still have informal settlements growing in the country. And the ruling party and other parties who have been in governance before there's a lot that they could have done.

What the above participants also confirm is the fact that members of the society who feel that one group is marginalized over another are more 'receptive' to populism (Rico *et al*, 2017). They are more receptive because of the emphasis on the 'redemptive face' of democracy by populists (Canovan, 1999). Populist parties, after all, thrive in portraying themselves as being political outsiders who offer something new and different from all other political parties (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017).

In this sense, they present themselves not only as representing the 'dejected' but, importantly as part of the ordinary and 'dejected' people. Populist parties, argues Spruyt *et al* (2016: 336) give people "hope to overcome… troubles through the action of sovereign people". This is why then for Participant 5 the EFF represents this hope. A hope that black people can no longer be victims of systematic marginalization and a hope that their sovereignty will be affirmed through their 'meaningful participation' for the betterment of their lives.

Participant 5's hope was also reflected in what attracted participant 6 to join the EFF. Accordingly, Participant 6 believes that the party's stance on land is directly aimed at restoring the dignity of black people. In his view,

> The land discourse is very important in this particular discourse because we
> speak about unemployment, we speak about poverty, we speak about all those
> social ills that are deeply rooted into the land issue (Participant 6).

His argument, which is that of the party, is that land ownership inequalities are a reflection of the continuing marginalization of black people in the post-apartheid era. He believes that the EFF is the only party that can remedy this situation because of its emphasis on 'returning' the stolen land. In other words, he joined the EFF as a means of correcting the injustice that he perceives in the country. This act of joining the EFF, as a means of 'correcting' democracy, proved to be dominant in the participants of this study.

What this section demonstrates is the fact that most people are attracted to populist parties for a number of reasons. However, the central reason for joining seems to be based on their disgruntlement and distrust of the ruling party more than any other reasons. They join the EFF because of the failings and perceived failings of the ANC. They join the EFF even though the party has conflicted ideologies, and policies. According to Rico *et al* (2017: 456) people who join populist parties out of anger,

resentment or disappointment with the status quo "might be less likely to carefully scrutinize populist parties" and what they actually stand for. Hence, they join parties such as the EFF despite the party's ideological shortcomings. Below I will argue that the failure to carefully scrutinize what the party stands for or represents has led to some people either leaving or being expelled by the party.

7.3 The party for all

The people who join the EFF are not only dissatisfied with the ANC, but with other political parties as well. In other words, the EFF is an orphanage to a number of political activists (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2017). As Rico *et al* (2017: 449) argue the "ideological ubiquity of populist discourse allow it to be embraced by angry voters regardless of their political orientation". Furthermore, understood as a thin ideology, populism is "vague enough to accommodate significantly different interpretations, thereby allowing people with opposite ideological orientations to an equally populist discourse" (Rico *et al*, 2017: 449). Hence the political orphans who found a home in the EFF do not necessarily all subscribe to the same political ideology or tradition, but they are part of the EFF partly because of their grievances and discontent with the 'established political actors'. It is for this reason that the formation of the EFF attracted a number of people from different political and ideological backgrounds into the party (Mbete, 2015; Nieftagodien, 2015a). Some of these people, for instance, were once members of the congress movement who followed the former Youth League leaders into the EFF while some came from other political formations such as the PAC and some came from social movements (Mbete, 2015). Consequently, Nieftagodien (2015a: 450) glowingly writes that "An often neglected contribution of the party is that it has brought together activists from different, often antagonistic, political traditions of the liberation movement, namely, Congress, Black Consciousness, and Africanism". What Nieftagodien (2015a) fails to mention however is that the EFF is able to attract and accommodate these various political traditions because the party's 'thin ideology' is chameleonic and has the ability to be anything and nothing at any particular point.

As argued earlier, one of the key ideologies that the EFF often subscribes to is black nationalism. In fact, as illustrated earlier, black nationalism is often the host ideology that the EFF's populism operates from. Because of this, perhaps it should not be a surprise then that the EFF appeals to people who subscribe to black nationalism. This is more so when political parties such as the Pan African Congress (PAC), for instance, that were supposedly meant to champion some of the ideals that attract people to the EFF have seemingly been trapped in perpetual infighting and irrelevancy for decades (Hoeane, 2005; Kiewit, 2019; Mabasa, 2018; Dubase, 2019). Others such as Azapo, on the other hand, have disappeared into seemingly permanent state of irrelevancy (Phepheng, 2018). Phepheng (2018) writes that "So peripheral is Azapo that one would be forgiven to wonder if we can still say Biko's BC is a living philosophy". It is so peripheral that Azapo is not even represented in parliament, while the PAC, which has never been a serious political force, electorally, in the post-apartheid era, only has a single seat in parliament due to the 0.19% of the electorate who voted for it (Hoeane 2005, PMG, 2019). Hoeane (2005) mentions that the lack of unity and the absence of decisive leadership has been key in driving these parties into irrelevancy and directionlessness.

Meanwhile, the EFF has experienced steady growth in membership and in its representations in parliament and Provincial Legislatures, through presenting itself as championing the black nationalist agenda that some of these parties were meant to be championing. As a result, a number of people who subscribe to various strands of black nationalism such as Black Consciousness and Africanists have found themselves at home within the EFF (Kiewit, 2019; Nieftagodien, 2015a). These are people who believe that 1994 did not in itself resolve the entire legacy of colonialism and apartheid. With seemingly no other political formation articulating the link between race, land, and the economy like the EFF does, the party is home to these people. Witness, for instance, how a former member of the PAC told me:

> I was a member of the PAC for a long time, very long time. PAC is non
>
> functional. It's close to its death. So I could either look for a political home

or I could stay with the PAC. The closest in terms of the policy, right, in terms

of socialism, in terms of being leftist is the EFF. So it was a natural

progression for me to move from the PAC to the EFF. If I wanted to do any

good, if I wanted to stay politically active. (Participant 7)

Participant 7's argument about a dysfunctional PAC was also shared by another member who argued

that she could never join an organisation crippled by infighting, disorder and systemic dysfunction.

She expressed that she joined the EFF as opposed to the PAC because (Participant 8):

No! I am a very organised human being by nature and its not an insult. The

PAC's attraction for me ended in the early 1990s or mid 1990s. When it

became clear that they seem not to be committed on their own to really push

the land agenda as they claimed. So it was just a lot of lip service. Fortunately

I was exposed to quite a few PAC people in my friendships and network, so

I was not impressed with how they were running their own organisation. I

believed in what Robert Sobukwe said fully. I think most of us do. I believed

in the ideals of the PAC, but not to the PAC as an organisation that they were

competent and organised enough to… you know push. Because you need a

very well coordinated and organised entity for you to do the actual work on

the ground.

Both Participant 7 and Participant 8's choice for opting for the EFF rather than the PAC seems

reasonable on a number of levels. Firstly, the PAC, organisationally, has been a mess in the post-

apartheid era, due to the seemingly never-ending leadership squabbles within the party (Hoeane

,2005; Kiewit, 2019; Kondlo, 2009; Mabasa, 2018; Dubase, 2019). Most probably due to its

infighting, the PAC has never received more than 2% on the national elections, in 1994 it received

1.25%, 0.71 in 1999, 0.73 in 2004, 0.21 in 2014, and 0.19% in 2019, (Hoeane, 2005; IEC, 2014b;

PMG, 2019). The EFF in comparison received 6.35% during the 2014 elections, and 10.80% in 2019 (IEC, 2014b; IEC, 2019). Out of the three major political parties (ANC, DA and the EFF) in the country, the EFF was the only party that grew in the 2019's national elections, with parts of the media stating that "the EFF is without a doubt the biggest winner" in terms of growth (Cele, 2019b).

The PAC, had it not been seemingly crippled by the persistent infighting, would most probably be the one party that is championing many of the slogans championed by the EFF, particularly the one on expropriation of land. Of all the liberation movements in the country, the PAC is most often associated with the demand for the return of the land (Hoeane, 2005; Kondlo, 2009). According to Kondlo (2009: 258), the "PAC was ideologically strong with an African nationalist ideological vision more radical than that of the ANC", more so, when it came to the redistribution of land (also see Hoeane, 2005). Hoeane (2005: 204) considers the PAC as one of the parties that have often been on "the left of the ANC and have their roots in Africanism and Black Consciousness". In its 2004 election manifesto, for instance, the PAC called for the scrapping of the private property clause in the constitution because it viewed it as legitimising "racial economic inequality" and it also believed that the clause was a "main obstacle to land reform", argues Hoeane (2005: 189). In 2004, its then President Motsoko Pheko stated that "Our people are still without the wealth and land they fought for . . . these people are being told today by the African National Congress government to celebrate ten years of democracy, but there is nothing to commemorate" (cited in Hoeane, 2005: 189). In fact, as far back as 1993, the PAC called for "the expropriation of land for redistribution to the landless without compensation for those dispossessed" (Kondlo, 2009: 276). The party that currently champions the notion of 'expropriation of land without compensation' is the EFF, therefore, Participant 7's move from the dysfunctional PAC to the EFF, and Participant's 8 views on the PAC needs to be understood with this background in mind. The EFF, therefore, has attracted some of the people who might have viewed the PAC as their political home. As one *Mail & Guardian* article

opined, the EFF has attracted these people after "successfully harnessing much of the rhetoric of black consciousness, even though the EFF's roots are in the ANC" (Kiewit, 2019).

Although one can understand why people cannot join or be part of a dysfunctional political party like the PAC, the question of the EFF's fidelity to the black nationalism projects remains. The question stands because the EFF is a number of things at any point in time. While Nieftagodien (2015a) argues that this 'bringing together' of different ideological traditions does not make the EFF a populist party, I argue that this, in fact, is one of the attributes that makes the EFF a populist party. The thinness of populism as an ideology enables it to borrow freely from different and contradictory ideologies across time and space without fully committing to any particular one.

The chameleonic ability to freely borrow is a useful tool for the EFF as it allows the party to appeal to many people who do not necessarily scrutinize its ideology and policies (Rico *et al*, 2017). Hence the EFF is a home for those who subscribe to non-racialism and a home of black nationalists. Today it can be a political orphanage for people who believe in workers' power and tomorrow it is an orphanage of state capitalism. It is the political home of bottom-up decision making today, and a party of downward decision making the next day. You have people who join the party because they believe it is pro-feminism even though the party is predominantly male centric, like most populist parties. It is a party that is against violence against women today, tomorrow it is a party that tells women what levels of violence against women by men constitute abuse. It is a party of law and order, and it is also a party of violence and disorder. Even the party's confusing ideological marriage of Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian is an attempt, more than anything else, to appeal to various political groupings. The point being made here is that the thin ideology of the EFF enables the party to be any of these things without committing to be any of them. Consequently, it should not be a surprise that these inherent contradictions have left some who believed in the party disillusioned.

7.4 Disillusionment amongst the disillusioned

As a result of these contradictions some of the people who joined the EFF after believing it is one thing, left the party upon discovering that it is, in fact, something else. One of these people is its former provincial chair for Gauteng, Mandisa Mashego. Although Mashego has not publicly provided any reasons why she left the EFF, she did describe her new political party as being "genuine" (Nyathi, 2021). Importantly Mashego left the party after she failed to secure a position as the national secretary general in the party's December 2019 elective conference where she was, in the words of one newspaper report, standing "up for black women's leadership" (Madisa, 2019). She told the same publication that her contestation was a "defiance" against suppressing women from contesting (Madisa, 2019), and she told another that it was a matter of pushing "the boundaries" (Madia, 2020). According to Mashego her contestation for the chairperson role "bruised" certain, supposedly male, egos because she alleges that some people did not expect her to exercise "my right to contest" (Madisa, 2019). At the time she was talking to the *Sowetan*, Mashego was still a member of the EFF, hence it makes political sense for her not to name the people whose egos were bruised, or which people wanted to 'suppress' her right to contest the position. Be that as it may, it has been reported that the position she wanted was earmarked for another man, Marshall Dlamini by the dominant political grouping associated with Malema (Madisa, 2019; Ntuli, 2020). Dlamini got the position after Mashego failed to secure the required number to formally contest the position. Following her resignation, she told one reporter that "once you realise you no longer fit in the vehicle, by all means step aside" (Madia, 2020).

While Mashego, who is now in another political 'vehicle', is yet to provide the exact reason for leaving the party it does seem that she left the party as a result of the inherent male dominance and patriarchy within the EFF. For instance, while talking about her new party, she told the *City Press* that "we need a space where women have real power and make a real contribution that's taken seriously and isn't patronised" (Nyathi, 2021). For years Mashego was, it needs to be emphasised, the provincial chair of the country's third largest party, hence such statement needs to be analysed

with that experience in mind. Moreover, she has often presented herself as a feminist who, at times, challenged the party's patriarchy, as seen in her 'right to contest' for a position that the dominant males allegedly reserved for another male (Ntuli, 2020). Furthermore, prior to the party's national elective conference, she contradicted Malema's view about the purpose and need for a women's wing within the party. Prior to the conference, Malema had expressed the view that an EFF's women's wing should perhaps be formed in order to help the party generate more female votes for the party (Maeko & Smit, 2019). Mashego, on the other hand, told one publication that such a formation should be 'genuinely' concerned about women empowerment rather than it being a strategy of getting more votes. She further stated that patriarchal men cannot be honestly expected to defend women, because "Men have nothing to benefit from feminism. They have everything to lose, because patriarchy provides them with undue privileges" (Maeko & Smit, 2019).

Populist parties are said to have an ambivalent relationship with feminism in general. On the one hand, populists recognise the need of "incorporating women into the political space as a way of expanding their support base" (Abi-Hassan, 2017: 434). A view also expressed by Malema above. And yet, on the other hand, gender is systematically positioned as secondary within the populist ideology (Abi-Hassan, 2017: 434). This is more so in cases where the party has based its political identity, like the EFF has done, on 'strongman' and dominant masculinities (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017). In such an instance, populists incorporate women into the party not necessarily to change the patriarchal political identity of the party, but rather as part of growing the electoral base of the party. In other words, the incorporation of women even into carefully selected positions is often not based on genuine transformational politics of women and feminists politics. According to Abi-Hassan (2017: 441), populists often "consistently frame the role of women in politics as an extension of their gender role in the home, even when they occupy high political offices". In other words, rather than seeing populists embrace feminism, there is a tendency of associating and expecting women to serve

only in certain roles and positions (Abi-Hassan, 2017). As seen below this is an issue that one of the participants raised with regards to the EFF.

The idea of extending home gender roles to the public space is one that was also experienced by one of the research participants. She explained that she and her female comrades experienced this through the division of labour in her branch. She told me that apart from the practice of reducing women to deputy positions, "Even the division of labour within the branch. The women do like the house keeping and stuff like that. And the men come out and get all the media attention" (Participant 10). She further described her experience as a deputy president of a branch as "difficult, it was very difficult" (Participant 10). Part of this difficulty arose as a result of women having to "constantly… assume a different identity, a way of interacting with people so that the men in the group take you seriously. It was very difficult to do that" (Participant 10). The practice of not taking women seriously is often highlighted amongst populists and nationalists politics groups, as was noted in Chapter 3.

Participant 10's experience is seemingly not unique. For instance, Participant 9, a former active supporter of the party, also confirmed this difficulty of being a woman within the EFF in the following manner:

> And I heard how they are treating women in the EFF. The disregard they have
>
> for women. Women they don't have a voice. The physical and the emotional
>
> abuse that women are going through in the EFF just to have a position for
>
> whatever reason that these women are there at the top for. And there has been
>
> accusations of rape, there's been accusations of well uh you slept with me
>
> because you promised me this position.

Participant 9 further highlighted the contradictions between what the party says in public and what it does in the absence of cameras. She noted that the party publicly depicts itself as being against women

abuse, yet their conduct within the party is just as problematic when it comes to the treatment of women within the party. This contradiction is also highlighted in Maggott's (2019) study, who argues that the party's public stance of being anti-sexist does not translate into action, nor shape the way women are treated or viewed within the party.

The practice of not taking women seriously within the party also leads to mostly men occupying prominent and influential positions within the party's structures. This is standard practice in structures that privilege one group of people at the expense of and over another group. Hence while in the DA only a certain kind of black gets promoted, in the EFF you have to be a certain kind of a female (see Maggott, 2019). Oppressive structures maintain themselves through rewarding those who are willing to assimilate into the dominant system (Yancy, 2008). That is why Participant 10 above speaks about having to "assume a different identity" in order to be accepted. Without doing this, without this assimilation process, they risk not being taken seriously by people who pose as their comrades. In order to be accepted to the dominant group one often has to assimilate and assume a different identity that is acceptable to the dominant grouping. Patriarchal men are known for punishing women who do not neatly fit into the stereotypical role of women (Maggott, 2019). Dlakavu (2017) hinted at this in her thesis when discussing how one member of the party was told by a male provincial leader that she was not wearing appropriately. Sexist men and political organisations often expect women to behave in a particular normative standard, and to dress in a way that is deemed 'appropriate' to the male gaze.

The other problem that comes with the patriarchal practices of the EFF, such as that of giving males more platforms to be prominent (speakers of the party, chief whip, the face and voice of the party) is that it creates another danger that was highlighted by Participant 9. She noted that in a society like South Africa where rape and abuse of women by men is, tragically, a norm, the practices of the EFF provide an enabling environment for this unfortunate and tragic reality to continue to be part of our

lives. In other words, the practices of carefully reducing women to the background perpetuate the status quo, rather than challenge it. She correctly stated that the EFF:

> perpetuates violent stereotypes and puts women in a position where they can be raped because who is going to believe you know the little known Palesa over here who's like you know helping filling out membership forms over Pambo over here who's in parliament. So even the way the political labour is divided sets the tone… [for patriarchy]. (Participant 9)

Participant 9 is raising an extremely good point here. It is one that is often overlooked. It is easy to overlook it, of course, when the intellectual leaders, the voice and the face of the party are all males. It is easy to overlook when patriarchal men, and the assimilated women, set the tone and agenda of what it is to be discussed and what is not. This is why the likes of Naledi Chirwa and Leigh-Ann Mathys, who sometimes assume the roles of feminists within the party, are able to defend sexism and patriarchy when articulated by one of the party's men who's often seen as one the party's foremost intellectuals, as seen in Chapter 5. On so many levels, and beyond the EFF we have seen this act of part-time feminists defending patriarchal leaders before. We saw it when the ANCWL actively partook in activities that denigrated a woman who accused Zuma of rape. In that instance, the feminists of the ANCWL defended the man, the patriarch even before the court pronounced on the matter. Therefore, the feminists within the EFF have seemingly taken the baton of what it means to be a feminist in a patriarchal political formation from the ANCWL.

7.5 Searching for the soul of populism

Andile Mngxitama, a long time black consciousness proponent, fell out with the party's leadership upon discovering that "the party is failing [to uphold] the very high standards we set for others for accountability and also fighting corruption" (Poplak, 2015). Crucially, upon joining the EFF, Mngxitama was asked about the contradictions of the party and said that:

By appropriating our politics. It became useless and childish to insist on

developing a politics outside of the space Malema was operating in, because

he had already appropriated our agenda, our politics (Sosibo, 2013).

In other words, he joined the party, not for ideological reasons but simply because Malema was saying

what Mngxitama wanted to hear. Mngxitama joined the EFF even though he does not subscribe to

the notion of non-racialism and to the freedom charter that the party sometimes subscribes to (Sosibo,

2013). Similar to the participants above, he joined the EFF in 'hoping for', as opposed to being

convinced by the party's promiscuous ideology. This state of hoping for is the reason why

Mngxitama, upon being expelled from the party, went onto claim that the EFF has lost its 'soul' and

that it had 'sold out' (Mngxitama, 2015; Sosibo, 2015). After pointlessly searching for the supposed

lost 'soul' of the EFF, Mngxitama went on to tell the *Mail & Guardian* that "I have looked very hard

in every corner of the country for the soul of the EFF. I have come to this very sobering conclusion:

there is no soul to save in the EFF" (Sosibo, 2015). Furthermore, he went on to say that "I have lost

all hope and respect that the EFF can carry out a revolutionary project" (Sosibo, 2015). Mngxitama's

search was always bound to give him the same results because the EFF is not committed to any

concrete ideology and hence even the party is unable to define its political identity without slogans

or without contradicting itself. My argument is that Mngxitama went on to look for a 'soul' that never

existed in the EFF. The only 'soul' that there is, that has always been with the EFF, is that of populism.

It is a soul that, as has been argued, is very promiscuous.

Mngxitama is not alone in accusing the EFF of having 'sold out'. The former Treasury General of the

EFF, Magdalene Moonsamy also raised the point once she was out of the party. According to

Moonsamy, "The EFF sold out the African people when they voted with the DA" (Maseko, 2015).

Moonsamy's argument needs to be understood on a number of levels. Firstly, the EFF, on most days

at least, is supposed to be the foremost black nationalist party of the day. In other words, the EFF

depicts itself as a party that is pushing the interests of black people and that takes race and racism seriously. In the lead up to the 2016 local government elections, for instance, Malema proudly boasted that the party's manifesto was "for the black nation" (Poplak, 2016). Ndlozi, speaking for the party, argued that the EFF is "an alternative that black people have" (ENCA, 2019). Yet the same party voted for and supported a white liberal party in three metros in 2016. Secondly, weeks before the EFF voted for the DA, Malema had referred to the DA as "a party of racists" (Baker, 2016; Onishi, 2016). Furthermore, the DA that the EFF helped is a proud Eurocentric and free market political party. Although the party changed its name to be the DA's in the early 2000, its genealogy goes back to the years of apartheid, having been led by people such as Hellen Suzeman who, according to Suresh Roberts (2007: 32) "was always a more self-styled ruling class trustee of native welfare than a champion of native democracy or self determination". Post1994 leaders of the DA include Hellen Zille who has publicly defended the contributions made by colonialism in the country. Therefore, in voting for the DA, the EFF was voting against what it sometimes claims it stands against. In other words, in voting the DA it was voting against the very principle that it sometimes claims to stand for. And in voting for the DA, the EFF demonstrated that its supposed 'non-negotiable' policies such as land expropriation and nationalisation were in fact negotiable because the DA, as the EFF knows all too well, is a proud proponent of privatisation and is firmly against land expropriation or any form of nationalization.

Furthermore, Mngxitama might have potentially saved himself a lot of time and energy if he had spoken to Zorro Boshielo, another former member of the party who also reached the 'sobering' conclusion that there is 'no soul' to be saved in the EFF (City Press, 2015). He told the Sunday paper that "the truth is that there is no soul to save in the EFF" (City Press, 2015). In his resignation letter, Boshiele who was the first Provincial Chairperson of the Gauteng province for the EFF stated that:

> Unfortunately, the general lack of debate and discourse in the EFF at a
>
> leadership level, coupled with a culture that is punishing to those who hold

diverse viewpoints is impacting harshly on the EFF's ability to drive through,

with sufficient momentum, a revolution agenda. Furthermore an orientation

away from community engagement, in favour of a Parliamentary-driven

programme has prejudiced the EFF's ability to establish robust and support

at a community level" (City Press, 2015; Ndaba, 2015).

What Boshiele was highlighting in his resignation letter, merely five months after being elected into his position, is the political hypocrisy that is inherent in the EFF. In other words, Boshiele a whole provincial leader is saying the party that is proclaiming itself as a party for 'real freedom' does not practice 'real freedom' internally. It has no real freedom because those who think differently, or as seen in Chapter 5, those who question the hierarchical character of the party are dealt with harshly. Furthermore, Boshiele is also highlighting the inconsistency of proclaiming oneself a 'movement' when they are comfortably concentrating on being parliamentary matters at the expense of community struggles. At the time of Boshiele's resignation, the EFF was mainly focused on the 'pay back the money' anti-Zuma campaign in parliament. A time when the party was still darlings and friends with the media.

Boshiele's problematisation of a political party that calls itself a movement while entrenched in institutional and parliamentary politics was also raised by the former deputy of a branch. She argued that the party's "obsession with parliamentary politics changed that a long time ago" (Participant 10). In other words, the party's focus on parliamentary politics meant that the party could not be honestly referred to as a movement. Participant 10 further added that:

it is not a movement. It is a political party… we pay our membership fees,

we… it functions as a business

As noted previously, the idea and practice of presenting the EFF as a movement is an inherent part of presenting the party as though it is a people's centred and driven political formation that functions

outside the political establishment. But what Participant 10, and Boshiele before him, is saying is that the EFF is but another political party. It functions and operates just like a political party rather than a movement. The notion that the EFF is a movement rather than a political party is a political spin that serves to portray them as something that it is not. The idea of a movement politically sounds better than a political party when the identity of the party is based on the false notion that it is a people's party. It is this false notion that leads people to look for souls that never formed part of the party's political identity.

The EFF's politically contradictory identity is something that another former member picked up early. In her book, she writes that before realising "how self serving" (wa Azania, 2014: 165) the EFF leaders were, she believed that the EFF "was going to finally be that political home, that cause I was prepared to give my live to" (wa Azania, 2014: 158). She writes that Malema and Shivambu "were dishonest with me from the very beginning. I have come to believe that they always intended for the movement to be a political party" despite the pretence that the idea of a political party must come from 'the people' (wa Azania, 2014: 157). She allegedly joined the party because she "genuinely believed in the struggle for economic freedom", but soon discovered that the two leaders were in it for different reasons (wa Azania, 2014: 161). Like most EFF members who raise questions that are seen to be challenging the party's hierarchy, wa Azania relationship with the party had to come to an end. An end that made her realise that "some of us have no space in the EFF".

wa Azania, like Mngxitama and others, failed to see the EFF for what it is, and only got to know the political identity of the party only once they were inside. Perhaps this is understandable because, as previously noted, populist parties are well vexed in pretending to be something that they are not. In the case of the EFF, we have seen how the party claims to be this nice political formation with an identified principled and faithful soul. Yet, in reality, the EFF is a political party that claims many political identities all at once and at different times as a means of generating support from people who

are disgruntled by the current status quo and the already existing political parties. To reach these people, the EFF based its political identity on a thin ideology that enables it to change without a flinch whenever it suits the hierarchy of the party. And that is what makes the party's political identity populist.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter began with a critical analysis of the reasons given by people who are supporters and members of the EFF. The chapter argued that the reasons provided by these participants are in line with the scholarship on populism which has found that people tend to support populist parties as a result of feeling angry with the incumbent. Consequently, the participants interviewed for this study tended to express their support of the EFF as a form of protesting against the ANC government. The chapter also highlighted that joining a populist party has its own discontents because the EFF's chameleonic nature has led some to feel betrayed by a party that was supposed to be their political home. A political home that is seriously concerned about advancing the liberation and freedom of the oppressed. But these people discovered that the EFF rather than being a movement of the oppressed is a political party that operated like the ones that it publicly criticises. They discovered once inside the party that the EFF is not the political vehicle that is claims to be. These people were drawn into the party because they thought that the EFF has a certain political identity when it does not. Rather the EFF is a political party with multiple and changing political identities that are adapted to suit a particular moment, or appeal to a particular audience. In other words, the political identity of the EFF is best characterised as a populist party.

Chapter 8: Summary and conclusion

8.1. Introduction

This is the last chapter of this thesis and its purpose is to summarise the key arguments raised as a form of concluding the research project. The chapter will do this in a number of interconnected ways. Firstly, it will provide a brief summary of what was discussed in each of the previous chapters. This summary will highlight the key argument of each chapter. Secondly, the chapter will restate the research questions, as they were mentioned in the beginning, that necessitated this study. This will be done in a way to see how the key arguments of the thesis were, in fact, a response to these questions. Thirdly, the chapter will briefly summarise the significance and contributions to the field and or topic made by the thesis. Fourthly, the chapter will point out possible further research areas on this topic. Many of these are based on the shortcomings or limitations of the current thesis, as identified in Chapter 1. Finally the chapter will provide concluding remarks and final words on this particular topic and research study. Therefore, the chapter, when it is all said and done is made up of these 5 sections, namely, summary of the chapters, the restating of the aims/objectives of the thesis, the contributions that the study made, possible research areas or questions, and concluding remarks.

8.2. Summary of the previous chapters

This thesis is made up of 8 chapters, including this concluding chapter. The first chapter introduced the thesis, by way of explaining what the thesis was about, what it sought to do and its central argument. It was also in the first chapter, where the aims and objectives were initially outlined, which are mentioned below. The key contributions of the thesis were also initially discussed albeit at length in the first Chapter. While the first chapter served the purpose of being an introduction, it also played the important role of being a methodology chapter. In other words, the research methodology used to carry out this study was discussed at length in the first chapter. In summary, the chapter outlined that the research was conducted through the use of qualitative research methods, which enabled the

researcher to conduct interviews with participants as one of the many ways of generating new knowledge about the topic.

The second chapter of this thesis picked up where Chapter 1 left in terms of illustrating the significance and contributions of the thesis. It did this by means of critically discussing the current available academic literature on the topic. In short, Chapter 2 was the literature review. The chapter, building on the argument already discussed in the first chapter, discussed the limitations and gaps within the available literature on the EFF. It was in this chapter where it was pointed out that the available literature, as useful as some of it is, has not yet explained in in detail the political identity of the EFF, nor has there been a careful analysis of what the EFF sometimes claims to represent in political terms. Even the literature that this thesis is building from that argues that the EFF's political identity is best understood as a populist party has not thoroughly conceptualised populism beyond its performative, that is theatrical nature as it pertains to the EFF. Due to the focus of the literature on the theatrics of the EFF, there was a huge gap in terms of theorising the political identity and ideology of the EFF as articulated by the party. This thesis, it became clear in the chapter, is the first comprehensive one to carefully analyse the EFF's political identity beyond the populist acts of the EFF.

The third chapter continued to illustrate the significance and uniqueness of the study by discussing, at length, the theory and approach used to study and conceptualise the political identity of the EFF. It was in this chapter where the concept of populism as a thin or thin-centred ideology was discussed at length. The chapter explained the importance and usefulness of understanding populism not merely as the attention grabbing behaviour of the party, or its colourful dress code in parliament but equally important as a political ideology. The usefulness of understanding and conceptualising populism as a thin ideology equips us with analytical tools to understand the political ideology of the EFF much

better. Understanding populism as a thin ideology helps us to theorise the EFF's lack of commitment to any particular political ideology or stand, as a result of its inherent chameleonic nature as a populist political formation. The manner in which populism is conceptualised in this chapter also further helped us to theorise the rhetoric of the party and the manner in which the party wants to be seen through its multiple and often conflicting articulations of its ideology. The chapter, furthermore, explained why thin ideology-based political formations such as the EFF tend to play on the notion of being a 'movements of the people' or wanting to be seen as ultimate fighters for democracy. This chapter, in other words, paved the way for the rest of the analysis for the careful analysis of the political identity of the EFF.

Chapter 4, picking up from the previous chapter, focused on one of the ideologies that the EFF often relies on to legitimise itself. While Chapter 3 mentioned in passing that the party often grounds itself in black nationalism ideology, Chapter 4 explains the ideological history and politics of black nationalism in South Africa. Black nationalism in South Africa cannot be removed from its historical context, hence this chapter is very much historical at times while not removed from the current state of affairs. In more ways than one, Chapter 4 is one of the first analysis chapters of this wherein it was pointed out that the party is not faithful to the black nationalism tradition it claims to be representative of. The party's contradictory and confused stances of the politics of non-racialism, for instance, leave us with not knowing what we are dealing with ideologically when it comes to race matters in South Africa. This was made all the more confusing by the fact that the party, similar to white leftist and liberal political groupings, seems to be not ideologically equipped to critically discuss race matters on a theoretical level outside the old Eurocentric economic and class lens. The chapter pointed out that the failure to theorise race was another revealing point about the party's lack of political or ideological commitment to anything, even the ones it claims to be committed to.

Chapter 5 was a careful analysis of how the EFF often performs its populism as conceptualised in this thesis. The chapter focused on three themes, namely (1) the idea of presenting the party as a protest movement for the people rather than as another established political party; (2) the notion of the EFF as a party that is committed to the struggle for what is calls economic freedom is often amplified by depicting the party as revolution movement that is prepared for violence to attain the supposed freedom for the people; and (3) the party's populism is noticeable in the fact that its leader, Malema, takes on the role of being the arch-populist of the party who is sometimes viewed as the messiah of the people. The chapter argued that together and separately the themes discussed in this chapter are some of the ways in which the party enacts and practices its populist ideology. The party performs these acts, similar to populists elsewhere, as a way of getting attention, relevancy and ultimately as a way of garnering votes on the pretence that it is a people's party that is not scared of taking on the establishment head-on. The message of the party being that while other political parties are seemingly in bed with the enemy and or afraid of the enemy, the EFF and its leaders are not. Hence these acts, in multiple ways, are central to the party's representation of its self as some kind of a people's party.

Chapter 6 was a careful analysis of the party's policies. This chapter argued that the party's thin-ideology is also noticeable in what is meant to be the party's key and supposedly non-negotiable policies. The chapter critically analysed these policies from both a historical and ideological perspective. What came out of this chapter is that other than the nice and radical sounding slogans of the policies, the party is not clear on what is meant to be its key mandate, namely delivering its so-called economic freedom through the implementation of these policies or slogans rather. Furthermore, the chapter showed that most of what the party seems to be proposing, incoherent as they are, is only slightly different from what is already offered by the governing ANC. Expressing what seemed like borrowed policies from the ANC makes the EFF look like another extension of the ruling party, albeit more colourful and noisy than the ANC. Looked at in its entirety, the chapter is a further illustration of the argument made in this thesis of understanding the EFF as a populist party that has a canny

ability to subscribe to different ideologies or perspectives to suit the political interests of the party at any point in time.

Chapter 7 was the last analysis chapter of the thesis. In it, I discussed the reasons that made people associate with the EFF despite its multiple political identities. Rather than this being an anomaly, the chapter argued that this is in line with populist political formations across the world. This is the case because people who identify with populist formations do not necessarily do so due to the ideological orientation or political programme of the populists but because of their resentment with the status quo and the parties that are deemed to be part of the status quo. Therefore, people join and support populist parties as a means of protesting against the incumbent or governing party. This was illustrated by the fact that the participants of this particular research expressed their involvement with the EFF as an act of correcting the injustice in the country. The fact that the EFF also presents itself as an alternative made the process of these participants to identify with the party. The chapter, however, also showed that some of the people who once identified with the EFF later realised that the political identity of the party is not what they thought it was. In other words, while those who have joined the EFF largely as part of being disillusioned with the status quo, also ended up being disillusioned with the party once they realised what the EFF actually is. The reality of the disillusioned amongst the disillusioned is again not a surprise when we understand populism as theorised in this thesis, because from early on we know that populism as a thin ideology enables the party to have multiple political identities.

Chapter 8, then, is the summary and conclusion chapter. It plays the role of summing up the thesis and proving the last words of this thesis.

8.3. Response to the research questions

In Chapter 1 of the thesis, after discussing the problem statement at length, I listed two questions that were to guide this study. These were questions that were identified as not being wholly answered by the available literature on the party. In other words, the questions were formulated after the research gap within the existing literature on the EFF was identified. The key question asked in that that chapter was: What is the political identity of the EFF? Chapter 1 also listed 4 subsequent questions which will not be repeated here because, as subsequent questions, they help answer the central question of the thesis. In essence, the thesis as a whole is on the politics, significance and the role of the EFF in post-apartheid South Africa.

The thesis responded to the central and subsequent questions in a number of interconnected ways. Firstly, from the onset the thesis made it clear that the EFF is above all else a populist party. The thesis went on to demonstrate this fact through explaining what makes a party a populist party (see Chapter 2). The thesis also focused on some of the EFF's ideological underpinnings by analysing the claims by the party that its ideological genealogy goes back to colonial and apartheid years (see Chapter 4). The thesis further discussed the characteristics that make the EFF a populist party (see Chapter 4 — 7). For instance, one issue that kept coming up is the ability of the EFF, as a populist party to be a political chameleon. We saw this in Chapter 4 where it was pointed out that the party that claims to be the ultimate party of black people, knows nothing about race theory beyond the Eurocentric class framework. The chameleon nature of the EFF is again noticeable in claiming to be a party for workers, for people, and for the state. Of course, we also saw this in how the party that is publicly claiming to be fighting for what it calls real freedom is unable to practice this so-called freedom internally. Furthermore, although the party presents itself as a movement for economic and real freedom, the party is yet to develop a coherent political programme for such. The thesis highlighted many such inconsistencies. Therefore, these inconsistencies lead one to conclude that the political orientation and identity of the EFF is that of a populist political party. Its populism can not

be properly understood outside conceptualising populism as a thin ideology. A thin ideology is one that is flexible, promiscuous and able to change at any time to suit the political needs of the moment. In other words, in the case of the EFF, it is able to be a party that talks about real freedom while practicing authoritarianism. Read together and individually the chapters of this thesis deliberated on and responded to the central question and the subsequent questions.

8.4. The significance and contributions made by the study

Chapter 1 and 2 have already highlighted, at length, the significance and contributions on the topic that this thesis makes, hence in this concluding chapter, a brief summary will suffice. It was important to study the political identity and political orientation of the EFF for numerous reasons, key amongst those being that there is currently few academic studies on South Africa's second opposition political party. Secondly, it was important to understand what the party represents ideologically, beyond its colourful acts and nice sounding slogans. And lastly, it was important to know whether the party is what it claims to be on an ideological and political level. Many studies of the EFF have accepted what the party claims to stand for without critically analysing the party's self definition, political ideology, or its political programme for economic freedom. This thesis is the first to comprehensively interrogate these. Moreover it is the first comprehensive study that has identified the EFF as a populist with a thin ideology.

The study differed from the current available studies of the EFF in a number of levels, as already stated. It differed, firstly, from the assertion that the party is a fascist political party. It rejected this notion because the people who have made this propagated view have not provided convincing arguments of what makes the EFF a fascist rather than a populist political formation. Secondly, it differed from the many studies that have limited the populism of the EFF to its acts, behaviour and dress code. It has been argued that the entire identity and ideology of the party is populist in nature. Furthermore, no other study, as far as I know, has studied the EFF at this length, including a historical

analysis of the ideology that the EFF claims to embody beyond the ANCYL. This is the first thesis also to argue that the EFF lacks a political programme to put into place the economic freedom that the party promises. Beyond the "fine slogans" (Fanon 2001: 108) that the party calls its 'seven cardinal pillars', the EFF is yet to offer a coherent, and a clear programme of its promises as its economic freedom.

8.5. Possible research areas and or questions

As pointed out in the first chapter, this thesis is not without its limitations, hence future research can investigate these. Therefore possible future research can address the following:

o The lived experiences of women within the EFF. There are already some studies on this, but more research is needed.

o The politics of the Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command, and its role in student politics, and the higher education sector

o And lastly, the party's use or weaponisation of social media, particularly twitter as a means of articulating its thin ideology. And also the use of social media as a tool to mobilise against the party's political opponents.

8.6. Concluding remarks

The EFF is a populist political party. As a populist party, the party has unique ability to claim to be many things at once. Its rhetoric of being a people's party against the establishment and the elite enables it to get a lot of people who are disgruntled with the status quo to identify and associate with the party. The party, similar to populist parties across the world, has no coherent and or clear solutions to the challenges that the people who support it need. For the EFF to live up to one of its identities of being an ultimate freedom fighter for black people, it will have to do more work. And it will have to be born again as a real vehicle of people's and the country's freedom. The process of being reborn will have to include shedding the inherent populist and chameleon nature of the party. Either that or

the ultimate freedom fighter for those who are at the receiving end of the current status quo will have to look elsewhere for real freedom in post-apartheid South Africa.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical clearance

UNISA | university of south africa

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

24 October 2018

Dear Phumlani Majavu

NHREC Registration # : Rec-240816-052

CREC Reference # : 2018-CHS-0216

Name : Phumlani Majavu

Student #: 36198463

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 24 October 2018 to 1 November 2021

Researcher(s):   Phumlani Majavu

Supervisor(s):   Professor S. Ndlovu

Department of Developmental Studies

The politics of the Economic Freedom Fighters: A Fanonian analysis

Current Qualifications: PhD in Development Studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for one year.

The *low risk application* was *reviewed and expedited* by the Chair of College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee on the 24 October 2018 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

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2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the Department of Psychology Ethics Review Committee.

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.

7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date (24 October 2021). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number (2018-CHS-0216) should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Signature :

Dr Suryakanthie Chetty
Deputy Chair : CREC
E-mail: chetts@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-6267

Signature :

Professor A Phillips
Executive Dean : CHS
E-mail: Phillap@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-6825

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

01 November 2019

Title: The politics of the Economic Freedom Fighters: A Fanonian analysis

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Pumlani Majavu and I am doing doctoral studies in the Department of Development Studies towards a Doctoral Degree (PhD) at the University of South Africa. I would like to invite you to participate in my study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this research understand the character and nature of the EFF politics, particularly its practices and ideologies.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

I would like to ask whether you will allow me to conduct an interview with you about your views and opinions about the politics of the EFF.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves using an audio recorder in order to capture our discussions, and I will use an interview guide to assist in our discussion. The types of questions that will you be asked will focus on your knowledge and understanding of the EFF. The interview will approximately take 45 minutes.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Please understand that your participation is voluntary, and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not, is yours alone. If you choose not to take part, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop participating in the research at any time and tell me that you don't want to continue. If you do this, there will be no penalties and you will not be prejudiced in any way.

If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There are no immediate benefits to you from participating in this study. However, this study will be helpful to me in the sense that it will help me get a better understanding of the politics of the EFF.

ARE THEIR ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

At the present time, I do not see any risk of harm from your participation.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Explain the extent, if necessary, to which confidentiality of information will be maintained.

Confidentiality

All identifying information will be kept in a password protected file and will be kept confidential to the extent possible by law. The records that identify you will be available only to me as the sole researcher of this project.

With your permission, I will audiotape and take notes during the interview. The recording is to accurately record the information you provide and will be used for transcription and analysis purposes

only. Your name will not be recorded on the transcripts. Instead, a code name or number will be used to ensure anonymisation. I will only use the code name or number in any research outputs produced. If you choose not to be audiotaped, I will take notes instead. If you agree to being audiotaped but feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview, I can turn off the recorder at your request. Or if you do not wish to continue, you can stop the interview at any time.

The data received from this research will be used for the research thesis, journal articles, and conference proceedings, however the data as mentioned above will be anonymous and your name will not be mentioned anywhere.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet Pretoria, at the researcher's office at home for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

No there is not incentives in participating in the study.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the *[see the attached ethics clearance],* Unisa.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Pumlani Majavu on 076 141 2826, or email phumlanim@gmail.com.

Should you have concerns about how the research has been conducted, you may contact Prof Linda Cornwell on 012 4298080, or cornwl@unisa.ac.za. Professor Cornwell is the M&D coordinator in the Department of Development Studies, Unisa.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Pumlani Majavu

Appendix C: Consent form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the audio recording of the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname………………………………………… (please print)

Participant Signature…………………………………………..Date…………………

Researcher's Name & Surname………………………………………(please print)

Researcher's signature…………………………………………..Date…………………