
University of Cape Town

# *An evaluation of Greene's resource theory of party dominance with reference to the South African case*

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**COMPULSORY DECLARATION**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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# Abstract

*The African National Congress is commonly thought of as a dominant party, which poses an explanatory problem – how and why is it dominant? Greene (2007) proposes that orthodox electoral market explanations fail to explain the persistence of dominant parties, and advances that "hyperincumbency advantages" (i.e. resource and policy advantages accruing to the dominant party) best explain how dominant parties persist, and that the decline in these advantages is linked with decline in party dominance.*

*Greene's early analyses took place before the ANC qualified as a dominant party in his model: this dissertation seeks to explain whether his theory explained the ANC's party dominance and its declining electoral and ideological dominance. Methodologically, a theory-testing case study incorporating process-tracing approach is taken. The ANC's hyperincumbency advantages are described through case studies of the party's funding mechanisms, its relations with public resources, and a specific study of patronage within the ANC during Jacob Zuma's presidency.*

*This dissertation finds that Greene's hyperincumbency approach was insufficient to accurately explain the ANC's dominance or its decline. Firstly, the ANC's electoral and ideological declined even as its access to public resources through what Greene terms a "national patronage system" increased. Secondly, the expansion of the aggregate opposition vote has been mostly due to splits off the ANC and declining partisan alignment with the party, rather than declining resource imbalances. An historical analysis of factionalism within the ANC since 1994 is undertaken. Factional dynamics within the ANC have proven important to party dominance, as the direction of patronage became primarily targeted at winning intra-party battles, and lack of factional management repeatedly caused damaging splits off the ANC.*

*This thesis suggests that approaches to dominant party studies should consider the importance of factional management in maintaining party dominance, as a necessary but potentially insufficient condition.*

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# Acronyms

ANC – African National Congress

BEE – Black Economic Empowerment

BBBEE – Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment

COPE – Congress of the People

Cosatu – Congress of South African Trade Unions

DA – Democratic Alliance

EFF – Economic Freedom Fighters

GEAR – Growth, Employment and Redistribution

IDASA – Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa

IFP – Inkatha Freedom Party

LDP – Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)

NDP – National Development Plan

NDPP – National Director of Public Prosecutions

NDR – National Democratic Revolution

NEC – National Executive Committee

NEDLAC – National Economic Development and Labour Council

NIA – National Intelligence Agency

(N)NP – (New) National Party

NPA – National Prosecuting Authority

NUM – National Union of Mineworkers

Numsa – National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa

PAN – Partido Accíon Nacional (Mexico)

PRD – Partido de la Revolución Democrática (Mexico)

PRI – Partido Revolucionario Institucional

RDP – Reconstruction and Development Plan

RPPF – Represented Political Parties Fund

SAA – South African Airways

SACP – South African Communist Party

SAPS – South African Police Service

UDF – United Democratic Front

WTO – World Trade Organization

# *Research Question*

*"Does Greene's Resource Theory explain the ANC's party dominance and its decline?"*

## Introduction

One-party dominance is, for orthodox party theorists, an abnormality. Nevertheless, dominant parties have emerged on multiple different continents, in developed, developing and middle-income countries, and in democracies and "electoral authoritarian" regimes. Some theorists propose that a lack of party alternation suggests a lack of democracy or rigged elections. Certainly, for some dominant parties, this has been the *modus operandi.* However, it does not account for the dominance of a host of parties – established democracies in the developed world such as Sweden and Japan have or have had dominant parties. Some other underlying factor or factors must sustain dominant parties. This dissertation is a contribution to two academic debates: The first is the field of dominant party studies in South Africa. From this case study, this thesis will suggest some contributions to the broader academic search for a general theory that explains party dominance.

Kenneth Greene (2007) offers a theory of party dominance that rests on the politicisation of public resources by dominant parties. Greene submits that continuous access to the benefits of public office, or "hyperincumbency", only serves to extend the electoral advantages that already accrue to all incumbent governments. Hyperincumbency allows dominant parties to politicise public resources and use them for campaign and patronage purposes, as well as control the policy agenda as a means to "firefight" potential opposition parties. Greene's theory advances that increased access to public resources will allow for increased and sustained periods of party dominance, whereas declining access to resources will entail declining party dominance.

This dissertation seeks to test Greene's theory, which has its origins in his case study of Mexico's PRI, by applying it to the South African case. Explanations for the length of the ANC's tenure and the decisiveness of its electoral victories abound, including conceptualisation as a national liberation movement, South African elections as a "racial census" and neopatrimonial approaches. The ANC's tenure between 1994 and 2019 will be examined, and an argument detailing the weaker explanatory power of Greene's theory in the South African case advanced.

The paper begins with a census of conceptualisations of one-party dominance, and arrives at a definition of the phenomenon. Subsequently, it examines explanations for one party dominance, with special focus on Greene's resource approach and the literature on factionalism and dominant parties. Chapters Three to Five establish that the ANC is a dominant party, how it gained its dominance and that this dominance is declining. Chapter Six subjects Greene's theory to empirical testing, based on proxies as well as a case study of the ANC's national patronage system under President Jacob Zuma. Greene's theory is shown to have limited explanatory value, and thus Chapter Seven advances an argument for ANC dominance based on its ability or inability to maintain party unity and manage factional tensions.

# Chapter One: Literature Review

Engaging in an empirical or comparative study of one-party dominance requires an assessment of the foundational literature of the field. This literature review will seek to answer three major questions: firstly, what is one-party dominance? Secondly, how does one-party dominance form and expire? Finally, what are the effects of one-party dominance on the political environment – i.e. the state, opposition parties, and party-society relations? All three questions are far from uncontroversial in the literature, and require comprehensive responses. This review will submit a definition of dominance suited to the South African case that includes ideological dominance, in line with early work on the field.

## 1.1. What is One-Party Dominance?

Answering the question "what is one-party dominance?" also entails answering the question of how one-party dominance can be operationalized and "measured" (in a non-literal sense). The literature does not arrive at any form of consensus view, although certain elements of dominance seem to be broadly accepted. As Pempel (1990: 2) notes, the party-dominance literature is marked by vagueness in definitions and dispute over which cases qualify.

Before engaging with definitional aspects, one must ask the question: why study dominant parties at all? Is this a useful category? Why not simply analyse these regimes as sustaining their power either through authoritarian means or by outcompeting opposition parties? The answer is that dominant parties seem to share common strategies for gaining and maintaining power across regime type, and (as will be detailed in the coming pages), orthodox approaches to political competition in either democratic or authoritarian regimes do not adequately explain why and how parties become and remain dominant.

A brief census of proposed definitions certainly reveals the aforementioned vagueness and inconsistency of definitions of party dominance:

Almond's (1960: 41) definition of dominant parties is rooted in "nationalist movement" cases, and as such defines dominant parties as the loyalty of most "significant interest groups" to the party of national liberation. Almond shies away from providing a generally applicable definition, instead offering common political arrangements in these dominant party systems: a

large “national movement” style party, opposed by small and particularist opposition parties with very little chance of victory, incorporates a range of disparate interests so as to make party cohesion and decisive policymaking difficult.

Sartori (2005: 171) explicitly distinguishes his “pre-dominant party system” from the notion of the “dominant party” as detailed separately by Duverger (1954), Almond (1960) and Blanksten (1960). Noting the uncertain operationalisation of party dominance, he investigates a group of democratic polities in which the incumbent party has a lead of more than 10 percent over the following party (Sartori, 2005: 172). If the “dominant party” categorisation was meaningful, he contends, there should be some form of common characteristics in the examined cases – which Sartori (2005: 173) argues there is not. The crux of the issue is that dominant parties at any given time do not necessarily produce dominant-party political systems.

This leads Sartori (2005: 173) to propose his typology: the “predominant party system”, which he distinguishes from the hegemonic party system. Sartori advances a minimalist conception of predominance (which, despite his arguments to the contrary, very closely mirrors what the literature considers as “party dominance”):

1. The dominant party must exist in a pluralist environment, i.e. opposition parties must be legitimate and legal competitors of the predominant party, even if they are insignificant
2. The predominant party must win an absolute majority of seats (except where minority governments form part of accepted practice)
3. Electoral victories must be authentic, i.e. the predominant party must not resort to electoral fraud or manipulation to continue winning
4. The predominant party must consistently win elections (3 or more) with a high likelihood of winning the following one (i.e. a wide absolute majority or a very stable gap between the predominant party and the next opposition party) (Sartori, 2005: 177)

Sartori (2005: 177) notes that the time threshold is somewhat arbitrary, and that it is subject to fluctuation. He proposes that this is appropriate, as even small fluctuations in vote share can alter the predominant nature of the system (for instance, losing the absolute majority changes the character of the system). Sartori makes a point of distinguishing predominant parties from hegemonic parties – however, what he (2005: 206) terms “pragmatic-hegemonic” parties seem

to have more in common with the predominant party system than he admits. Some characteristics of the "pragmatic-hegemonic" party he proposes are useful, notably the identification of these forms of dominant party as assimilationist and co-opting opposition as a strategy to maintain dominance (Sartori, 2005: 207).

Pempel (1990: 3) proposes a four-fold approach to dominance:

1. *Dominance in number:* the dominant party must win more seats than its opponents
2. *Dominant bargaining position:* the ability to stay in government through use of a strong bargaining position, and make it highly unlikely any coalition can form without it
3. *Chronological dominance:* the dominance must be sustained over a long period
4. *Governmental dominance:* the dominant party carries out an "historical project" while in government, shaping the national political agenda through a sustained and relatively consistent public policy programme (Pempel, 1990: 4).

Evidently, all of the elements of Sartori's "predominant party system" are present in some or other form in Pempel's dominant-party typology. Importantly, however, Pempel's definition includes some kind of ideological or policy dominance (what he terms "governmental dominance"), which introduces a new problem of measurement. Sartori's focus on electoral results and the surrounding system may be an easier methodology to follow but omits the commonly found notion of an ideological component of party dominance.

An absolute minimum seems to be that a dominant party must be a party that is electorally dominant over some period of time. However, this raises a number of possible divergences. Firstly, what does "electorally dominant" mean? Is a party that consistently wins a plurality of votes, but has to rely on coalitions or other political support agreements in the legislature to govern, still a dominant party? Should a dominant party have to win a considerable majority in order to be considered dominant? Does dominance require the opposition to be at the very least unlikely to gain power, if not completely improbable? What should be considered a sufficient period of time for a party to be dominant?

This dissertation proposes that a minimalist definition of party dominance, which allows for any party that consistently wins an electoral plurality, is harmful to its explanatory capacity and dilutes the value of the concept in question. Parties that manage to win a consistent plurality of votes but are unable to form an executive or pass legislation without the assent (or at least

abstention) of other parties in the legislature should not be considered as dominant. Regimes where one party governs as the largest partner of a coalition seem not to fit the same mould as those where one party is capable of forming a government and passing legislation alone over a long period: major parties in a coalition must either provide incentives or concessions to other political parties, which tempers their capacity to impose their dominance in an ideological sense; and also includes the possibility that coalition partners may abandon the major party at any point, making regime alternation much more possible than should be the case in a truly one-party dominant regime (it seems common in the literature that a dominant party should not only think of itself as dominant, but also be considered by its competitors as such). On the other hand, McDonald (1971: 220) proposes that a dominant party must earn at least 60% of seats in the legislature – this seems arbitrary and possibly too restrictive, as a simple majority allows the party to form the executive and direct normal policy relatively unchecked. Thus, this dissertation advances the first necessary condition of one-party dominance is the capacity to form an executive and pass ordinary legislation without the consent of any other parties. In proportional systems this entails consistently winning at least a majority of votes, whereas in constituency systems this condition may be produced simply through consistent pluralities that earn a majority of seats.

The second issue is that of duration: how long must a party dominate before it can be considered a dominant party? This conditionality varies in the literature – it is difficult to arrive at any specific measure of time that is not essentially arbitrary. Nevertheless, the duration condition should attempt to address some possible intervening variables while not being so strict as to disregard parties commonly seen as dominant. Greene (2007: 16) proposes a period of 20 years or 4 consecutive elections, appealing to the notion of "one generation" of dominance. This dissertation argues in favour of the latter condition (given that electoral dominance is a virtue of the pattern of political competition, not a period of time), which controls in most cases for possible charismatic appeals of an individual leader, and the subsequent leader's possible appeals to being the charismatic leader's "anointed successor", as most leaders of the executive are limited to two terms in office. It must here be acknowledged that the issue of threshold is up for debate – this dissertation's intention is to arrive at a definition that is not so minimalist as to be broadly applicable, but the evidence of a nascent dominant-party system may well emerge before the 4-election threshold has been reached. This seems to be an unavoidable limitation of any definition.

The final issue in terms of electoral dominance is that of freedom: can a dominant party exist in an authoritarian setting? This dissertation submits that dominant parties can be seen to exist both in democratic and authoritarian regimes: the caveat is that elections should be procedurally fair (i.e. not subject to outcome-changing fraud or excessive restriction of opposition campaigns, including access to the ballot and freedom to campaign), and the incumbent party must not rely on authoritarian measures as its primary means of sustaining dominance (i.e. elections must be the primary form of political contestation). Indeed, Greene (2007: 16) identifies a number of authoritarian regimes where dominance was sustained through the use of elections not subject to outcome-changing fraud.

Thus, in the electoral sense of dominance, the following necessary conditions are established:

1. A dominant party must win a majority of seats in the legislature, and be able to form an executive and pass ordinary legislation without other parties' assent
2. A dominant party should have won at least 4 consecutive elections
3. Elections must be the primary means of political contestation, and must be seen to be procedurally fair by voters and the opposition

Having established this dissertation's conditions for electoral dominance, a more nuanced concept must be addressed: the foundational theorist of the field of dominant-party studies, Maurice Duverger, proposes that dominant parties must be *ideologically dominant* in some sense. In Duverger's (1964: 308) phraseology, a dominant party must be "identified with an epoch".

As Pempel (1990: 7) notes, long periods of time in power give parties the opportunity to pursue an "historical agenda" of policy, as well as to "shape their own followings" (Panebianco, 1988: 4). Pempel (1990: 7) thus establishes ideological dominance (or what he terms "governmental dominance") as the ability to dominate the policy agenda, and use this dominance to recreate or expand the support base of the dominant party.

Inherent to any party's policy agenda is its desire to satisfy its existing bases of support, attracting new support, and isolating or diminishing potential sources of opposition (Pempel, 1990: 16). A party's policy agenda is thus a mix of its electoral policy and its organisational/instrumental interests (which likely overlap) – successfully implementing the policy agenda contributes to its electoral performance, which allows it to continue protecting

its interests as the party of government and promising rewards to existing and prospective supporters and elites (Pempel, 1990: 16). This forms part of what Pempel (1990: 16) terms the "virtuous cycle of dominance", which drives a dominant party's continued success.

Pempel (1990: 16) details the "virtuous cycle" as such: a dominant party must first gain an electoral plurality (i.e. dominate "socioeconomic mobilisation"), and use this to create a bargaining advantage with other parties that enforces its centrality in all possible coalitions. These criteria are related to minority governments and such of limited applicability – but the principle of being at the core of executive formation is certainly applicable across all dominant-party regimes. Pempel (1990: 16) then proposes that the dominant party must remain in power for a sufficient period so as to implement its "historical programme" and use its hold on the state to isolate opposition and reinforce its electoral dominance. He proposes that it is the interplay between the above factors (socioeconomic mobilisation, bargaining advantages, public policy and longevity) that determines whether a party can become successfully dominant or not. This theory is, however, rooted in the very specific context of what Pempel calls "industrial democracies" – this dissertation will not confine itself to theories in these constraints, and would advance that a theory of dominance which can only account for one context of dominance is probably insufficient.

Shalev (1990: 85) also identifies the importance of the ability to dominate, co-opt or minimise political action outside of the party system, especially the control of important societal organisations, most importantly unions.

Having acknowledged the importance of ideological dominance, another limitation must be stated: arriving at some form of quantitative or obvious form of ideological dominance does not seem feasible. Rather, this dissertation contends, in assessing case studies, a pattern of ideological dominance can be established from the proposed dominant party's idiosyncratic behaviour in the policy sphere and its implementation of "historical programme", as well as its use of its control of policy to service or expand its support base[1].

[1] *This project intends to evaluate the presence (or otherwise) of policy dominance on a case-by-case basis. The literature does not advance any formalised or easily-operationalised definition thereof.*

In summary then, this dissertation's definition of dominance is as follows:

1. A parliamentary majority and independent executive formation
2. 4 consecutive electoral victories
3. Centrality of procedurally fair elections in political contestation
4. Implementation of the party's "historical agenda" and the use of policy control to create and perpetuate a "virtuous cycle of dominance".

## 1.2. One-Party Dominance: Formation, Persistence and Decline

Having established a framework for what one-party dominance is, three major questions arise: how do parties become dominant? How do they stay dominant? Finally, how do they lose their dominance?

**Formation**

Dominant party formation is both a product of objective conditions (i.e. the structural conditions of the electoral market and the nature of the political landscape) and party strategy – it seems that both of these factors must be present to create a dominant party system, even if every possible point for the formation of dominance presents specific conditions which require specific strategy. Almond (1960: 41) notes that "dominant non-authoritarian" party systems often emerge from a nationalist movement's transition to power after a struggle for emancipation – a cursory survey of commonly cited dominant parties (Mexico's PRI, South Africa's ANC, Senegal's PS, even to an extent Japan's LDP) confirms at least that "national liberation movements" often become dominant parties, even if not all dominant parties emerge from a liberation struggle. The ideological dominance of these parties is seen by the allegiance of most significant interest groups around a common ideology, usually that of "national independence", which persists after liberation is secured (Almond, 1960: 41). While Almond's proposal does not capture all dominant parties, it points to an important common factor of dominant-party system formation: these overwhelmingly form in or just after a form of transition (most often, but not necessarily, after democratisation of some kind).

Di Palma (1990: 162) stresses the importance of not exaggerating the role of transitions to democracy in establishing dominant party systems, despite Pempel's (and Almond's) proposed

role of "moments of crisis" in allowing parties to establish dominance over political power. Di Palma's (1990: 163) two major contentions are: 1) even in favourable circumstances, parties must work hard to achieve dominance and 2) strategies for maintaining dominance are not necessarily immutable over time, especially in the passage from democratic transition to democratic consolidation.

Di Palma (1990: 164) submits that establishing dominance during a democratic transition is a matter of strategy: the marriage of the delegitimation of the opposition, undermining of its credibility as a party of government and assertion of party dominance in the socio-political sphere with the rules of the new competitive political game. Given that buy-in to the democratic political game requires at least the possibility of change in power by democratic means (i.e. free and fair elections), Di Palma (1990: 164) proposes that dominant-party systems will usually be produced by dominant moderates (as parties of either extreme seem unwilling to "combine dominance with competitiveness"). The placation and buy-in of both those associated with the former regime and those who fought it with the aim of installing something other than a democratic order can be essential, where these groupings make up significant population groupings (Di Palma, 1990: 165).

The nature of politics in the initial stages of the transition compared to the end periods of the same transition is completely different: initial phases usually revolve on a tight set of issues that concern the removal of the incumbent and the installation of a new order, whereas later stages have a much expanded list of policy concerns, and hence many more concerned interest groups and political actors (Di Palma, 1990: 166). Thus, a party's early-stage pre-eminence does not guarantee its continued dominance beyond the initial transition (what Di Palma looks at the transition from strategic politics to "normal" political appeals).

The behaviour of prospectively dominant moderate parties in cases of transition can often not rely solely on a wholesale delegitimation of its opposition on either extreme: in these cases, Di Palma (1990: 177) proposes that these parties are best served by a strategy of *"garantismo"*, which uses a strategy of creating a completely open political market by granting maximal access to all forms of political power to parties likely to be in the opposition: proportional representation, unity governments, legal guarantees to minorities or other measures. Individual groupings on either political extreme are unlikely to be able to control a "managed" political market, and so voluntarily co-opt themselves into the new system, where the dominant

moderate party benefits from a perception as the mediating party and guarantor of the new constitutional order (Di Palma, 1990: 178). This strategy is predicated on the absence of a significant moderate challenger party, and the extremes presenting some political significance without being large enough to be able to preside over a "managed political market" (Di Palma, 1990: 180).

Where the aforementioned extreme groupings do not exist and the imperative is not the co-optation of all into an open political market, one may find more moderate parties disagreeing substantially on constitutional issues or issues, domestic or international, that speak to the new state's "national identity" (Di Palma, 1990: 180). Where this is the case, a prospective dominant party may prefer to forgo the consociational focus on inclusion and co-operation, and instead press its advantage on divisive issues and act unilaterally, where it feels its moderate competitor is at a disadvantage (Di Palma, 1990: 181).

Pempel (1990: 27) implies that left-wing links to labour are often instrumental in the formation of dominant left-wing parties, as does Shalev (1990: 85).

Otake (1990: 131) proposes that the internal dynamics and resultant strategy of the opposition to dominant parties plays a major role in determining whether a party's dominance will form and persist. Indeed, while Greene is correct to identify major costs of being in opposition (detailed later in this dissertation), his theory is entirely structuralist (i.e. accounts for opposition party behaviour in terms of dominant party strength), and what attention it does devote to opposition party strategy is framed in terms of what the structure permits, not what agents are able to do. It is unclear what the balance between structure and agency is (and indeed this is determined by individual cases), but to submit that opposition parties have no agency whatsoever is to propose that, regardless of the position it takes, it will earn the same vote share – which is highly improbable. In this vein, opposition strategy must at the very least be considered somewhat independent of the structural constraints that limit its possible scope.

In the cases which Otake (1990: 132) examines (Germany's SPD and Japan's JSP), "stickiness" on specific policy issues where the opposition party (and its core constituency) firmly holds a policy preference that is far away from national preferences (in Otake's study, national defence policy) constrains how close to the median voter preference the opposition party can position itself. While Greene essentially proposes as much in his analysis of opposition parties in

Mexico, he does not account for the possibility of opposition parties moving towards a more optimal strategy without incumbent decline. Nevertheless, much of the literature on opposition parties in "industrialised democracies" focuses on the nascent stages of party dominance, in which opposition strategy and potential for victory is not as constrained as existing dominance. As Almond (1960) advances, dominant parties outside of this context often come to power after some form of revolution or liberation struggle, which gives the party which led this a kind of initial advantage that the gradual growth of dominance in formerly competitive democracies does not provide.

The most common feature of dominant-party formation, then, is emergence from a form of political shock or transition from an old regime, whether this involves the end of a war (as in the cases of Italy and Japan) or a successful struggle for liberation and/or democracy (for instance, Senegal and South Africa). Di Palma identifies the importance of party strategy in the transition stage and the need for the incumbent to shift from the narrow policy priorities of the transition to the broader appeals needed to sustain dominance post-transition. The incumbent's strategy in respects of its opposition, whether this consists of *garantismo* or co-optation, is key in determining whether it can solidify its advantage in the post-transition phase. Despite the above-cited literature, the field on dominant party formation is not as developed as that on its persistence – perhaps this is due to the fact that, in effect, dominant parties do not become dominant at a given moment, but rather achieve this through a continuous strategy – so in effect, dominant party persistence is dominant party formation.

**Persistence**

If dominant parties form through their persistence, what makes them persist? Greene (2007) provides a useful critique of mainstream approaches to party competition from both supply and demand sides. Greene's (2007) resource model of party dominance, which focuses on "hyperincumbency advantages" in resources and the costs of opposition in dominant party systems is the model evaluated by this dissertation. Usefully, Greene's model provides a systemic explanation for all phases of the dominant-party system: the creation of unfair electoral markets through resource dominance resulting from state control (dominant-party formation), the persistence of dominance through the use of patronage and policy (and raising the costs of opposition), and the decline of dominance as the dominant party's well of resources dries.

**Demand-side theories** hold that opposition failure in dominant-party systems stems from a lack of voter demand, due to a range of possible issues.

One of these is the lack of social cleavages, which Lipset & Rokkan (1967) advance as a crystallisation point for political competition. Greene (2007: 19) advances a comparative analysis of ethnolinguistic fractionalisation (ELF), commonly used as a proxy measure for social cleavage: he finds no statistical relationship between ELF and number of effective parties across time (indeed, he finds that ELF was actually higher in many dominant party systems). Social cleavage may be a necessary condition for the emergence of challenger parties – but it does not seem a sufficient one.

Demand-side theories may also place too much emphasis on negative retrospective evaluation of the incumbent as determining voter behaviour, without considering *prospective* evaluations of challenger parties – evidence from a number of dominant party regimes indicates that, despite widespread voter dissatisfaction with the incumbent, the electorate had worse still views of the prospective performance of challenger parties (Greene, 2007: 21). Indeed, even in cases of economic crisis, dominant parties are still likely to survive – although it seems that economic crises can set the conditions for future dominant party decline (Greene, 2007: 21).

A final demand-side argument links economic development and competitive democracy or democratisation – Przeworski & Limongi's (1997) "endogenous argument". Whereas the economic makeup of a dominant regime is important in maintenance of dominance, there is little statistical or empirical evidence to suggest a direct link between either wealth or inequality and party dominance (Greene, 2007: 22). Indeed, Japan, which is neither a highly unequal nor a poor country, has one of the longest-running dominant parties in the world.

**Institutional approaches to politics** propose relations between electoral and democratic institutions and the number of effective/viable parties. Electoral district size is a common proposal (in line with Duverger's Law) – but does not provide an adequate explanation, given that the discrepancy in effective parties holds even within single-member district configurations (Greene, 2007: 23). Other issues such as electoral formulae and representation thresholds are similarly insufficient. In short, as Cox (1997: 26) identifies, institutional approaches fall short because they assume a completely fair market for votes, with equal access to resources (both financial and human), and equal capacity to advertise positions.

**Supply-side approaches** examine the possibility or probability of challenger party formation – these are proposed to be a function of both institutional permissiveness and voter demand (Greene, 2007: 24). Broadly, theories of party formation propose parties will form where the probability and benefits of winning are greater than the costs of competition – though the time of entry and assumptions of voter behaviour vary across different models (Greene, 2007: 25). As with the institutional approach, the assumption of a fair or neutral market for votes damages explanatory capacity, as does the supposition that competition is based on one dimension (policy position) – whereas Greene (2007: 26) proposes that competition takes place both on policy and on patronage dimensions (which invalidates these models).

## 1.3. Greene's resource model

Greene (2007) convincingly argues that one-party dominant regimes exist in both authoritarian and democratic polities, and that orthodox or conventional approaches to politics cannot properly account for them. Conventional approaches are structured to analyse fully closed authoritarian regimes or fully competitive democracies – but dominant party systems do not fit in either of these typologies. In terms of dominant party authoritarian regimes (DPARs), dominance remains sustained primarily through electoral appeal in regular, procedurally fair elections, rather than the blanket repression or electoral fraud that describes fully closed authoritarian regimes. Similarly, conventional approaches to party competition in democratic regimes assume that elections take place in a "fair" or "neutral" market for votes, which means that a challenger party that makes policy appeals closely approaching the average voter preference should form, and should have equal likelihood of winning to the incumbent party – which is clearly not the case in dominant regimes, despite common existence of the demand for challenger parties (Greene, 2000: 3). So, conventional approaches to political competition create a binary, in which either opposition parties will not form at all because of the improbability of victory, or they will form and be able to meaningfully compete with the incumbent party. Neither of these outcomes reflects the reality of a dominant party system.

In actuality, opposition parties do form and compete in dominant party regimes, despite being highly unlikely to win. Greene's (2007) work first examines why dominant parties win reliably, and then examines the reasons for opposition-party formation.

As Pempel (1990: 16) proposes, dominant parties create a "virtuous cycle of dominance" once elected that allow them to sustain their electoral and hence ideological dominance. Greene (2007: 33) views the "virtuous cycle" as the creation of an unfair electoral market by incumbent access to resource advantages and the ability to raise the costs of opposition, which allows the dominant party to win the election and hence continue to have the means to assure its dominance.

Greene's theory of one-party dominance focuses on two major advantages accorded to the dominant party: resource advantages and opportunity costs for the opposition.

The impact of **resource endowments** on parties cannot be underestimated: richer parties attract better candidates, communicate better and more widely and can use the distribution of resources to bolster their electoral support (Greene, 2007: 39). Incumbency advantages even in fully competitive democracies (especially those of incumbent candidates in constituency systems) are well documented: however, in dominant-party systems, these advantages are so specific to the dominant party and sufficiently large for Greene (2007: 39) to term them *hyperincumbency advantages.*

These hyperincumbency advantages usually fall into one of two categories: 1) the use of policy for partisan advantage, or 2) monopolistic access to public resources (Greene, 2007: 39).

The use of policy for partisan advantage can manifest as legislation targeted at specific groups (either as a means to ensure their continued support, or to reduce discontent that could be exploited by challenger parties), "pork-barrel" projects in exchange for electoral support, or the manipulation of the political economy to favour the incumbent's core constituencies (Greene, 2007: 39). Whereas policy may be used to ensure support in competitive democracies, the check provided by the opposition and the probability of the alternation of power limits the scope to which this tactic may be exploited (Greene, 2007: 40). The weakness of the opposition and the improbability of the loss of power allows dominant parties to deploy policy for partisan advantage in a much more meaningful fashion.

In Greene's (2007) study of Mexico's *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), an archetypal dominant party, he details the use of policy as a means of "firefighting" the growth or potential growth of opposition parties. The PRI's record on the key political cleavage in

Mexico across its tenure, economic policy, saw significant fluctuation over the 70 years it was in power (Greene, 2007: 74). Orthodox electoral market theories such as Downs' (1957) suggest that a policy tack in one direction should open opportunities for opposition parties on the opposite end of the political spectrum. However, the PRI would repeatedly tack back or change direction in its economic policy stances, alternatively adopting pro-market or pro-labour policies. The prospects of left-wing challenger parties were limited by the extensive patronage appointments in the state that the PRI controlled, as well as the PRI's tactical use of poverty-alleviation programmes like PRONASOL and the expansion of public services when the PRI perceived a threat from the left (Greene, 2007: 87). Similarly, the PRI repeatedly used market liberalisation and the relaxation of business regulations as a means to entice economic liberals and business elites where it perceived a potential threat from the right (Greene, 2007: 86-87). This had significant consequences for the nature and possible strategy of the opposition, who were both pushed towards political extremes. Another major policy intervention which limited opposition strategy and access to resources was the PRI's manipulation of the electoral code to provide itself with extra funds from the national budget and entrench resource disparities between itself and its challengers (Greene, 2007: 108-114).

Monopolistic access to public resources allows these resources to be transformed into patronage goods. Greene (2007: 40) proposes five forms of public goods accessed illicitly by dominant parties:

1. Diversion of funds from state-owned enterprises, which often have large budgets and are managed by political appointees, and engage in frequent obscure and high-value transactions with the state
2. Direct funnelling of public money to party coffers through line items and hidden allocations to dominant party legislators
3. Provision of what Grindle (2012) terms "jobs for the boys" in the public sector
4. Exchange of influence and economic protection in the state economic framework for kickbacks or contributions (for instance, the marketing of "access" to state economic decision-makers, especially ministers, in return for party donations).
5. The use of the "administrative resources of state" for campaigning.

As previously stated, none of these initiatives are necessarily *exclusive* to dominant-party regimes – but the improbability of the loss of power diminishes fears of opposition parties having similar resource advantages when they gain power, which makes the possible scale of

these advantages far more significant (Greene, 2007: 41).

However, the opportunities for the use of the above resources as patronage are limited by 1) the size of the public sector as a proportion of the total economy and 2) the degree of political control of the civil service (Greene, 2007: 98). The size of the public sector clearly determines the total value of public funds that can be accessed as patronage goods: the more SOEs and the more state-led the economy, the more patronage a dominant party can distribute. On the corollary, more privatisation and fewer SOEs will mean a diminished patronage pool. Political control of the public bureaucracy also strongly influences the magnitude and scope of patronage: a professional, career civil service, with tenure and merit-based promotion will not allow the diversion of public funds as easily as a politically-controlled bureaucracy, wherein loyalty of political appointees to their patrons is essential to their career future (Greene, 2007: 42; Grindle, 2012: 21).

In the case of the PRI, it presided over a "national patronage system" consisting of a comparatively large and highly politicised civil service and a profitable and economically important public sector, dominated by major SOEs (Greene, 2007: 98). Political control of recruitment and advancement in the bureaucracy at the top level through confidence appointments and at lower levels through its strong ties to the major public sector union allowed the PRI to create a civil service that was staffed by PRI allies and compliant and willing to implement its policy strategy, as well as complicit in the diversion of funds to its coffers (Greene, 2007: 101). In the mid-1980s, SOEs accounted for nearly a quarter of Mexico's GDP and the public sector for a sixth of total employment, making the scope for patronage significant (Greene, 2007: 101). The purposefully complex fiscal relationships between SOEs and the government allowed for significant diversion of funds to the party, which, combined with its use of state resources for campaigning, made its campaign machinery unparalleled in reach and size (Cornelius & Craig, 1991: 61; Greene, 2007: 102).

The resource advantages of dominant parties skew electoral competition. Orthodox theories of "perfect democratic competition" such as those described by Downs (1957) assume a standard distribution of voter preferences, with a peak at the centre and declining numbers towards either extreme. Whether this is appropriate generally is a matter of debate, but for argument's sake let us advance that a given polity's voter preferences are normally distributed. Mainstream political competition theories advance that a centre-left and centre-right party will form and

compete for votes with equal chances of winning (Downs, 1957: 118). What Greene's (2007: 49) model accounts for is the importance of the material benefits provided by patronage, which alters the functioning of the party system in the case of these "single peaked preferences". Let us assume that a dominant centre-right (A) and a challenger centre-left party (B) are in electoral competition. Voter preferences in Greene's model are informed by voter policy preferences *as well as* the material benefits (patronage) offered by dominant parties. Thus, any undecided voter with a policy preference at the exact centre will choose the party (A) that offers it material benefits, given the equal utility derived from each party's policy positions. Furthermore, dependent on the magnitude of patronage offered to voters, some voters who prefer the policy of the challenger party (B) may vote for the dominant party (A), if the utility of patronage outweighs the utility of getting the policies they prefer.

The second component of Greene's theory of party dominance concerns the **costs of opposition**, which he divides into 1) opportunity costs and 2) physical costs. Greene (2007) does detail, in his case study analysis of Mexico, how physical repression contributes to dominant party advantages. However, given that Greene (2007:5) proposes that opportunity costs are more important in affecting the opposition, and given the focus of this dissertation is on a democratic dominant-party regime, physical costs will not be analysed in depth.

Opportunity costs are a significant barrier to the strength of challenger parties. In a political spectrum with a normal distribution of policy preferences, a centrist party competing with the dominant party (which habitually positions itself either slightly to the left or right of the median voter) is at a huge disadvantage because of resource imbalances, and is therefore highly unlikely to win. Challenger parties thus face a problem of personnel recruitment: instrumentalist political elites ("office seekers") interested in material benefits or the trappings of power are likely to prefer an uncertain place in the dominant party over a guaranteed place in a party highly unlikely to ever win (Greene, 2007: 60). Challenger parties must therefore recruit from "message-seekers" seeking "self-expression benefits" – i.e. those for whom the utility of expressing their policy preferences is so significant that it outweighs the lure of power and material benefits in the dominant party (Greene, 2007: 60). Given that dominant parties usually seek to locate themselves somewhere around median voter preference, challenger parties are thus necessarily confined to recruiting from elites who significantly differ from the dominant party's (and hence median voter's) policy preferences (Greene, 2007: 34). A possible weakness of this approach is sub-national political competition, which may allow challengers

to recruit office seekers at a municipal or provincial level, and hence offset some of the recruitment problem.

The narrowing of both the potential recruitment base and potential policy scope of challenger parties restricts the possible character of the opposition. As challenger parties are predominantly made up of elites who differ substantially from the *status quo* of the dominant party, they must offer niche policies which bind them to minority constituencies on the extremes of the ideological spectrum (Greene, 2007: 61). While this provides the party with a reliable and consistent (although insufficient for competition) support base and makes them difficult to co-opt, it also locks the party into a strategy that is focused on retaining this base (Greene, 2007: 61). Challenger parties in dominant regimes are required to focus on representing the interests of their existing base at the expense of expanding into potential support bases, and usually maintain a closed organisational structure which does not aim to incorporate new members, but rather protect existing ones (Greene, 2007: 61). This closed structure and ideological rigidity makes it difficult for challenger parties to expand and appeal to disaffected voters when the dominant party begins to lose popularity. Even voters who have a negative view of the performance of the dominant incumbent are unlikely to trust the opposition more than they do the incumbent – this "rather the devil you know than the devil you don't" approach to voting is often partly a result of dominant party strategy aimed at marginalising and discrediting opposition parties (Greene, 2007: 61).

The niche-oriented nature of challenger parties in dominant-party systems also has a negative effect on both intra- and inter-party coordination. Problems of intraparty coordination arise as the dominance of the incumbent declines, and more moderate elites seek to join challenger parties (Greene, 2007: 62). Long-standing party elites in challenger parties will tend to be both more senior and more ideologically extreme, which may cause conflict with newly arrived moderate elites, and drive the party to favour ideological consistency over electoral competitiveness, despite a declining incumbent (Greene, 2007: 63). Interparty coordination is even more complicated, given that challenger parties are usually ideologically remote from each other, and bound to favouring the policies that serve their minority constituencies (Greene, 2000: 63). This makes opposition coalitions, or any kind of united electoral platform, highly unlikely to form and difficult to sustain (Greene, 2007: 63).

Greene's **theory of dominant-party formation and maintenance of dominance** thus relies on incumbent party resource advantages to explain party dominance. These take the form of the use of policy for partisan advantage and monopolistic access to public resources, which allows the dominant party to outspend rivals on both campaigns and patronage, as well as direct policy to assuage potentially disaffected groups. These resource advantages make the market for votes unfair, as even voters with policy preferences that differ from the incumbent's platform can be drawn to vote for the incumbent through offers of patronage. The unfair electoral market creates problems of recruitment for challenger parties, as the majority of office-seeking elites will gravitate towards the power and material benefit offered by the dominant incumbent. Challenger party recruitment will thus focus on marginal elites with support from minority constituencies, and thus offer a policy platform out of step with median voter preference. Ideologically rigid and closed challenger parties will struggle to capitalise on recruitment of defecting voters and elites, and will be unlikely to go into coalition against the dominant incumbent.

The corollary of this theory is thus Greene's **theory of why dominant parties lose:** the magnitude of patronage begins to decline, perhaps as a result of declining political control of the civil service, or due to some kind of negative externality (often a political or economic shock that requires budget cuts). This diminishes the total value of patronage available for the dominant party, making the electoral market fairer. This expands the sphere for recruitment and the policy scope of challenger parties, who are able to recruit disaffected and moderate elites, and expand their appeal to broader sectors of the population. While this is often a gradual process given the rigidities of challenger parties and the continued resource advantage of the incumbent, better opposition prospects of victory allow them to make more believable promises of future material benefits to both elites and voters. The declining pot of public funds available to the dominant party also often drives campaign finance reform and public funding of political parties based on total representation to take advantage of the incumbent's existing numerical superiority (Greene, 2007: 107). While this may offer temporary resource advantages to the incumbent, it also makes illicit funding and misuse of public funds for party politics less feasible, further constraining future dominance. Two possible responses to this decline in electoral dominance emerge: either a transition to multiparty democracy and hence electoral defeat for the incumbent, or a recourse to increasingly authoritarian measures, and the transformation into a closed authoritarian system.

Greene's case-based theory is not beyond critique: it potentially underestimates the importance of authoritarian repression in dominant-party authoritarian systems (even where the opposition is not actively or commonly repressed, the fear thereof may have an unquantifiable effect on electoral performance, campaigning and recruitment). However, Greene & Ibarra-Rueda (2014: 31) do highlight the importance of "episodic repression" in helping the PRI sustain its dominance, and the persistence of the PRI at sub-national level after its loss of national power does suggest that authoritarian repression was not the chief means of sustaining dominance.

Greene's argument does account for the importance of opposition strategy. However, he presents opposition strategy as effectively determined by the incumbent's actions, rather than as an independent phenomenon. While the political space and prospects for success are certainly a factor of how the incumbent dominant party acts, opposition parties' behaviour, tactics, and policy positioning all certainly influence their electoral success and hence should be included in analysis of the dominant party's persistence and decline. Greene seems to agree with this where dominant parties lose, as his analysis of the 2000 election of the PAN's Vicente Fox focuses on Fox's policy and electoral tactics as well as the PRI's declining advantages. By the same token, the behaviour of opposition parties when they continue to lose should be considered as important to dominant party persistence (even if it is not a variable directly in the control of the incumbent). Most importantly, Greene's theory might skip over how intra-party politics affects the persistence of a dominant party:

## 1.4. Factionalism and one-party dominance

Greene certainly provides a compelling theory of how dominant parties maintain dominance through changing the rules of **interparty competition,** and using the advantages brought by long periods of incumbency to secure their vote share and diminish the possibilities for the opposition**.** However, another key dimension of party dominance speaks to the effect of **intraparty competition** (i.e. factionalism) on party dominance. Indeed, the decline in the PRI's vote share in Mexico (the case on which Greene's resource approach is based) was accompanied by the defection of party elites towards challenger parties, especially the PRD. Greene's approach does account for the exchange in power between different wings of the incumbent party – but this is accounted for as a means of optimising electoral performance rather than as a manifestation of internal politics. Important arguments about factional politics

and dominant party persistence have been articulated generally by Boucek (2014) and specifically in reply to Greene by Ibarra-Rueda (2013).

Boucek (2014: 3) notes that the maintenance of dominance is usually multicausal. Nevertheless, Boucek sees a breakdown in party unity as a common cause of decline in dominant parties, and argues that party unity is a necessary but insufficient condition for party dominance. Boucek's argument is rooted in the more stable ideological structures seen in many developed-world dominant parties, rather than the more ad-hoc alliances which form during candidate selection in parties with less institutionalised internal politics. However, her focus on the behaviour of factions, rather than their nature themselves, mean the prospects of her theory "travelling" are good.

Boucek (2014: 4) identifies three major interacting methods for building dominant voting coalitions. The first tactic is "socio-structural", involving tactics such as exploiting social cleavages to gain votes, or adopting a "catch-all" strategy where these cleavages are weak, as well as the exploitation of sectional links (for instance, with unions) and the changing of the structure of the electorate through policy (here Boucek (2014: 5) cites the example of the British Conservative Party creating a "generation of homeowners" through the sale of council housing, which shifted the policy preferences of council house residents towards the Tory party – Pempel would likely interpret this as part of the 'virtuous cycle of dominance').

The second method involves an institutional approach: Boucek (2014: 6) correctly identifies that plurality and constituency systems favour dominant parties, as they are the largest party and are hence likely to benefit from a disproportionate number of seats compared to their vote share (in line with Duverger's suggestions in *Political Parties*). While this has often played into the hands of dominant parties (especially in Japan), dominant parties do exist in proportional systems and the changing of electoral formulae does not seem to be a common tactic for maintaining dominance.

The final method involves what Boucek (2014: 10) terms "spatial and strategic" approaches. These speak to how the dominant party can adapt its electoral strategy in line with shifting preferences in the voting market – for instance, as social cleavages diminished in the European dominant party regimes, the incumbents became increasingly pragmatic and "catch-all" in nature, more concerned with the maintenance of power ("office") than the expression of

ideological preference ("voice"). According to Downs' (1957) single peaked preference distribution approach to the electoral market, catch-all parties are far more likely to win elections than parties more concerned with fidelity to their ideological niche (opposition parties are often constrained to these niches, as Greene notes). Dominant parties are thus much more able to "hold the centre" or shift their positions to gain new voters, whereas the opposition is unlikely to have this kind of freedom. Incumbency advantages extend these strategic possibilities and thus further entrench dominance.

Given extensive literature suggesting party unity as a predictor of electoral outcomes, Boucek (2014: 20) argues that theories of party dominance must consider the importance of factional dynamics in the maintenance and decline of incumbents, especially given that the scale and scope for factionalism is larger in dominant parties. This fills in a key weakness with other theories, which ignore that the key grounds of political contestation in dominant-party regimes is often inside the party, rather than between parties.

Factionalism, where it is **cooperative,** can actually help to maintain dominance, as it provides for common action between separate leadership groups who can appeal to different constituencies.

However, it is competitive and degenerative factionalism that forms the bulk of Boucek's (2014: 21) focus. Internal discontent and competition can cause a party split, which Boucek advances as a key driver of transitions out of dominant party systems. Unity declines as internal competition increases, driving challenges to the party leadership, and the effectiveness and consequences of these challenges is modified by institutional strength both within and without the party, the cost of exit for splitters, and the leverage, cohesion and size of the dissident faction. Organisational incentives that entrench factional power (for instance, slate elections) worsen outcomes, as members become increasingly loyal to factions and decreasingly loyal to the party.

Leadership selection that results from factional deals often produces fragile *ad hoc* alliances that give the leaders unclear or shaky mandates (Boucek, 2014: 22). Institutionalised factionalism also gridlocks policymaking and weakens party discipline, as MPs and power brokers start to derive power from their membership of a faction rather than of the party, making the cohesion of the party weaker and the individual incentives to toe the party line less

significant.

Changing electoral market conditions that reduce the cost of exit (i.e. where it is easier for the opposition to compete – this can speak to the intensity of cleavages, the electoral formula, the vote share of the incumbent *etc.*) can also increase the probability of splits, making the potential outcome of factionalism much more damaging. Exit threats where the incumbent seems electorally safe and the opposition is unappealing are less credible (Boucek, 2014: 23).

Ibarra-Rueda (2013: 17) identifies two mechanisms of factionalism which influence the persistence and decline of dominant parties. The first involves intra-party factional disputes negatively influencing voter perception of the dominant party. Dominant parties tend to play up their experience in government and their stability and unity to appeal to voters, comparing themselves with opposition parties who have not governed and are often unstable (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 7). Factional conflicts in the dominant party can both diminish the party's perceived unity, and trigger fears of radical change in the party's policy platform as factions play to more radical constituencies as a means to ensure support (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 17). The factions that lose in internal disputes may also see their constituencies abandon them as they no longer see a future within the dominant party.

The second mechanism aligns with Boucek's "degenerative factionalism" concept, as factions splitting from the dominant party can join the opposition or form new opposition (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 18). The recruitment advantages identified by Greene mean that dominant-party elites are often more popular and better resourced, which encourages challenger parties to promote them quickly (again lowering exit costs somewhat for dominant-party elites) – unless the challengers are already somewhat electorally competitive and have popular elites (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 19). In either case, factional management preventing elite exit from the dominant party is essential to maintaining dominance: either as a means to prevent the opposition from becoming competitive, or to prevent already competitive opposition from taking advantage of disarray in the dominant party.

Ibarra-Rueda (2013: 20) advances three further possible downsides of factional disputes in dominant parties where elections are more competitive: firstly, internal conflicts harm the party's ability to mobilise its base. Secondly, they shift attention from the party's electoral platform towards its internal problems. Finally, internal conflicts encourage challenger parties

(presumably this has benefits in elite recruitment and voter appeals). The inverse of all these downsides occurs where dominant parties retain factional unity, making factional management essential to success in competitive elections.

Ibarra-Rueda (2013: 25) proposes two means of retaining sub-national factional unity: "exogenous" and "endogenous". Exogenous unity describes the management of factions from the party centre, most likely by the party leader or a group around the leader, through a mix of "carrots" (spoils and other rewards) and "sticks" (political punishment or other forms of coercion). Endogenous unity describes mutual cooperation by factions without imposition by an external or central actor. Ibarra-Rueda (2013: 26) claims that, given difficulties of imposing political punishment and distributing rewards in democratic systems, factional management of democratic dominant parties requires goodwill from subnational factions. This argument likely understates the scope for both carrots and sticks in democratic parties, although mutual cooperation is no doubt important to factional management. Ibarra-Rueda's argument can be applied on a national scale as well: strong central leadership offering both carrots and sticks can engender factional unity (either by appeasing factions with goals or resources, or through subordination of factions). By the same token, mutual cooperation among factions can occur at national level given the non-zero sum game they face: they may wish to maximise positions for their constituencies, but also have to cooperate with other factions in order to win national elections (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 31).

Ibarra-Rueda (2013: 35) makes the argument that sub-national dominant parties' successes are a function of their independence from the national party, as central control discourages factional cooperation. While this may be true in the context of his case study, the claim that increased autonomy from the centre allows for better factional coordination as a rule seems questionable. Factions which have less to compete for are less likely to enter into degenerative factionalism, as the "game" they are involved in is not as "winner-takes-all". Independent factions which are not centrally managed are equally as likely to want to defeat the opposing faction as they are to work with it, especially where electoral success is somewhat guaranteed. Thus, while independence from the centre may increase the potential *scope* of sub-national factional cooperation, it cannot be concluded that it will increase the *incidence* of this cooperation.

The success or otherwise of the PRI at the state level in Mexico post-2000 was, according to Ibarra-Rueda (2013: 7), largely dependent on how the party's factions interacted with each other. In instances of collaborative factionalism, the PRI could overcome even low approval ratings and a united opposition. Where factions were antagonistic, it could lose even with popular incumbents and fragmented challengers. "Factions" in these cases refer to informal political tendencies which become obvious in candidate selection, rather than the stable ideological structures seen in other dominant parties (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 10). Greene notes the importance of this factional management in his piece with Ibarra-Rueda on the PRI's persistence at a sub-national level, showing that sub-national party branches with more collaborative factions managed their resources better and were more likely to win elections (Greene & Ibarra-Rueda, 2014).

As Boucek herself notes, the modalities of factionalism are insufficient to fully explain the maintenance of dominance (for instance, factionalism cannot properly explain why opposition parties are weak or distant from the median voter). Other authors (Ibarra-Rueda, 2013: 6) argue that – at least at subnational level – factional cooperation is the key method of sustaining party unity and hence dominance. Either way, party unity seems key to preventing dominant party decline – where loyalty to factions outstrips loyalty to the party, and internal selection processes become increasingly zero-sum and contested, the likelihood of damaging splits increase. The more likely a split, the lower the cost of exit for members of the dominant party, and *vice-versa.* In this regard, factional management can be seen as a necessary but insufficient condition for dominance.

## 1.5. What are the effects of One-Party Dominance?

The specific effects of one-party dominance are mutable and unclear (not least because different dominant parties have vastly differing agendas). Nevertheless, certain essential characteristics define the dominant party system – and these characteristics produce certain consistent results. This section will focus on the consequences dominant parties have for party-state relations and for policymaking, especially in terms of serving their constituencies and the formation of "cognitive locks". Some of the effects of party dominance, especially consequences for the political system and opposition parties, have been covered in previous sections, given they are intrinsic to theories of how party dominance forms and is sustained.

The institutionalisation of one-party dominance effectively requires the blurring of the line between party and state, as the dominant party seeks to impose its ideological dominance and bind the political system to its "historical project". While this may take place in varying degrees, it seems to be a common feature of most dominant-party systems considered in the literature. This can have negative or positive consequences for both the party and state.

In terms of the state, dominant parties can offer the stability and consistency that multiparty competition cannot. Where the interests of the dominant party are best served by the strengthening of state institutions – what Di Palma (1990: 178) terms *garantismo* – it usually has the social and political capital to encourage trust in institutions (which, given its absolute control of the budget, it can also fund). The possibility of dominant parties bringing legitimacy to state institutions is especially cited in the transition of national liberation movements into government in the transition to a nascent democratic state (Butler, 2007: 36).

Equally, however, given the dominant party's overwhelming control of the legislature (often to the extent of being able to change constitutions) and executive and the ideological battleground, the dominant party may privilege its own interests over those of the state (Southall, 2013: 148). This is most obvious in Greene's analysis of the misappropriation or even theft of public resources for partisan uses and the use of state positions as patronage, but extends further to the undermining of state institutions when these bodies threaten the dominant party's interests (for instance, the dismantling or weakening of prosecutorial and investigative bodies, or the use of similar bodies to raise the costs of opposition).

In terms of the party, persistent dominance moves the grounds of political competition away from the electoral arena and into the party. Given the policy of the state is often determined within the party's decision-making structures, internal competition for resources replaces electoral competition. This can make internal selection processes into zero-sum battles, and encourage corruption or weakening of the party's organisational structure. Alternatively, the rents and prospects of office offered by the party's hold on the state can help keep even the biggest of tents together, encouraging collaboration of groups across the political spectrum within the party.

Party dominance also has significant consequences for the policymaking sphere. Greene and Pempel both advance that dominant parties make use of targeted policy to either reward their

bases of support, or preclude the formation of enough dissatisfaction to facilitate support for a challenger party. This may take the form of pork-barrel projects and patronage, or simply regionally or economically targeted policy. The incumbent's long-term dominance may alternatively, allow it to advance an "historic project" and use its exclusive control of decision-making to impose either difficult immediate decisions or long-term policy platforms that are otherwise impossible due to power alternation. For example, the LDP's dominance quite likely made feasible Japan's developmental state approach, which required both long-term planning and the ability of the incumbent to enforce difficult decisions on both organised labour and business.

A further consequence of the dominant-party approach to policymaking, identified by Forestiere & Allen (2011), is the formation of *cognitive locks*. "Cognitive locks" describe how entrenched ideas create path dependencies in policymaking, effectively narrowing the scope of policy seen as possible or acceptable by the policymaker (built into this is the assumption that policymakers operate in a kind of "bounded rationality" informed by psychological constraints and human imperfections, which runs contrary to the absolute rational choice theory model) (Forestiere & Allen, 2011: 381). Ideas informing policymaking choices are presumably a synthesis of what policymakers see as best for them in terms of their party's persistence and best for the country overall, although where the balance of self-interest and national interest lie is case-dependent (Forestiere & Allen, 2011: 381). Ideas alone are not cognitive locks – this term describes specifically ideas that become engrained in the policymaking process and are highly unlikely to be reversed. The institutionalisation of these policies informs future policy, constraining possible policy options and reinforcing the existing policy.

In the case of dominant-party systems, Forestiere & Allen (2011: 382) submit that initial policy choices and platforms implemented by a nascent dominant party are likely to persist, firstly because they are likely to cater explicitly or implicitly to the party's electoral support base, and secondly because the lack of a strong or coherent opposition allows the incumbent to sustain its own policy choices. Indeed, initial choices about how policy is made (for instance, the choice of corporatist systems where dominant parties have strong links with either business or labour, or both) and the content of this policy (who receives what benefits) are more likely to become entrenched as cognitive locks in dominant-party systems, as it is not in the incumbent's interests to stop serving its electoral base or its own instrumental goals (electoral, financial or otherwise). This is dependent on whether the incumbent dominant party acts more as a

"distributional coalition" (serving the interests of itself and its constituencies) or an "encompassing organisation" (seeking to maximise the positive impact of policies) (Forestiere & Allen, 2011: 383). Electoral campaigning, as it often involves appeals to bases of support, encourages behaving as a distributional coalition. Whether the incumbent acts as an encompassing organisation when in government is case-dependent. In Greene's conceptualisation, the incumbent may be inclined to spread benefits where it perceives the possibility of widespread dissatisfaction increasing the appeal of opposition parties. However, where niche constituencies are already served by a niche party which is constrained by a narrow base and hence unlikely to challenge the incumbent, the dominant party has little incentive to include these constituencies in its policymaking considerations.

Regardless of the encompassing or distributional nature of the dominant party, it seems clear that cognitive locks on policy are more likely to form in dominant regimes, where the incumbent continues to be well-served by existing policy and may indeed feel obligated to persist with policies that serve its base. Given that dominant parties often arise in state systems in the process of formation or transition and hence are instrumental in deciding the nature of the state (e.g. through constitutional design) or the design of the policymaking process, the cognitive locks they introduce may persist far beyond their tenure in power.

Party dominance can, depending on circumstance and the best interests of the dominant party, have a range of positive and negative effects on both the party and the state. Nevertheless, universal to dominant party systems is the hazy distinction between the party and the state. This can produce important consequences for policymaking, and indeed the formation of cognitive locks can mean that the ideology of the dominant party persists long after it is ejected from power.

## 1.6. Conclusion

The formation of dominant parties can take place in differing circumstances, and dominance can be built by differing means. Keeping this variation in mind, dominance seems to occur mostly after a system transition (after a war or the liberation/democratisation of a country), and, as Di Palma insists, is the product of both circumstances and the political strategy and positioning of the prospective dominant party. The binding of multiple interest groups to the project of the dominant party is essential for the incumbent to retain supremacy in both electoral and policy processes.

Dominant-party persistence is the most controversial and debatable question in the study of dominant parties. This dissertation proposes that theories of party dominance which rest on orthodox interpretations of electoral markets and interpret dominance either as a lack of voter demand for opposition (demand-side) or as a failure in opposition strategy (supply-side) are insufficient, given they assume that the electoral playing field is completely level. Institutional approaches centred on electoral systems, while correctly addressing the impact of electoral design on political outcomes, also assume a level playing field. This dissertation thus seeks to evaluate Greene's (2007) resource model of party dominance, which focuses on "hyperincumbency advantages", i.e. the dominant party's disproportionate resource advantage due to its unchecked control of the state. These advantages allow the incumbent to outspend and outcompete challenger parties, and hence raise the costs of opposition sufficiently to produce what Pempel (1990) terms a "virtuous cycle of dominance". The corollary of Greene's resource model is that, as a party's resource advantage declines, the electoral field will become increasingly competitive – this is "why dominant parties lose".

Greene's theory is rooted in the case of Mexico's PRI. This dissertation intends to test the arguments involved in the resource model against a differing case, that of South Africa's ANC – both in the interests of providing an account for the ANC's dominance, as well as testing the broader applicability of Greene's model.

The following sections will engage in empirical analysis, with a view to answering the questions: is South Africa a dominant-party system? If so: how was this dominance formed? Why has it persisted? And if it is declining – why?

# Chapter Two: Methodology and limitations: the merits of a qualitative approach and a theory-testing single case study

Greene (2010) submits that his theory should be generalisable across dominant party systems, including both authoritarian and democratic regimes. This dissertation proposes testing this claim through a single case study "process tracing" analysis. Process tracing involves the selection and examination of specific evidence related to the hypothesis and research questions posed by the analyser, most frequently within a single case study (Collier, 2011: 823).

The selection of what Collier (2011: 824) terms "diagnostic evidence" is founded on descriptive and causal inference. Descriptive inference involves establishing that the phenomenon or claim involved is actually occurring in order to study a relationship, it must first be fully explained that the relationship itself has occurred (Collier, 2011: 824). If one seeks to understand the mechanism by which *x* causes *y,* it must be clearly stated that both *x* and *y* actually occur. Causal inference involves proposing a causal puzzle (*what causes y?* in the aforementioned example), an hypothesis (*x causes y*) or many hypotheses, and drawing conclusions about causal mechanisms (*how does x cause y?*) from selected evidence (Collier, 2011: 826). As Collier (2016: 826) notes, the degree to which hypotheses can be confirmed or dismissed is dependent on the strength of inferences drawn and the quality of evidence available. Incontrovertible confirmation of an hypothesis is unlikely in the social sciences, but process tracing can provide greater understanding of causal mechanisms.

This permits the study of complex issues where the change in the chosen variable is comprised of a group of difficult to quantify observations rather than specific indicators. The key contribution of process tracing is that its focus is chiefly on how causative mechanisms work (Ulriksen & Dadalauri, 2016: 227). Co-variational analysis is likely inappropriate in testing a theory as complex as Greene's: the maintenance or decline of party dominance is a multifaceted outcome, and the mechanism by which hyperincumbency advantages maintain it according to Greene's theory are highly complex, involving exit costs, policy manipulation and other factors. An analysis of the causal mechanisms involved seems a more appropriate means of theory testing than a purely outcomes-based co-variational approach (i.e. "if resources decline does dominance decline"). It is also more likely to offer prospects for testing alternative hypotheses. As Ulriksen & Dadalauri (2016: 225) detail, process tracing is useful in testing

complex theoretically defined causal processes.

This dissertation seeks to investigate the process by which the ANC has maintained its dominant party status and why its dominance has declined. Descriptively, this requires both establishing whether the ANC was dominant in the first place, as well as establishing whether its dominance has diminished. Causal inferences may then be drawn. In drawing causal inferences, this dissertation will seek to test Greene's resource theory and explore alternative hypotheses drawn from the literature on factionalism and dominant parties. In this regard, the methodological approach shares some similarities with congruence analysis – however it seeks to explore more meaningfully not only which theory best explains the relationship between independent and dependent variable (i.e. variance in dominance), but also the "how and why", i.e. the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variable.

Why a case study and not a comparative study? Greene (2007) has already decisively and comprehensively addressed the functioning of his resource theory in Mexico – indeed the general theory is actually largely drawn from the Mexican case. Importantly, Greene (2010: 45) also claims that his theory can be generalised across both democratic and authoritarian regimes, and submits these cases to qualitative and quantitative tests. However, Greene (2010: 48) admits that quantitative tests indicate that the South African case does not conform to his general theory, and suggests some intervening factors including the ANC's period of dominance not being sufficiently long and the disparity between immediate post-transition politics and sustaining dominance in the long term. This essay seeks to qualitatively test Greene's theory in the South African case, with the benefit of a much longer period of dominance (26 years in total) and a more detailed analysis of the case. As George and Bennett (2005: 109) outline, theory testing seeks "to strengthen or reduce support for a theory, narrow or extend the scope conditions of a theory, or determine which of two or more theories best explains a […] phenomenon". The South African case study has the potential to either expose potential limitations of Greene's theory and define the scope for functioning of the theory, or confirm the theory with the benefit of new evidence and a more detailed study. Individual case study can also contribute to theory development through outlining new or excluded causal mechanisms, hypotheses or interaction effects (George & Bennett, 2005: 109).

The nature of the subject under study, i.e. the complex concept of "party dominance" and the information deficit in South Africa when it comes to the sources, value and destination of party

funds and other resource advantages held by the dominant party, necessitate a qualitative approach. As argued in the literature review, party dominance should not amount simply to electoral dominance, which makes the use of pure electoral dominance in quantitative studies dubious. Furthermore, even if one accepts the quantitative approach, Greene's (2010) comparative quantitative testing of his resource theory showed inconclusive results when applied to the South African case. A qualitative assessment is important in establishing whether this quantitative assessment was indeed correct, and if so, why this was the case.

Limitations include the shorter time period of dominance under study in the South African case, the lack of quantitative data about party financing and the use of party patronage, and potential questions over whether the South African case can inform general theory.

This dissertation submits that the complex processes by which party dominance is maintained or lost benefit from an in-depth approach that can only be provided by a qualitative case study. Finally, this dissertation's interest is not only theory-testing, but also explaining why the theory functions or not. A comparative study would not provide the scope for in-depth analysis that a single case study, process tracing approach can deliver. Should Greene's resource theory hold, it will be informative to investigate whether the causal links are uniform in a different case from its original target.

# Chapter Three: Is the ANC a dominant party?

Before attempting to test any theories against the South African case, it must first be established whether the ANC indeed qualifies as a dominant party in terms of the criteria set out in the literature review, as follows:

1. A parliamentary majority and independent executive formation
2. Four consecutive electoral victories
3. Centrality of procedurally fair elections in political contestation
4. Implementation of the party's "historical agenda" and the use of policy control to create and perpetuate a "virtuous cycle of dominance".

On the first count, the ANC undoubtedly meets the requirement for legislative and executive dominance. It has held a parliamentary majority (and once a supermajority enabling unilateral constitutional changes) since the first democratic elections in 1994, and, despite some concessions made during the period of the Government of National Unity (1994-96) and occasional appointments of less important opposition politicians to less important Ministries, it has complete freedom in executive formation. In fact, the ANC has been so dominant that legislative and executive processes have become somewhat subordinated to internal party bodies, where a number of major policy decisions are taken.

The ANC has also been completely electorally dominant, winning over 60% of the vote in every election since 1994, with the exception of 2019's general election, where it earned 57.5% of votes. It has also controlled 8 of 9 provinces at any given point since 1999, despite initially losing KwaZulu-Natal to the IFP and subsequently the Western Cape to the DA (although it gained the more populous KZN through electoral attrition and floor-crossing in the mid-2000s). The ANC's municipal electoral performance has been less impressive, although it has won a majority in all four local government elections held since 2000, despite losing outright control in metros including Cape Town, Tshwane, Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela Bay.

Elections in South Africa are procedurally fair, and South Africa has been rated as democratic for both its elections and the campaigning environment (in terms of freedoms of the press, assembly and freedom to form opposition) by both Freedom House (2021) and Polity (2014) since 1994. Political contestation through elections has been encouraged by the highly

permissive electoral formula (absolute proportional representation with no threshold) and has arguably become fairer since the abolition of "floor-crossing", which allowed politicians elected on party lists to swap parties (and largely benefitted the ANC) (Southall, 2013: 106).

The final question is whether the ANC has some kind of ideological dominance, or what Pempel (1990:4) terms "governmental dominance", wherein the dominant party carries out an "historical project" while in government, shaping the national political agenda through a sustained and relatively consistent public policy programme. As stated earlier in this dissertation, there is no easily operationalised or simple quantitative measure advanced in the literature, and establishing whether a party is ideologically dominant or not relies more on looking for case-specific examples of 1) the implementation of some kind of "national project" that defines the political agenda of the country in question, and 2) the ability to bind interest groups to this project.

The ANC's ideological dominance is best examined through its nominal "project" for South Africa, the National Democratic Revolution, informed by its status as a national liberation movement (Butler, 2009a; Southall, 2013). The genesis of the NDR was in the ANC's communist elites attempting to envision a path to socialism beyond the immediate pressures and inherent compromises of national liberation, and to maintain a path towards socialism through the transition to "bourgeois democracy" (Butler, 2005: 725).

Since 1994, the NDR has assumed a much more nebulous character, becoming, at least within the ANC and despite Netshitenzhe's (1996) wishes, "all things to all people". In terms of evaluating the ANC's ideological dominance, the fluid nature of the NDR makes it hard to pin down what constitutes the imposition of dominance. This is probably intentional, as it enables the vast array of ideologies existing in the ANC's "big tent" to rationalise their continued support for the party, even where policy does not gel with their beliefs (Butler, 2005: 726).

Nevertheless, the NDR still establishes the basic goal of the national liberation movement in power: "the transfer of power to the people" through phases (Netshitenzhe, 1996: 3). In this case, "power" means "political, economic and social control", and "the people" primarily refers to "African workers and the African poor" as well as "black workers in general and the black middle strata" (Netshitenzhe, 1996: 3-4). The question of class politics and whether black capitalists/the "patriotic bourgeoisie" should be seen as part of the "people" or whether they

too were elements of "monopoly capital" seems to have been somewhat settled by the party's long-term endorsement of Black Economic Empowerment. The minimalist conception of the NDR can thus be seen as a transfer of power (as conceptualised above) from the white minority towards the larger "motive forces of democratic transformation" (Netshitenzhe, 1996: 3).

Has the ANC succeeded in achieving this? A frequent critique from the left is that the ANC (especially under Mbeki and again under Ramaphosa) has sold out its redistributive programme through the "1996 class project" or, more recently, through being in the thrall of "white monopoly capital" (a critique most frequently articulated by the EFF) (Pillay, 2008: 5; *News24,* 2019c). If one takes the broad criteria used by the left wing of the Tripartite Alliance, this is probably the case: income inequality between and within races remains extremely high, and the white minority is richer in terms of assets and income than the black majority. However, it is questionable whether the broader criteria are appropriate in evaluating the ANC's ideological dominance.

Instead, this dissertation submits the criteria should be narrower and focused on whether the ANC has succeeded in redistributing political, economic and social control *to itself* and to its allies. Here it is important to recall that dominant parties seldom have *complete* dominance within a system. It is also worth noting that the ANC's self-perception as a national liberation movement means it considers itself the natural political representative of "the people", and hence conflates its control of the levers of politics, economics and society with broader popular control thereof (Southall, 2013: 174). This narrower vision of policy dominance more accurately represents actual party dominance, whereas the broader criterion is more altruistic and seems more focused on the dominance of an *idea.*

Has the ANC succeeded in redistributing the bases of political, economic and social control to itself since 1994? This is a multifaceted question, and each segment merits its own analysis.

Redistribution of political control to the ANC involves both the ANC's power in explicitly political fora (municipalities; provincial and national legislatures) as well as its capacity to dominate and somewhat subsume the executive arm of the state. It further includes the ANC's capacity to manage the political system out of significant actual and potential volatility in the early 1990s.

The latter criterion has unquestionably been fulfilled, as the ANC expended significant political capital on reducing political and racial violence, integrating major opposition parties (especially the NP and IFP) into the new political dispensation, and limiting potential territorial fragmentation in former homelands (Butler, 2007: 36). The redistribution of power to the ANC in elected bodies has already been addressed, and its dominance is obvious in these fora.

The ANC's relation with the state has largely continued South Africa's history of a state bureaucracy that is highly partisan, where the dominant party (previously the NP) exerts considerable control over the state and uses it for its own ends (Naidoo, 2014: 121). The key logic of the ANC's relation with the bureaucracy is via "cadre deployment", the ANC policy which seeks to "deploy" party loyalists, or at a minimum those sympathetic to the party's ideology, to the civil service. Although constrained by the sunset clauses protecting apartheid-era civil servants from dismissal until 1999, the ANC sought to maximise its potential for control over the state bureaucracy by empowering Executing Authorities in all spheres of government (i.e. elected officials) to oversee recruitment rather than a central, non-political body like the Public Service Commission (Cameron, 2010: 684). While political appointments at the upper levels of the civil service are by no means unusual, South Africa has a comparatively high level of political involvement in appointment of civil servants at all levels (Cameron, 2010: 686). As the ANC's hold over the state grew, its 1997 Cadre Policy and Deployment Strategy confirmed that senior positions in the public service should be given explicitly to ANC members, and not just ANC-sympathetic applicants (Cameron, 2010: 687). The fate of senior state bureaucrats and their prospects for advancement both seemed to be linked to the fate of their political principals (Naidoo, 2014: 127). The ANC's dominance of the bureaucracy is also indicated by the use of state posts as a form of patronage, indicating at minimum a public service that is not insulated from political manipulation (Naidoo, 2014: 128). The control of deployment is far more diffuse within the ANC than its critics admit, meaning that often deployments favour specific factional interests rather than overall party interests (Naidoo, 2014: 130). Nevertheless, it is clear that the ANC has achieved a system in which the state is a willing implementer of its policy agenda, or at least only weakly resistant to it, and often uses it to provide "jobs for the boys". ANC elites at all levels have also seen it as natural to be involved in state spending and procurement decisions (Olver, 2018). In this sense, the ANC has achieved a measure of control of both the political and bureaucratic arms of the state.

The conceptualisation of "economic control" is key: in a broad sense, the ANC has not managed to transform the South African economy comprehensively, nor has it succeeded in bringing more of the economy under state control. The opposite has in fact occurred, as South Africa's economy has become increasingly service-based (moving away from the more easily controlled minerals-energy complex) and integrated into the global macroeconomic framework, including membership in the WTO, which has removed a measure of agency from the South African state in deciding its economic future (Fine & Rustomjee, 1996). However, in a narrower sense, the ANC has proven willing and able to "dominate" South African business, earning buy-in to policies often not in corporate South Africa's own best interests, such as Black Economic Empowerment, with relatively little resistance. Often these policies have given the ANC or its members increased access to the "commanding heights of the economy". The liberalisation of the economy also came at the cost of the ANC imposing a strong labour regulation regime with the support of its union allies (Southall, 2013: 179). The key economic goal of the ANC during the Mandela and Mbeki presidencies was to use BEE and the economic importance of the state to build a "patriotic bourgeoisie" of black capitalists, not to pursue rapid redistribution to the entire population (Southall, 2014: 653). The ANC, via the South African state, has also managed to retain a significant number of vital state-owned enterprises (Southall, 2013: 221). It would be an exaggeration to propose that the ANC is "in control" of the South African economy. However, it has proven capable of earning major concessions from organised business, and has firm control of the state as an economic actor.

Netshitenzhe (1996) does not describe a view of what the redistribution of social control would look like. It would be counterproductive to impose a requirement for the dominant party to properly *control* societal relations, as this would effectively amount to totalitarianism (which is distinct from dominant-party rule). Rather, this dissertation proposes turning to the ANC's interactions with civil society as the key indicator of the ANC's capacity to impose and sustain its own policy agenda. As Habib (2005: 672) argues, "civil society" is inherently plural, and it therefore follows that government's relations with civil society will be plural. A simplistic dichotomy largely defines civil society interactions with the state: those consulted in decision-making via corporatist bodies (most notably NEDLAC) and interactions with government have proven susceptible to domination by government. Organised labour and organised business have both been pushed by the ANC government into accepting policy detrimental to their own interests – the former most notably through the liberalisation of the economy (the ostensible "1996 class project") and the latter as detailed above. Formalised NGOs have also often

established a collaborative relation with the state that saw them become deliverers of research and services for government, rather than independent or community-driven institutions (Habib, 2005: 680). A number of social and community organisations involved in the UDF also folded themselves into the ANC after its unbanning (Southall, 2013: 174). Civil society which exists outside of these decision-making fora and outside the party, however, has had a far more conflictual relationship with the ANC government: notable examples are mostly community organisations demanding services (for instance, Abahlali baseMjondolo or the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee) or issue-led social movements like the Treatment Action Campaign (Southall, 2013: 187). Bénit-Gbaffou (2012) also identifies how local ANC branches are seen by the community as a key mediation point with the state – this allows the ANC to control the extent to which dissent jeopardises the policy direction of its government. Unions who do not form part of Cosatu or who have split off Cosatu (including the members of other union federations and independent unions) have also been far more willing to oppose the government than their included counterparts. For example, in the 2020 public-sector wage dispute triggered by government freezing wages, Cosatu-aligned unions engaged in informal negotiations directly with the government, whereas non-Cosatu unions were much quicker to take the wage dispute to court (Mailovich, 2020). These excluded organisations have intermittently been able to force the delivery of services or alter government policy through legal means. However, broadly, civil society has not significantly curtailed the ANC's ability to introduce its key policies, and "included" parties have in fact often been drafted in to executing the government's policy.

Evaluating whether a party is dominant or not is complicated by disagreements in the literature over what dominance is and how it can be operationalised. In a minimalist sense, entirely focused on electoral dominance, the ANC is clearly a dominant party. But an excessively minimalist definition of dominance strips it of analytical meaning: a dominant party is more than just a party that repeatedly wins elections. Using a more maximalist definition, including policy dominance as described above, the ANC nevertheless remains a dominant party. Its electoral success has allowed it to expand its power and implement a broad redistribution of the bases of control (political, economic and social) into its hands as a party. Critiques of the ANC from the left often see it as betraying the National Democratic Revolution and failing to transform society in a broad sense. However, this dissertation proposes that this broad view distracts from the fact that the ANC has sufficiently redistributed political, economic and social control to impose policies it views as key to its own survival and long-term "historical project"

with relatively little resistance. In conjunction with its unquestionable electoral dominance, this makes it a dominant party.

# Chapter Four How did the ANC "become" dominant?

Much attention is devoted to how dominant parties stay dominant – but the process of actually becoming dominant is under-exposed. However, there is a clear set of interventions available to incumbents (or the dominant force during transitions), dependent on the objective conditions, that position them for dominance. This chapter will outline the ANC's use of co-optation, patronage and cooperation in its establishment of dominance in the 1990s.

The ANC's transition into dominance, as is the case for most dominant parties, tracked the transition into a new political system in 1994. Di Palma's (1990) identification of common traits of transitions into party dominance is informative: nascent dominant parties will likely attempt to discredit the opposition, undermine its credentials and otherwise establish dominance in the new political "rules of the game". The ANC's popular legitimacy advantage was well established by its role as South Africa's national liberation movement, which gave it significant popular support across constituencies and interest groups, and also allowed it to represent major opposition parties, most importantly the National Party and Inkatha Freedom Party, as antithetical to the new political order.

However, arguably the more important ANC tactic in the transition towards full democracy was not delegitimation of the opposition, but its inclusion in the political system. The downside risks of complete marginalisation of its opposition were high (including the potential for civil war), which drove a strategy of what Di Palma (1990: 177) terms *garantismo,* or the extension of maximal political access to sources of radical opposition by a moderate centre party through permissive electoral formulae and unity governments. This conforms almost completely with the formation of the Government of National Unity (including both IFP and NP political elites) from 1994-1996, and South Africa's single national constituency proportional representation system (despite the ANC's initial preference for a first-past-the-post system) (Southall, 2013: 103). Di Palma (1990: 177) advances that this allows the prospective dominant party to "constitutionalize the extremes", tying them into the political game's rules; where the incumbent has a marked advantage. The prospect of an open electoral market where it could appeal to its existing base, combined with the negotiated transition delivered by CODESA 1 and 2 and the introduction of amnesty and reconciliation measures through the TRC, diminished the transition costs for the National Party and likely secured elite support for the

interim (1994) constitutional order. The establishment of provincial governments represented an important concession from the ANC to both the NP and IFP, allowing them a greater chance of winning office (Lodge, 2005: 738). In the case of the IFP, these incentives seem to have struggled to convince party elites who were pushing for increased decentralisation of political power, and the 1994 passage of the Ingonyama Trust Act, ceding much of the territory of the former KwaZulu homeland to a trust controlled by the Zulu king, is often proffered as the motivating factor behind securing the IFP's participation in the 1994 (and all subsequent) elections (Lynd, 2019). Southall (2013: 103) even submits that it is possible the 1994 provincial elections were manipulated to provide victory for the IFP in KwaZulu-Natal. Whether the Ingonyama Trust was a promise made by the ANC to secure IFP participation in elections or was merely incidental and convenient is uncertain, but it is evident that the ANC's preferred outcome was for the two major opposition forces to join in the new constitutional dispensation.

Having secured the participation of both of its major opponents in elections, the ANC did not have to strain itself to delegitimise its foes: both the NP and IFP made largely niche appeals to limited constituencies, leaving the ANC as the only major party targeting a multi-racial electoral coalition. The NP's focus was on retaining its predominantly white electoral constituency while tentatively expanding into Coloured voters, especially in the Western Cape; whereas the IFP's voter base was overwhelmingly concentrated in KwaZulu-Natal. Both parties continued to be perceived by many voters as continuations of the apartheid system.

As a result of the ANC's work to foster buy-in to the new constitutional dispensation, and the relatively niche appeals of both major opposition parties, it found itself in an electoral dispensation which guaranteed it a majority and presented opportunities for expansion. Of course, maintaining this electoral advantage required strategy of a different nature, which will be addressed in the following section.

The other major common practice in establishing party dominance involves securing the buy-in of major interest groups (Almond, 1960: 41). This can either be a result of attraction (whether through policy promises, patronage or otherwise) or co-optation (or both). This tactic was not unfamiliar to the ANC even before it became involved in electoral competition due to its experience in coalition-building during the liberation struggle. By the early 1990s, the ANC had already bound a significant number of interest groups to itself. The Tripartite Alliance was established in 1990, formalising the long-standing ties between the ANC, Cosatu and the SACP

(Lodge, 1999: 7). This significantly diminished the prospects for a strong challenge to the ANC from the Left, whether in the form of a communist party or a less ideological "workerist" party. Elites from both Cosatu and the SACP had long held and would continue to hold simultaneous membership in decision-making structures in both organisations.

Besides the IFP-dominated KwaZulu homeland, the ANC also paid special attention to ensuring integration of former homeland elites into its political structures. It was in the ANC's best interests to ensure that ethnic cleavages were as politically insignificant as possible, which could have triggered political fragmentation and the emergence of a range of niche parties based on the political structures developed in the former homelands. In the Transkei, pre-existing interpersonal relationships with local elites and General Bantu Holomisa's pre-transition *rapprochement* with the ANC facilitated rapid integration of the Transkei political elite into ANC structures, with Holomisa quickly earning a place in the National Executive Committee (Robinson, 2015: 955). The ANC followed a similar strategy in most rural areas where its organisational apparatus had been absent under apartheid, incorporating local elites (both homeland officials and traditional leaders) and their support networks into local, provincial and national executives (Lodge, 2014: 17; Southall, 2013: 196). The leverage of homeland elites post-1994 was also diminished through the introduction of nine provinces and the relative weaknesses of provinces as a sphere of government (although the importance of provincial structures within the ANC has progressively grown).

Equally important was the ANC's position as the *de facto* leader of the struggle for democracy in the eyes of business elites and the international community. It also benefited from close links to mass-based struggle in the 1980s through the United Democratic Front and township revolts: although these movements were probably not, as the ANC has sometimes claimed, directed by them, they nevertheless espoused similar politics and had close ties to the ANC both during and after the struggle (Butler, 2012: 48). The ANC had been involved in talks with South African business and societal elites through direct meetings with the Urban Foundation, executives of the Anglo-American Corporation (AAC) and the Dakar Conference with IDASA (Michie & Padayachee, 2019: 2). The ANC evidently had a legitimacy in the eyes of all interest groups that no other opposition party could claim, allowing it to dominate negotiations in CODESA and thus lay the grounds for a transition that favoured it (constrained by the interests of its major opposition and myriad other minority interests).

Through a combination of its pre-transition popular legitimacy in the eyes of its allies, the electorate and even its opponents, its strategy of *garantismo* designed to lock its opposition into the new political order, and its ability to co-opt or attract interest groups to its cause, the ANC laid the groundwork for its future electoral dominance. However, as Di Palma (1990: 163) asserts, the initial establishment of party dominance is no guarantee of future dominance, which requires different strategies. It seems thus that the ANC's strategic choices during the transition to democracy were a necessary, but insufficient condition for long-term dominance.

# Chapter Five: Defining declining dominance

An important conceptual question must be addressed in evaluating dominance: what does a declining dominant party look like? In much of the case study literature, dominant party decline is effectively equated with electoral decline. Certainly, electoral decline is an important indicator of a dominant party's political power. Stronger electoral performance inherently means weaker direct political opposition, and *vice-versa.* Sub-national electoral losses, whether at the provincial or municipal level, strengthen challenger parties' political importance and access to resources. Finally, crudely, elections are a freeze-frame of general societal approval of the dominant party and the degree to which it is capable of binding the national body politic to its specific policy programme. This is a readily operationalised variable: the ANC's electoral performance at the municipal, provincial and national levels over time is informative.

However, this dissertation has argued that party dominance has an ideological component which must be considered. By this token, declining ideological dominance must also be considered a form of declining party dominance. Methodologically, this dissertation proposes the same qualitative, case-specific approach as evaluating whether a party is ideologically dominant: is the party less able to implement its "historic project" via policy, and has it been less able to bind key interest groups to this project? Potential decline in the ANC's ideological dominance should thus be assessed similarly to its aforementioned dominance: through its handle on the bases of political, economic and societal control. While this section will evaluate whether there has been decline on either front, it seems evident that decline on either the electoral or the ideological side should translate to a decline in dominance. If major interest groups no longer see their fate as bound to the dominant party, this must mean the dominant party's stature has declined somewhat (although it does not necessarily translate to the party no longer being dominant).

In an electoral sense, the ANC's decline is evident: since its electoral peak in 2004, it has lost significant national vote share (from 69,69% to 57,5%) and had a diminished provincial vote share in all provinces in 2019, including almost losing the provincial vote in the economic centre of Gauteng (Electoral Commission, 2021). It has also seen a marked decline in municipal political dominance, where the opposition has proven generally stronger than in national elections. The 2016 Local Government Elections saw the party lose its majorities in a number

of metropolitan and local municipalities, including the City of Johannesburg, Tshwane, Nelson Mandela Bay and Ekurhuleni (Electoral Commission, 2021). While the party managed to win back some of these municipalities through coalitions and by-elections, its control of municipal government has been rolled back significantly, especially in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Returning to the National Democratic Revolution-grounded conceptualisation of ideological dominance, has the ANC maintained its hold on the political, social and economic bases in power? Electorally its decline has been addressed, and this has translated to a somewhat diminished political dominance in legislative structures (for instance, the ANC is no longer able to change the Constitution without the approval of a significant number of opposition parliamentarians), although the ANC continues to maintain majorities in 8 of 9 provincial legislatures and the National Assembly.

What then of the relationship between the ANC and the state? The centralisation of power during the Mbeki presidency saw the use of senior civil servants as a means of controlling the ANC: Mbeki strictly centralised control of policy-making in the centre of government, and Director-General of the Presidency Frank Chikane marshalled departmental heads to ensure implementation and conformity to the policy agenda (indeed, Mbeki decided to make directors-general answerable to him, rather than to line ministers) (Gumede, 2005: 129; Giollabhuí, 2017: 397). Mbeki's ouster thus triggered a purge of Mbeki loyalists, perceived or actual, across the senior public service at national and provincial level (Booysen, 2011: 359). Booysen (2011: 359) proposes that the logic of this period was to impose ANC power on the state, rather than the use of state power to govern the ANC. While the state unquestionably was increasingly beholden to the ANC after Polokwane, central control of patronage was not achieved, with patronage appointments and the use of the state for partisan purposes becoming increasingly diffuse (Booysen, 2011: 359). State positions were also dispensed to suspected COPE sympathisers as its internal issues became public, in a bid to undermine COPE's electoral threat and encourage the party's disintegration (Booysen, 2011: 360). The early Zuma period entailed the elimination of the two centres of power which had emerged under Mbeki, and the subjugation of the state (both in terms of political officials and the civil service) to the ANC (Booysen, 2011: 366). The later Zuma period saw Zuma consolidating his personal power within the ANC and using the executive arm for personal benefit and to service patronage networks. Where resistance to the implementation of policies backed by Zuma and his allies

existed, civil servants were either shifted on or legally targeted (two notable examples being attacks on senior leadership in the Hawks and the Rogue Unit campaign at South African Revenue Service/SARS). The national intelligence architecture was also used to sustain personal patronage and fight internal ANC battles (High Level Panel Report on the SSA, 2018: ii). The Zuma-era ANC certainly markedly increased its control of the state. The inception of the Ramaphosa presidency saw yet another purge of senior civil servants, although replacement has been conducted in a more transparent and less ANC-controlled manner and Ramaphosa seems to have attempted to insulate at least the law-enforcement components of the state from political interference (with some success). While ANC approaches to the state vary according to the incumbent (state and ANC) president, its domination of the state has increased since its first electoral victory.

Economically, the ANC's ideological dominance has seen a far more muted performance. Initial market liberalisation and integration into the global economy drove further demand for liberalisation from big business, which the ANC proved unwilling to provide. Initial drives for Black Economic Empowerment were in fact sponsored by big business as a means to defending itself from more radical policy and providing itself with some political legitimacy (Bowman, 2019: 226). The introduction of BBBEE and transformation charters were not without dispute, but ultimately reflected a negotiated compromise between the state and business (Bowman, 2019: 226). Initial trends in economic ideological control reflected a relationship between business and the ANC where business grudgingly accepted the ANC's demands for pro-labour and redistributive policies (BEE/BBBEE, sectoral charters, sectoral training among others), in exchange for market liberalisation and relaxation of capital controls (Seekings & Nattrass, 2011: 354). These "growth coalitions" (Seekings & Nattrass, 2011: 354) became much less prevalent during the Zuma presidency, as the ANC government became increasingly demanding of business and business became increasingly recalcitrant in implementing the policy goals of government. The mining sector is a microcosm of declining state-business relations, as the initial Mining Charters (1&2), accepted by the industry in negotiation with government, gave way to Mining Charter 3 (imposing higher black ownership requirements and revoking the "once empowered always empowered" principle), provoking repeated legal challenges from the mining industry and accelerating the movement of capital and stock listings out of South Africa by major players (Bowman, 2019: 239). Hostile relations between big business (at least, those excluded from procurement during the Zuma presidency in favour of Zuma-connected businesses including Bosasa and the Gupta suite of companies) drove

business to donate heavily to Cyril Ramaphosa's campaign for ANC president, given perceptions of Ramaphosa as business-friendly and a "safe pair of hands" (Butler, 2019b: 513). This was partially successful, as much Zuma-era policy was walked back after Ramaphosa's elevation to state president, including moderation of Mining Charter 3 and indications of willingness to negotiate the Charter's future on both sides (Bowman, 2019: 239). Technically, of course, government is always able to dominate business, given it controls the legal environment in which business operates. However, key business interest groups have proven increasingly opposed to the ANC's policy agenda and have been willing to resist it – its ideological dominance of the economy can thus be said to have declined since the Mbeki era.

The point to which social control has been achieved and whether this represents a decline or not is difficult to parse. A crude measure is the party's share of votes not only from those who turned out but as a proportion of voting-age population (VAP) (i.e. all South Africans 18 and above): here the ANC's declining support becomes somewhat evident. In the 2019 election, roughly 27% of the VAP[2] went to the polls to vote for the ANC, down from its 1994 high of 54% and its 2014 performance of 36.4% (De Jager & Parkin, 2017: 7). This indicates at least that even if the general population agrees with the ANC's policy platform, it has little interest in going to the polls to indicate this, as well as that the opposition have not proven able to entice those non-motivated voters (which seems to track traditional approaches to the opposition in dominant regimes). Afrobarometer (2021) surveys also indicate declining trust in the ruling party, with the proportion of respondents indicating no trust in the ANC nearly tripling from 13% in 2005/06 to 36% in 2017/18.

Returning to the previously stipulated civil society approach to social control, the conflictual relationship between "excluded" civil society organisation which were left out of decision-making processes persisted during the Zuma presidency. Indeed, demands for service delivery by communities – Alexander's (2010) "rebellion of the poor" – increasingly became the subject of protest even as social movements declined in importance (Gentle, 2015: 675), with a rapid increase in the number of major service delivery protests from 2009 onwards, with the upwards trend carrying over into the Ramaphosa presidency (MunicipalIQ, 2021). However, the Zuma presidency saw even constituencies usually included in decision-making adopt a far more conflictual stance than they previously had. The ANC's hold on organised labour has

[2] Author's own calculations, based on IEC statistics.

diminished substantially as trade union density declines generally, and as Cosatu unions bleed membership to competing unions. This has been especially evident in mining and associated sectors, where the emergence of AMCU has threatened the Cosatu affiliate NUM (from which it split), and the expulsion of Numsa has weakened Cosatu's sectoral coverage and numerical strength (Gentle, 2015: 666). Unions, including Cosatu affiliates, have also proven wholly opposed to attempts at fiscal consolidation introduced by the Ramaphosa government, using industrial action and legal battles to rebuff retrenchment programmes and to seek concessions during wage negotiations. The 2014 platinum strikes provided a nexus of anti-government sentiment along the platinum belt, which the EFF capitalised on, winning significant support in the North West. The emergence of SAFTU in 2017, driven by Numsa and the expelled Cosatu General Secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, is a signal of increasing oppositional relations between organised labour and the ANC. Traditionally neutral or even state-supportive bodies including academia and civil society organisations like the SA Council of Churches (Frank Chikane had been a key member of the Mbeki-era Presidency) have also become much more critical of the ANC, and, along with media organisations, played a major role in driving public opposition to the Zuma presidency (Chipkin, 2018: 109). Admittedly, it is difficult to arrive at a conclusive answer to the question of the ANC's hold on the social base of political power. However, all indicators seem to point to an increasingly confrontational or at least less cooperative relationship between included and excluded civil society groups and the state.

Overall, the ANC's dominance, both electoral and ideological, seems to have been significantly damaged since its peak during the Mbeki presidency. While the Zuma presidency signalled that the ANC had comprehensively subjugated the state, this came at the price of declining electoral dominance and increasing opposition in both the economic and social spheres. The question to be posed is thus: how did the ANC manage to maintain its dominance, and why has it declined?

# Chapter Six: The ANC and hyperincumbency advantages: understanding the "national patronage system"

Greene's resource theory rests on the impact of the resource differential that dominant parties can accrue due to the advantages of hyperincumbency, i.e. long periods in government with minimal prospects of being ejected. Resource advantages allow the dominant party to promise the rewards of office to prospective elites and use patronage and targeted policy to appeal to voters (Greene, 2007: 39). Patronage can distort the electoral market and drive voters whose policy preferences are closer to the platform of a challenger party to vote for the dominant party due to the utility of the patronage they receive from the incumbent (Greene, 2007: 46). Dominant parties are likely to attempt to appeal to the median voter in their policy choices, given their support bases usually cut across political cleavages, although they are able to shift to either side and retain disaffected voters through the promise of patronage (Greene, 2007: 45-48). The larger the patronage it can distribute and the more certainty it has that patronage distributed will reach its intended target (and have its intended effect), the more likely it is to outcompete challenger parties, even those whose policy closely mirrors its own (Greene, 2007: 48). Patronage uncertainty is inevitable given that voters' choices are secret, and hence enforcement of the desired outcome is impossible (Greene, 2007: 49). Patronage uncertainty also hinges on how reliable patronage networks are and how much utility patronage gives to the target (Greene, 2007: 49).

Greene's Mexico case study describes the PRI's maintenance of dominance through the use of policy to "firefight" the emergence of potential opposition (Greene, 2007: 95) as well as the use of a "national patronage system" to solidify its resource advantages (Greene, 2007: 98). In the Mexican case, this involved the diversion of public money for party purposes, the distribution of public sector jobs to loyalists as patronage, kickbacks from state procurement and the use of state resources for campaigning (Greene, 2007: 98). Greene (2007: 98) also notes that the opportunity for patronage is a function of the size of the public sector and the degree of political control of the civil service.

In order to evaluate Greene's theory, this chapter will first establish how the ANC's "national patronage system" operates – remarkable similarities and subtle differences are both evident in this exercise. An understanding of the ANC's use of resources is key to establishing whether

resources are key to its dominance or not. This chapter will also consider how the ANC used policy to service its political base and hamstring opposition. Finally, some proxies for the availability of patronage to be used to sustain dominance will be suggested, in order to undertake an analysis of whether Greene's approach has had predictive power or not. While the proxies end up relatively similar, although not the same, to Greene's (2007: 101) (he uses public sector employment and the proportion of GDP contributed by state-owned enterprises as proxies), simply assuming that the ANC funds itself and distributes patronage in the same way as the PRI would be unsatisfactory. Finally, an evaluation of the explanatory value of Greene's theory in the South African case will be provided.

## 6.1. Monopolistic access to state resources

Understanding the ANC's "national patronage system" hinges both on understanding how the party funds itself and its elections, as well as an analysis of how client-patron relations take place within the party. The financing of party operations and election campaigns is opaque in South Africa: until 2021, aside from money provided from the public purse in terms of the Represented Parties Political Fund, there have been no disclosure requirements nor limits on how much money can be given to parties. As such, research on party funding has largely relied on news reports and investigative journalism to understand the mechanisms of the ANC's funding. However, it is clear that a combination of dubiously legal, completely illegal and fully legal mechanisms provides the ANC with its significant resource advantage. The ANC's electoral majority also allows it to dispense patronage to loyal supporters through its control of the state, in a variety of ways. This section handles the nexus of the ANC's use of resources to gain and sustain political power. It adapts Greene's "national patronage system" typology to the South African case, in an effort to understand how the ANC's resource advantages are built and how they fluctuate.

*Diversion of funds from the state*

The ANC has used linked companies to finance its operations since the inception of democracy. In the 1990s until the early 2000s, the Batho Batho Trust operated as the ANC's investment arm, accumulating significant shareholding across economic sectors, until it became reluctant to bankroll the party (Jolobe, 2010: 207). The 2003 establishment of Chancellor House

Holdings by ANC treasurer-general Mendi Msimang, likely at the behest of Thabo Mbeki, was targeted at ensuring consistent funding of the party's operational needs (Jolobe, 2010: 207). The Mbeki faction tightly controlled Chancellor House during Mbeki's tenure, consolidating its hold of the party. Chancellor House's major investments all involved state resources directly or indirectly: it was quickly granted prospecting rights in a manganese-rich area of the Kalahari by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy as part of a consortium, which netted it millions of dollars with little to no cost (Jolobe, 2010: 208). More notable was Chancellor House's interest in Hitachi Power Africa (HPA), which won a multi-billion-rand tender for boilers at Eskom's new-build power station Medupi. Chancellor House received over $6 million in "success fees" and dividends from Hitachi, and sold its $190 000 investment in HPA back to Hitachi for $4.4 million in 2014 (*Securities & Exchange Commission v Hitachi,* 2015: 17). This translated to a 5000% return on investment for Chancellor House, which was by then known as a funding vehicle for the ANC. The awarding of the boiler contract to Hitachi also took place while Valli Moosa was chair of the Eskom board, and simultaneously a member of the ANC National Executive Committee and the party's National Finance Committee (Jolobe, 2010: 211). At best this constitutes an obvious conflict of interest, and at worst the direct manipulation of state contracts to fund the ANC.

Similar practices were evident in the 2004 Oilgate scandal, in which Imvume Holdings, a company with long-standing connections to the ANC, was forwarded a R15 million loan by parastatal PetroSA, of which R11 million was subsequently directly transferred to the ANC's coffers (My Vote Counts, 2021: 11). Thales/ThomsonCSF also allegedly made a €1 million donation to the ANC in 2006, potentially to seek protection from political retribution over its role in the 1999 Arms Deal (My Vote Counts, 2021: 15). Indeed, it seems quite likely that the ANC as a party (and not just the individual elites involved) benefited financially from the Arms Deal itself, as it owned 10% of Schabir Shaik's Nkobi Holdings through a front company (Robinson & Brümmer, 2006: 12).

The exchange of party donations and personal kickbacks for favourable intervention in state tender processes has also become evident: then-MMC for Finance in Johannesburg Geoff Makhubo seems to have solicited substantial donations totalling up to R16m (channelled through an intermediary) from South African corporate EOH, in exchange for intervening favourably on its behalf in tender processes (Daily Maverick, 2020). The Makhubo-EOH scandal is just one of a list of similar processes, wherein private interests seeking to manipulate

state procurement outcomes make large donations to the ANC or cultivate personal relationships with senior ANC elites who have the power to secure favourable outcomes through the state. The Gupta family donated at least R10m to the party itself ahead of the 2014 elections, and likely dispensed far more to senior ANC elites who aided in the diversion of state funds (News24, 2020). Security and logistics company Bosasa, which secured over R12bn in state contracts, potentially donated up to R40m to the ANC, and definitely donated R3m (News24, 2019a, 2019b).

Targeted patronage through the use of state resources in an illegitimate sense (i.e. not "policy firefighting", but rather the diversion of state resources explicitly to service party interests) has also occurred. In 2004, Minister of Social Development Zola Skweyiya noted that disability grants in rural KwaZulu-Natal were being distributed to supporters of local ANC politicians who did not qualify for the grant (Lodge, 2004a: 168).

*Direct funnelling of money to party coffers*

Direct transfers of state money to the ANC from the budget, outside of legal mechanisms like the RPPF, have not been reliably documented. However, the use of intermediaries or exchange of procurement for funding has been a common feature of ANC resource advantages, as detailed above.

*Provision of "jobs for the boys"*

Control of appointments to positions, either political or public, is one of the key means of functioning of patronage networks at all levels in the ANC. Both Mbeki and Zuma mostly constituted their cabinets out of their elite support networks. Mbeki also directly appointed senior management in government departments, ensuring their loyalty (Gumede, 2005: 129). The ANC's cadre deployment policy has ensured that the scope for confidence appointments is wide. Naidoo (2015: 35) touches on repeated evidence that political leads hold highly centralised power over human resources matters, with limited delegation to civil servants. The presence of ministerial performance contracts including performance indicators may encourage further micromanagement of the civil service by elected officials (Naidoo, 2015: 36). This phenomenon is not confined to national government, and indeed contestation over deployment

of networks of support into state administration has been a common feature of the ANC's municipal governance. The 2000 Municipal Systems Act increased the scope for confidence appointments by allowing municipal councils to appoint the managers reporting to the municipal manager (who had already been a council appointment) (Olver, 2018: 280). Olver (2018: 280) notes that political control of appointments in municipal structures extend far beyond what the law provides for, though this is generally confined to the management level. However, it seems clear that ward councillors also exercise control over a number of non-management appointments, ranging from involvement in public works programmes to permanent appointments in community development work (Ndletyana, 2015).

Aside from the obvious remuneration upside provided to those awarded with government posts, it is clear that access to the civil service presents a number of other upsides, including the possibility to sell private services to the state. Then-Auditor-General Shauket Fakie provided an early indication of how government officials, both "designated" and at lower levels of the civil service, were frequently doing business with the state (Robinson & Brümmer, 2006: 8).

*Exchange of influence for contributions*

The exchange of access to and the protection of political elites for financial reward is a key *modus operandi* of the ANC's national patronage system. Private elites cultivate relations with well-placed politicians or with party factions through the provision of resources for campaigning and personal gratification. In exchange, political elites provide protection for their private benefactors, or intervene on their behalf in state processes. Another form of relationship arguably conforms to this: political support is often traded for future access to resources at socioeconomic levels where provision of other forms of resources is impossible.

Brett Kebble is perhaps the most eminent example of the exchange of political influence for monetary contributions: Kebble donated in excess of R25 million to the ANC, and was involved in brokering mergers and acquisitions for a number of ANC-linked investment companies, most notably the Youth League's Lembede Investment Holdings (Southall, 2008: 288). Kebble had aligned himself with a number of pro-Zuma factions ahead of the 2007 National Conference, suggesting he may have sought protection from both his financial and legal troubles from a future Zuma Presidency (Southall, 2008: 288).

The most transparent form of "influence-peddling" (or lobbying, depending on one's jurisdiction) has been the ANC's sale of access to its officials and deployed ministers. At both 2002 and 2007 ANC National Conferences, a "Network Lounge" offered access to ANC elites both within government and the party, in exchange for hefty fees (Southall, 2008: 287). It is unclear that the money went directly from the Lounge to the ANC, but it is unlikely that the Lounge was allowed to operate at the conference without some kind of fee provided to the party. Given some of the corporations paying at the Lounge were parastatals, this potentially also represented a transfer of state money to party coffers through an intermediary (Southall, 2008: 287). The company, although nominally independent, was owned by a holdings company closely associated with the ANC (Southall, 2008: 287). The Progressive Business Forum fulfils a similar purpose, except it is explicitly controlled by the ANC and hosts fundraising events on a continuous basis, trading access to the government executive for immense fees, including R1 million for two seats at President Ramaphosa's table in the runup to the 2019 election (Daily Maverick, 2018; Butler, 2019a: 77).

The exchange of non-monetary support for political patronage is also a common strategy, especially at municipal level. Municipal councillors construct networks of support through promises of delivery of services, and distribute resources and amenities (sanitation, water supply, food parcels) selectively to their support base once in office (Ndletyana, 2015).

*The use of state resources for campaigning*

The 2014 election presented the most visible use by the ANC of state resources as a component of ANC campaigning (Booysen, 2015: 19). One study indicated intimidation of social grants recipients, who were told voting for the opposition would result in the loss of grants and the denial of services (PARI, 2017: 5). Other evidence that the ANC was using state power as a campaign tactic included the denial of use of public spaces for political events, as well as the welfare agency, SASSA, handing out blankets and food at campaign events (PARI, 2017: 5). Booysen (2015: 19) details a pattern of provincial and national departments delivering social aid and opening major projects as close to election time as possible, and the extensive use of media to celebrate government achievements in and around the celebration of 20 years of democracy. The ANC has generally taken pains to avoid using the state as a campaign agent, but the 2014 election proved an exception to this rule.

As a whole, it is clear that the ANC has successfully used its access to state resources and the patronage it can dispense as a means to fund its political activities. Elites cultivate networks of support in exchange for promises of future patronage, and the party as an organisation encourages financial contributions to the ANC in exchange for favourable treatment from the state. Positions at either a political or civil service level are also used as incentives to buy or maintain support networks. The ANC has also diverted funds from the state to itself through its numerous investment arms, shell companies and nominated persons.

This "national patronage system" has given the ANC two major advantages: firstly, it persistently outspends its political opponents comfortably, and has spent over R500 million on at least the last 3 elections (if not more) (Butler, 2009b: 74; Booysen, 2015). This is complemented by the ANC's ability to recruit either new elites or opposition elites through promises of patronage of some kind. In sum, the ANC has and has had a massive resource and patronage advantage over its major political challengers.

## 6.2. The ANC's use of policy for partisan advantage

The ANC's policy tactics are less evidently skewed towards party competition. Much of its early policy was skewed towards financial markets due to the pressures of integration into the global economy, whereas much of its later policy was targeted at extraction of resources from the state, coupled with the servicing of political support bases.

As Lodge (2004a: 172) notes, from 1994 to 2004, as the ANC's support base expanded to include rural and urban-rural voters, one of its key policy interventions was the massive expansion of social welfare and public services, with a specific bias towards the countryside.

Policy-wise, the ANC's early phases cannot be said to be "populist" – it enforced a programme of fiscal consolidation, macro-economic stabilisation and market liberalisation in the late 1990s, GEAR, which primarily disadvantaged blue collar workers and the poor in general, i.e. the majority of voters (Butler, 2007). However, it cushioned this blow through the progressive expansion of services through grants and amenities. Access to electricity for households was expanded from 58% to 77% from 1996-2002, and evidence suggests that the delivery of electricity to ANC-dominated constituencies was prioritised (World Bank, 2021; Kroth,

Larcinese & Werner, 2016). The expansion of social grants beginning in 2000 increased the proportion of grant recipients from 7% of the population in 2000 to 20% in 2004, and 30% by 2011 (it has remained relatively constant since then) (Minister of Social Development, 2021). Housing delivery also expanded rapidly during the GEAR period (Department of Human Settlements, 2014).

The ANC also serviced a rapidly expanding black middle class through transformation initiatives such as Black Economic Empowerment, Broad-Based BEE, and the use of state employment and procurement to encourage the expansion of a new black bourgeoisie (Southall, 2013: 220-222).

In sum, in the Mandela and early Mbeki presidencies, the ANC relied on its high popular legitimacy with the general population and the compromises it had struck with organised business and labour to implement a macro-economic strategy (GEAR) that stabilised public finances and delivered economic growth, but also led to massive job losses (Butler, 2007). It cushioned the blow that integration into the global market caused by expanding delivery of basic services and social welfare, retaining some elements of the RDP while abandoning some of its more redistributive tenets.

During the Zuma presidency, despite the SACP and Cosatu's hopes of having greater policy input, not a great deal changed from the Mbeki era. The ANC's 2009 manifesto was mostly in line with Mbeki-era policy, and the National Development Plan (initially the SACP's idea) was shepherded to completion by Mbeki's Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, without producing any radical policy changes (Butler, 2019b: 437; Calland, 2013: 41). The only major change in policy was the decisive abandonment of the privatisation of SOEs. Certainly, the political left did not come out of Polokwane empty handed – political positions aside, both the size and pay of the public sector expanded rapidly from 2007, as the government implemented the Occupation Specific Dispensation salary model (which explicitly benefitted Cosatu unions), and above-inflation pay rises for the general public service across the course of Zuma's presidency (Cameron & Naidoo, 2016). While ANC manifestos may have talked much more left under Zuma, including for instance the promise of a National Health Insurance scheme and accelerated land reform, little practical implementation of these initiatives was actually attempted. The marginally above-inflation increases in social grants and the scrapping of university fees for poor students show a limited attempt for policy firefighting, but apart from

this the Zuma presidency saw relatively little use of targeted policy.

While the broad working class in South Africa has not seen significant improvements in standards of living since the global financial crisis, some notable labour interventions show evidence of the ANC's use of policy and state resources to reinforce its status with organised labour through Cosatu: firstly, the average salary level of the civil service has increased substantially (Kerr & Wittenberg, 2017). Second, public sector wages have increased far above inflation consistently since the 2010 strike. Third, the policy of affirmative action in the public sector has allowed for remarkable social mobility, from the working class into lower and middle management, for what is now a significant minority of Cosatu's membership (Gentle, 2015: 670). The power of large unions was entrenched by the bargaining council system adopted in the 1990s, giving an "incumbency advantage" to Cosatu's affiliates. The rewards provided to unions have, however, estranged them from blue-collar workers: over one-third of Cosatu members had degrees in 2015 and the union's membership was increasingly dominated by public sector workers (Gentle, 2015: 672). Finally, the adoption of a national minimum wage pushed through by the Ramaphosa administration improved wages for the lowest-paid workers (agriculture, domestic and public works programmes): these workers, often not unionised, form part of the economically marginalised groups that constitute a significant support base for the ANC.

The ANC positioned itself as a catch-all party early on, and in earnest during the Mbeki presidency, seeking to reflect an ideological compromise that would appeal to the median voter and ensure the stability of the new political and economic dispensation it had been instrumental in creating (Butler, 2007: 38). While it swung to a more left-nationalist orientation during the Zuma presidency, strikingly little of the ideological content nominally espoused by those seeking "radical economic transformation" was actually implemented by the government. While Piper & Matisonn (2009: 155) make an important contribution in suggesting that competition in the ANC serves the purpose of alternating elites in a way that approximates voter sentiment, the actual policy/ideology content of leadership transitions is often negligible. Astute political positioning means the party's core messaging has held broad appeal to South Africans since the 1990s, making the need for policy firefighting minimal. Finally, the tactical deployment of political strategies including discrediting and co-optation allowed the ANC to weaken its opposition sufficiently that major policy initiatives were probably unnecessary.

## 6.3. Do hyperincumbency advantages explain the ANC's dominance?

Testing Greene's theory through the South African case study is relatively simple: Greene (2007) proposes that parties sustain their dominance through the use of policy firefighting and the creation of resource imbalances, chiefly through expansion of the public sector and politicisation of the public service, which allow them to dispense patronage to elites and voters alike. If Greene's theory is correct:

*Hypothesis One (H1): the ANC's dominance should increase or at least remain constant as the size and politicisation of the public sector increases*

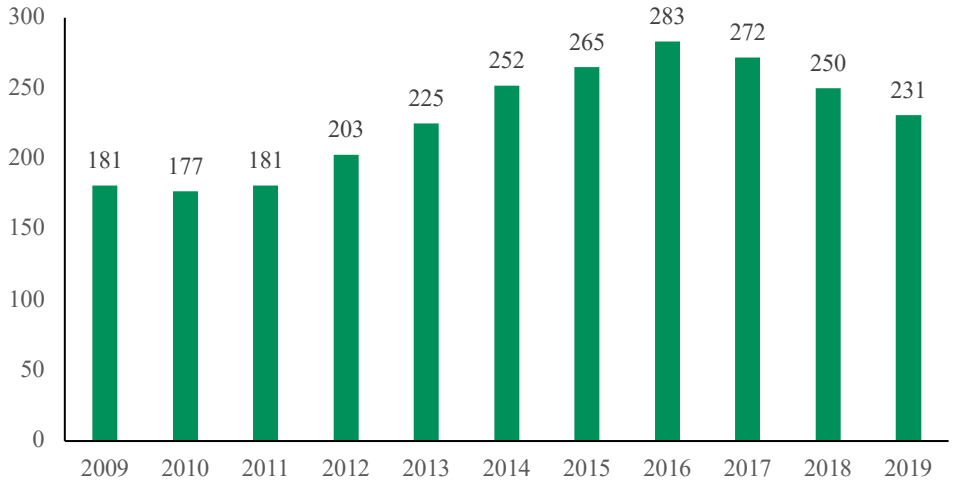
and

*Hypothesis Two (H2): The ANC's dominance should decrease as the party's control of public resources becomes less marked*

In this case, two proxies for party (electoral) dominance will be adopted: first, the obvious measure – the total vote share secured by the dominant party. Second, the proxy suggested by Greene (2010: 46) in his study of the generalisability of his theory: the gap between the ruling party and the next largest party. The first proxy gives an idea of the dominant party's overall popularity, whereas the second measures both the incumbent's ability to undermine the opposition, as well as giving an idea of the likelihood of the dominant party losing.

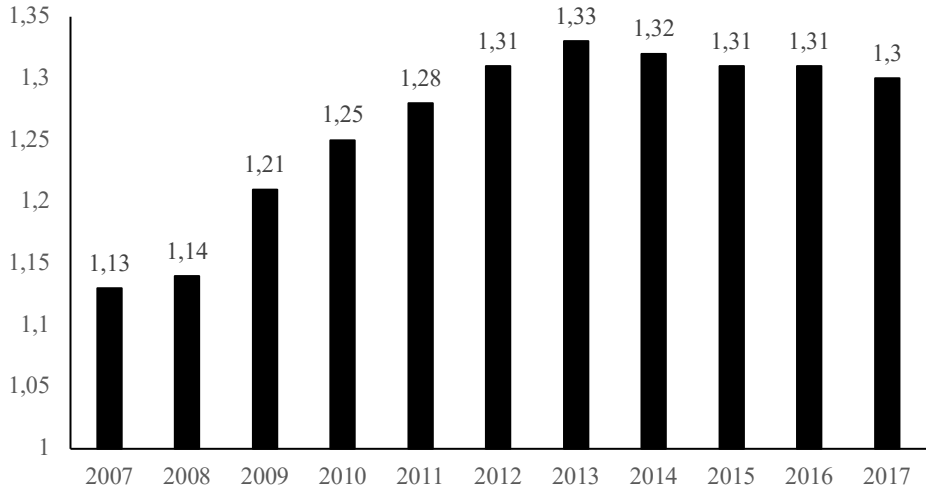
Greene's model for total access to state resources centres on two quantifiable proxies: public sector employment and SOE contribution to GDP. Political control of the upper levels of the civil service is a necessary condition for the dominant party to access state resources: this dissertation has already established that, especially at a senior level of the civil service, the ANC appoints cadres it feels are loyal to the party (Cameron, 2010; Naidoo, 2014). Proxies for patronage allow for an assessment of the availability or possibility of patronage, which must not be conflated with an actual measure of patronage. Patronage, especially illicit financial flows, kickbacks and other extra-legal mechanisms, is inherently difficult to measure as it exists outside of official records. This section first examines some proxies for the availability of patronage across the ANC's time in office, and subsequently engages in a specific focus on the mechanisms of patronage during Jacob Zuma's ANC/state presidency, which witnessed the ANC's major electoral decline.

Fig. 1: Public sector capital expenditure (R billion)




Data on the contribution of state-owned enterprises to South Africa's GDP is hard to come by. However, some other proxies are advanced: the first is capital expenditure in the public sector, which has proven a key point of extraction of public funds by private parties. The second is the total operational expenditure of the four largest state-owned enterprises, which includes Eskom, Transnet, SAA and Prasa, which all expanded from 2010 onwards. As Figure 1 shows, public sector capital expenditure increased markedly until 2017 (StatsSA, 2020).

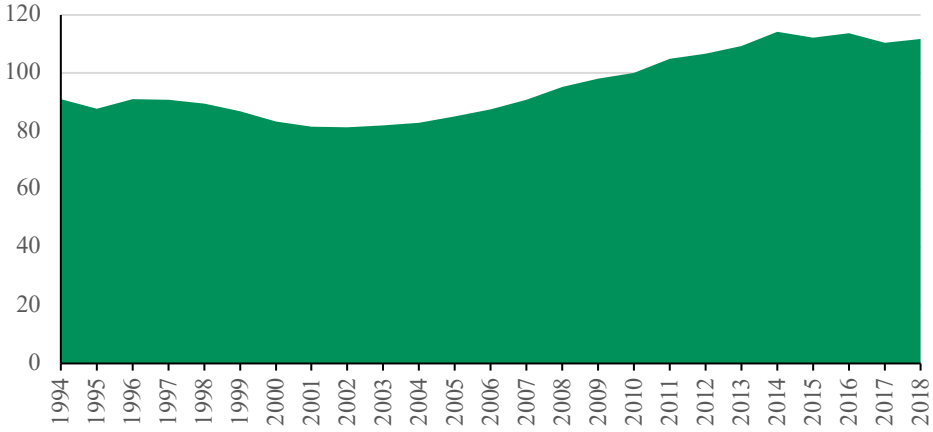
Fig. 2: Public sector headcount (millions)




Kerr & Wittenberg's (2017) analysis shows trends which make prospects for the functioning of Greene's theory slim: public sector employment remained relatively flat in absolute terms and declined as a proportion of total employment from 1994 until the global financial crisis in 2008. From 2010 to 2015, public sector employment rose both in absolute terms and as a proportion of total employment (Kerr & Wittenberg, 2017). Both the South African Reserve Bank's (2021) public sector employment index (Figure 3) and the National Treasury's (2018)

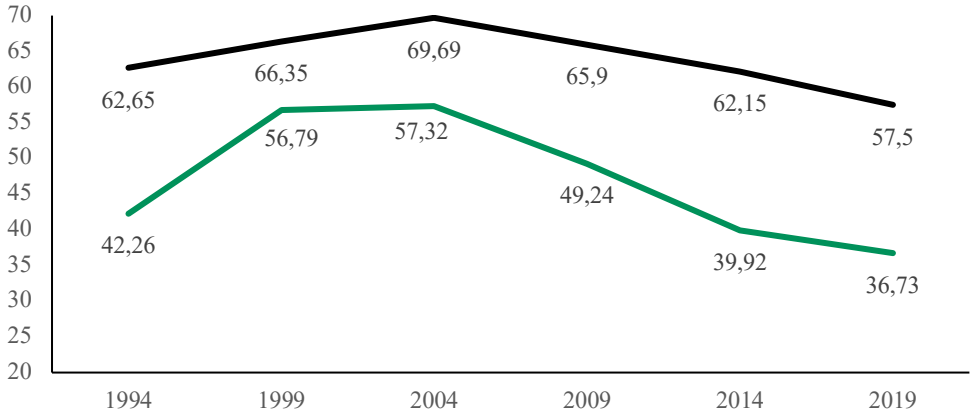
payroll headcount (Figure 2) confirm the obvious growth in the public sector from 2009 onwards. Compensation of public employees in real terms also expanded by 45% between 2007 and 2020, and the average salary level of public servants increased nearly one full rank in that time (National Treasury, 2020).

Fig. 3: SARB Public Sector Employment index (2010=100)




In sum, the opportunities for patronage increased substantially during the Zuma presidency – and yet the ANC's vote share and non-electoral dominance both declined, even as the scope for patronage increased. The gap to the largest opposition party also narrowed from 57% in 2004 to 40% in 2014 (Fig. 4). This suggests that resource advantages (which the ANC undoubtedly had over its challenger parties) are an insufficient means of explaining the persistence of the ANC's dominance and its decline. However, it is possible that the proxies utilised do not correctly reflect the scope for patronage, or that other variables are intervening in the relationship. To control for this possibility, this dissertation undertakes a case study of the operation of the national patronage system during the Zuma presidency.

Fig.4. ANC vote share (black) and gap to official opposition (green)



## 6.4. The ANC under Zuma: expanding patronage, declining dominance

Greene's (2010: 46) search for a general theory leads him to propose proxies for understanding the availability of patronage, including state control of the economy. However, patronage is not a phenomenon well suited to cross-country comparison, as the methods by which it is obtained and used are usually specific. This section seeks to understand the operation of the ANC's national patronage system during Jacob Zuma's presidency, when it was arguably at its most extensive, through a case study analysis.

Beresford (2015: 232) identifies "gatekeeper politics", i.e. the control of access and opportunities by political leaders in order to further their political or economic ends, as a feature of the ANC as a party and as a government. Political leaders (patrons) distribute resources and opportunities through their support networks (clients) to attain political power, and then use this political power to service their clients and regenerate their own resources through access to state spoils (Beresford, 2015: 229). Beresford divides this into two dimensions: spoils consumption and crony capitalism.

Spoils consumption involves the attainment of public office based on the economic and resource benefit it can provide to the office holder and their network (Beresford, 2015: 232). This has manifested itself in the ANC in the direct use of resources for personal enrichment (at all levels of public and political office), as well as the clientelistic distribution of state and party employment to political networks (Beresford, 2015: 233).

Crony capitalism involves the use of public office to facilitate private accumulation, either for the office holder, their private or political networks, or both (Beresford, 2015: 236). This is common to the political process at national, provincial and municipal level, most notably via the government's tendering process (Beresford, 2015: 236). ANC-deployed decision-makers in the civil service or elected office often privilege bids that service their personal interests, politically or economically, and use emergency procurement or closed tendering processes to award state contracts to the parties that form part of their networks (Beresford, 2015: 236).

Patronage in the ANC has been by no means the preserve of Jacob Zuma: Mbeki dispensed powerful or lucrative positions to loyalists across his presidency, and irregularities in state procurement were not uncommon, if not on the same scale and scope as during the Zuma regime (Suttner, 2009: 117). However, when Mbeki came to power, the "big four" SOEs (Denel, Telkom, Eskom and Transnet) accounted for 91% of parastatal assets and employed 77% of all parastatal employees – and yet Mbeki sought to privatise Eskom and successfully privatised parts of Telkom (Southall, 2007: 206). While Eskom was never successfully privatised, it seems clear that the logic of Mbeki's ANC was not to maximise state participation in the economy, preferring relations of what Evans (1995) terms "embedded autonomy" with existing corporate conglomerates and an emergent "national patriotic bourgeoisie" to centralisation or *dirigisme*. To wit, 18 enterprises were privatised, wholly or partially (with empowerment stakes often built into these sales), between 1997 and 2004, returning between R29bn and R35.5bn, of which at least R12bn was used to settle legacy debt (Southall, 2007: 209). While the entry of black senior and middle management and procurement from BEE-compliant companies was clearly part of government's strategy at SOEs, its policy of "rationalisation" often led to numerous retrenchments and downsizing of the workforce, limiting the possibility of using the state sector as a means of distributing expansive patronage (although senior appointments were focused on ANC-linked figures, including former MP Saki Macozoma and Maria Ramos) (Southall, 2007). Patronage during the Mbeki era, at least as far as the national ANC was concerned, was mostly highly centralised and used to reward loyal supporters or placate opposition. Elite bargaining and the centralisation of power in the ANC Presidency reduced the importance of factional competition, as Mbeki himself would often appoint premiers and mayors against the wishes of provincial or regional list processes, and deployment to political office was a highly centralised process (Gumede, 2008: 42-43).

Swilling & Chipkin (2018) detail the extension of the "national patronage system" under Zuma – but the destination of the patronage, unlike in the case of Greene's PRI, was chiefly to political individuals rather than for party purposes. The logic of the "controllers", i.e. Jacob Zuma and the Guptas, was to consolidate a power elite with the ability to attract, move and control resources around themselves, not around the ANC (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 30). Indeed, this is evident in that Zuma's cabinet reshuffles of 2017 and his forcing through of the appointment of Brian Molefe as Eskom CEO either disregarded or directly contradicted the desires of his party (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 30).

A key component of the expansion of the patronage system surrounding Zuma was the longer-term "hollowing out" of the state, and expansion of tendering service delivery and state procurement to the private sector (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 45). Private-sector actors were subsequently established by Zuma-linked elites, most notably the Gupta family, and tender processes were manipulated to facilitate the extraction of resources from the state.

A matter of specific concern for the incumbent Zuma-linked elite was the expansion and proliferation of hard-to-control patronage networks at municipal and provincial level, which created elites that were not necessarily dependent on the national party for patronage opportunities (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 47). Olver (2018: 279) notes the four-fold expansion of municipal budgets between 1997 and 2017. When combined with extensive contracting out of services and the capacity of municipal councillors to appoint municipal managers and the managers reporting to them, the likelihood of municipalities becoming a site of rent extraction was high (Olver, 2018: 280). Zuma was particularly concerned with centralising control of rent-seeking at the national level, and was favourably disposed to the use of state legal processes to shut these down: Pravin Gordhan was repeatedly deployed, both in Limpopo and Nelson Mandela Bay, with a mandate to investigate and shut down independent patronage networks (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 47). Conversely, local and provincial patronage networks that were linked to Zuma's elite system were allowed to flourish, especially in the case of Zuma's provincial support bases in the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal.

The logic of resource extraction from the fiscus avoided processes where budgets and expenditure plans could be extensively scrutinised. This drove the use of security and intelligence budgets, usually sealed for security purposes, and SOEs, whose budgets are not subject to the same parliamentary scrutiny as national departments (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 51). Resistance to major extractive activity was provided by National Treasury, which prompted both attempts to replace non-compliant Ministers of Finance (Gordhan and Nene chief among them) and the centralisation of procurement through the establishment of an Office of the Chief Procurement Officer (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 52). Appointments to senior state positions (SOE boards, SOE executives, departmental heads and deputy heads) were reliant on the individual's integration into patron-client networks with Zuma and his allies, and their willingness to implement whatever policy or spending programme Zuma desired. Loyalty of clients to the patron was richly rewarded: Mosebenzi Zwane, a relatively unknown provincial politician who had facilitated the Estina Dairy deal, was appointed

Minister of Mineral Resources to the surprise of even senior ANC members (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 84). Opposition to the expansion of patronage networks was met with removal, replacement or marginalisation through means legal and extra-legal.

Alleged incidents of direct payments to the ANC from SOEs also occurred, including a potential R80 million payment from Transnet to the party after a lucrative locomotive contract was tendered (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 71).

Procurement expenditure ballooned in size and the points from where it could be dispensed after the abolition of the State Tender Board in 2000 (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 106). The move to centralise procurement again under Zuma was in line with the Treasury's desire for a more central approach in order to minimise chances for corruption – except Zuma and his allies preferred central procurement as a means to locking out competing patronage networks and gaining more comprehensive control of rents (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 107). State procurement expenditure from departments was subject to more constitutional and parliamentary controls than that from SOEs. SOEs were thus the site of a rapid expansion of procurement expenditure, especially Transnet and Eskom, financed by the extension of government guarantees and debt (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 112). At Transnet, the R51bn procurement of locomotives for freight purposes included massive intermediary and consultancy fees to Gupta-owned companies (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018). At Eskom, coal supply contracts were taken over by Gupta-linked companies and inflated well above previous costs, as well as the use by the Guptas of Eskom tenders awarded as a means to purchasing mines they would subsequently use to service these tenders (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 116). This was facilitated by the appointment of pliable or complicit executives by Zuma or his allied ministers - in turn, the Guptas financed ANC activities and cut in political elites who facilitated the extraction.

Pliable or complicit law enforcement agencies were a major component of this extraction: both SARS and the NPA were weakened through the appointment of Zuma-aligned directors, the dismantling of units and the targeting of staff that jeopardised the extractive activities of patronage networks (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 122). The Hawks and intelligence agencies were used to undermine or target opponents of Zuma in the civil service, including Ivan Pillay, Johan van Loggerenberg (both SARS officials) and Johan Booysen (a Hawks general) (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 123).

The Zuma era also witnessed in earnest the establishment of a "parallel state", or rather several competing parallel states, all using the formal processes of state to legitimise their private interests. This was made evident in the proliferation of "kitchen cabinets", structures in and around cabinet comprised of Zuma loyalist ministers, security elites, provincial political elites and other power elites involved in extraction from or through the state (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 119-120).

Naidoo (2017: 23) notes the rapid expansion of state posts at governmental level: the number of ministerial and deputy ministerial posts proliferated rapidly after Zuma's 2007 victory, as did the number of personnel employed in ministerial departments. Patronage pressures on Zuma and his allies post-Polokwane were high, as there was an expectation of compensation for those who had carried Zuma to victory, and patronage was also deployed to Mbeki-era elites willing to integrate into the new political dispensation (Naidoo, 2017: 23). Given that ministerial staff are often seen as "confidence appointments", i.e. those whose loyalty the minister can count on, the expansion of ministerial staff can also be read as a means to service patron-client relations. The Senior Management Service, intended to give effect to the New Public Management reorganisation of state, has also ballooned in size (Swilling & Chipkin, 2018: 122).

Statistics show significant expansion of public procurement expenditure as a percentage of GDP from the inception of Zuma's presidency onwards (Brunette, Klaaren & Nqaba, 2019: 9). The expansion of the "contract state", where the state tenders out increasing amounts of services and responsibilities, has been accompanied by the expansion of procuring entities: over 1000 existed in 2017, producing over a million contracts annually (Brunette, Klaaren & Nqaba, 2019: 9). The overwhelming majority of irregular expenditure occurs in procurement both nationally and municipally (Brunette, Klaaren & Nqaba, 2019: 9). This presents two major issues: the size of spoils available from the diversion of public procurement for private gain has increased substantially, while simultaneously procurement authority has become increasingly diffuse. This introduces a combination that is not only damaging for service delivery, but actually damaging for the incumbent faction in the ANC: the opportunities for rent are immense but are also extremely diffuse, which makes centralisation of spoils as a mechanism for party control and factional management almost impossible to achieve.

In sum, it would appear that the ability of the ANC to control rents and dispense patronage was at its highest during the Zuma presidency – this is somewhat confirmed by the growth of procurement expenditure and staffing at SOEs from 2009 onwards, as well as the expansion of the public sector and its wages. The expansion of budgets, staffing and wages cannot be solely interpreted as an illegitimate attempt to divert funds from the state - but it at the very least increases the possible scope for patronage, at least in terms of Greene's theory. The high level of politicisation of the civil service allowed for extraction of rents from the state, and indeed the use of law enforcement and investigative capacity to target opponents to the patronage network.

This chapter has attempted to test as robustly as possible for the impact of patronage on the ANC's sustained dominance. Completely negating the effect of patronage in electoral victories is incorrect: all parties rely on the promise of state positions and the money and power that this entails to appeal to elites in the party. They also make policy promises and distribute goods to voters in ways that benefit their voter base. However, the issue in question is whether patronage can be deployed as a means to skew electoral outcomes in the favour of the dominant party through policy firefighting and outcampaigning the opposition due to resource advantages. Greene also advances that the skewed electoral market produces niche challenger parties incapable of competing with the dominant party, as elites seeking office and who are therefore more likely to adopt median voter preferences will gravitate to the party that can offer them material (power or financial) rewards.

None of these hypotheses seem to operate in the South African context. The ANC increased its electoral majority and the gap between it and the official opposition between 1994 and 2004, even as public sector employment declined and compensation remained stagnant, and state-owned enterprises were privatised. The Mbeki government, although it unquestionably encouraged centralised patronage and promoted the integration of ANC-aligned elites into the "commanding heights of the economy" and the upper echelons of the civil service, did not pursue patronage as its key political strategy. Indeed, it implemented fiscal consolidation and integrated South Africa into the global economy, which diminished its degree of control. By 2004, the ANC had a supermajority in Parliament, controlled all 9 provincial governments, and the nearest opposition party's vote share was nearly 60% less than the ANC's.

The logic of the Zuma presidency was the opposite: it expanded the size and pay of the public service, froze privatisations, expanded SOE budgets and procurement and borrowed extensively to finance this. Anecdotal evidence suggests the massive expansion of rent extraction from the state, bolstered by the sharp increase in adverse audit findings and irregular expenditure. It is clear that the price of tender irregularities was often substantial financial rewards to both individuals and the ANC as a party. The ANC's expensive and professionalised campaign machinery operated much as it did during the Mbeki regime (Butler, 2019a: 68). The use of state resources for campaigning became more explicit. Both the 2014 and 2016 electoral campaigns were well funded, and likely cost at least R500 million each (Booysen, 2015: 19). Despite all of this, the ANC's electoral fates declined substantially, and the opposition consolidated and expanded. Societal unrest and discontentment with the ANC also occurred on an unprecedented scale, leading Von Holdt (2013) to term South Africa a "violent democracy" and Alexander (2010) to speak of a "rebellion of the poor".

Clearly, the rising star of the ANC until 2004 and the decline in its dominance since 2004 are not dependent on the ANC's ability to access state resources. This seems puzzling, given that the power of money in politics is well-established (Butler, 2010: 1). Why has increased access to state resources not led to, at the very least, sustained dominance for the ANC? The following section will deal with potential explanations for the disjuncture between Greene's theory and the South African case.

# Chapter Seven: Explaining the ANC's declining dominance

Dominance is not a monocausal phenomenon. Any explanation of how it is sustained, or declines must acknowledge that a range of interacting factors contribute to the fate of a dominant party. However, there are some theoretical contributions likely to have more explanatory value than others: this chapter will first engage in an assessment of possible explanatory weaknesses in Greene's theory in the South African case, and subsequently examine the importance of intra-party politics in sustaining dominance. This chapter will advance the argument that factional dynamics have had a significant effect on the ANC's dominance and decline, informed by Boucek's (2014) typology and theoretical contribution of party unity as a "necessary but insufficient" condition for party dominance. A historical analysis of factional behaviour within the ANC is offered and linked to the expansion of the aggregate opposition vote. Subsequently, the expansion of the opposition due to its own strategic decisions is explained and linked to the inability of the ANC to manage internal dissent.

## 7.1. Greene's theory in South African context

Money matters in South African politics. That the ANC consistently outspends its rivals and can credibly make promises of material betterment to both its voters and prospective elites no doubt bolsters its electoral appeal. Its campaign machinery is also highly competent and well-funded. However, there are some clear issues with how Greene's theory "travels" in South Africa.

The first is the salience of race in South African elections: while categorisation of South African elections as "ethnic censuses" is overstated, especially given the trend of partisan dealignment (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019), race undoubtedly plays a part, especially in sustaining minority or niche parties. Competition of parties over multiple political cleavages complicates the Downsian voting behaviour that underlies Greene's theory.

The second is the importance of institutional arrangements: South Africa's electoral system is extremely permissive, which lowers the cost of exit for disaffected ruling party elites. Institutional arrangements within the ANC are also less amenable to the kind of elite pacts and

stability that defined the PRI in Greene's study, wherein PRI presidents had effective control of appointments across all senior political bodies. The PRI's mandatory leadership rotation also likely avoided scenarios that occurred in the ANC, where incumbents who held state positions faced off against prospective new leaders

The third is the availability of private capital, which Giollabhuí (2018a: 148) advances as key to the emergence of the DA as a challenger party attempting to compete with the ANC.

The final, and most important, factor that Greene's theory does not account for is the importance of internal party unity to party dominance. This is somewhat connected to the internal party arrangements present in the party. This chapter, informed by Boucek (2014) and Ibarra-Rueda (2013) advances an argument that the ANC's key electoral losses of dominance have been caused by the lack of internal party unity and mechanisms to address this within the dominant party.

## 7.2. Factionalism in the ANC, 1994-2019

Likely the tritest observation in South African politics is that "the ANC is a broad church". Nevertheless, it underlines an important commonality in dominant parties: they tend to be catch-all parties that draw elites and voters from multiple electoral groups (Greene, 2007: 37). The appeal of dominant parties generally is that they are able to build "dominant voting coalitions" by appealing to and incorporating multiple interest groups within their ranks (Boucek, 2014). As Boucek (2009: 455) argues, political parties are not unitary actors, and are subject to internal competition and pressures. Inherently, this suggests that dominant parties must manage conflicts of interest (ideological, material or political) between constituent interest groups in order to sustain their dominance. This section will examine how the national ANC has managed disputes between different interest groups, factions and in/out-groups. As Phadi, Pearson & Lesaffre (2018: 597) note, the term "faction" within the ANC describes *ad hoc* alliances between various power groupings or political elites at particular moments to achieve desired results, rather than immutable blocs or ideological tendencies which persist over the *longue durée*. As is common in the literature, given the frequency of multiple memberships and fluidity of elite groupings, Tripartite Alliance members Cosatu and the SACP are included in this analysis of factions in the ANC.

The longer a party remains in power, the more susceptible to factionalism it becomes, and the less likely respect for its own internal governance conventions becomes (Lodge, 2004b: 190). This factionalism is likely to be aggravated by party-state conflation that arises from a dominant party's perception of its own transformative mission (Lodge, 2004b: 190). Boucek's (2014: 3) major contribution seems relevant: party unity as a necessary but insufficient condition for dominance. She notes that "critical defections" are often the cause of regime transition away from one-party dominance (Boucek, 2014: 21). The effectiveness of elite activism within the party and the importance of splits are conditioned by electoral formulae and the predominance of the dominant party, as well as the competing coalition's size and importance in the party, all of which make up the exit costs of leaving the dominant party (Boucek, 2014: 21).

Cooper (2017: 1) advances an argument on leadership succession crises being inimical to party dominance: where leadership succession triggers "purging" (the marginalisation of elites based on their factional allegiance) the odds of party fragmentation increase, which in turn increases the likelihood of electoral defeat for the incumbent. Cooper (2017: 3) notes that dominant party losses often follow presidential succession crises combined with party splits. Cooper (2017: 4) adapts Hirschman's (1970) three-outcome approach on reactions to organisational decline, where an actor perceiving decline in an organisation can choose to do nothing (loyalty), resist or otherwise critique the organisation from within (voice) or leave the organisation entirely (exit). Fragmentation occurs where the benefits of exit outweigh the costs of leaving the dominant party.

Purges from positions in the party and state have an obvious effect on the options available to party elites: Cooper (2017: 4) submits that purges discredit the strategies of loyalty or voice, leaving exit the only remaining option. Certainly, this seems a convincing argument when developed. Full purges often entail the marginalisation of political elites from both political office and access to resources. Placed in this situation, there is little benefit for the elite in maintaining a strategy of loyalty, unless they intend to deploy a strategy of voice at a later stage, potentially contesting in a subsequent leadership selection process – but this involves a high degree of uncertainty and long waiting times out in the political wilderness. A voice-based strategy, where the purged elite resists internally, has little prospect of success where the incumbent faction has established its control over the party, although it may incentivise the

leadership to "buy off" the resisting elite for the sake of internal harmony. The prospects for exit in terms of political elites are reliant on a number of factors: electoral system, strength of the opposition, and what Cooper (2017: 5) terms the "minority faction's self-confidence", i.e. the faction's assessment of its chances of regaining office through a split. This analysis of Cooper's argument suggests that he is correct, and a purge of elites aligned (or not aligned) with a specific faction (defined loosely) does increase the chances of a party split. As he notes, South Africa's permissive electoral system and the lack of either fraud or political repression mean the costs associated with exiting a party are relatively low (Cooper, 2017: 6).

The above framework of exit, voice and loyalty, as well as the issue of party-state conflation and its consequences for internal party cohesion, will be followed in evaluating party cohesion in the ANC since its rise to power. The focus will be on leadership succession at the national level.

*Mandela Presidency: Elite bargaining ensures stability*

The Mandela era was made less complicated by Mandela's decision to serve only one term as state president, and therefore to retire as ANC President in 1997. Mandela and the senior ANC leaders around him had established a track record of achieving factional harmony through elite bargaining in the early 1990s, stressing the need to present a united front during negotiations with the National Party, and to hold the party together while the ANC established political dominance. Mandela and other ANC elders, fearing an intense and bruising internal battle, bargained for both Thabo Mbeki and Chris Hani to withdraw their bids for the ANC Deputy Presidency at the 1991 conference, and brought Walter Sisulu in as a compromise candidate (Gumede, 2005: 41). To minimise the potential for damaging leadership battles which could have introduced candidates the senior leadership saw as undesirable, candidate nomination thresholds were increased, and ANC leagues lost their right to submit nominations (Gumede, 2005: 51).

The major succession battle in the 1990s was for the post of President, between Mbeki and Ramaphosa, which played out long before the 1997 conference. Mbeki had positioned himself for the deputy presidency long before Ramaphosa, who was Mandela's preferred candidate (Gumede, 2005: 48). Even when Mbeki won the deputy presidency in 1994, Mandela sought to include Ramaphosa in government, potentially even the state deputy presidency – although

this option was quickly slapped down by Mbeki loyalists and Ramaphosa rejected a lesser post in cabinet, deciding to quit his Secretary-General role in 1996 after his role as leader of negotiations on the 1996 Constitution (Gumede, 2005: 48; Butler, 2019b: 352). Ramaphosa nevertheless did not openly undermine the party, nor did he choose to compete with it.

Cooper (2017: 7) poses the question of why the leadership battle between Mbeki and Ramaphosa to succeed Mandela did not trigger any kind of fragmentation. It seems that the answer lies in incentives for Ramaphosa to deploy a strategy of loyalty instead: firstly, his hold of political office was relatively secure – he was in the top 3 most popular candidates for NEC membership in both 1997 and 2002 (Butler, 2019b: 369). As Butler (2019b: 367) argues, Ramaphosa's age also allowed him to wait out a Mbeki presidency and still be appropriately young to challenge for office. Ramaphosa was also able to amass considerable wealth (with Mandela's blessing, and possibly even intervention) in the private sector, during the first wave of "voluntary empowerment" deals (Butler, 2019b: 368, 375) – wealth that would later stand him in good stead for his ANC leadership campaign.

*The Mbeki Era: Centralisation and Competition*

The Mbeki era witnessed rising internal competition for influence in the party and positions in the state, as the Government of National Unity ended, and the ANC began in earnest to transform the state to conform to its historical project. Internal harmony in the ANC under Mbeki was more achieved by centralisation of power in the presidency and dominance of party decision-making structures than by meaningful concessions, as part of Mbeki's attempts to modernise the party. Nevertheless, intra-party opponents were offered state or government posts to placate them and diminish the likelihood of splits. Exit costs from the ANC also remained extremely high at the time, after the rapid decline of most of the ANC's major opposition.

The change in frequency of ANC conferences from 3 to 5 years (to conform with periods between elections) was key in the management of the ANC, in that it increased the centralisation of policy-making and implementation in the NEC, rather than at a branch level (Gumede, 2008: 38). Mbeki also pushed, in 1997 (the beginning of his attempts to modernise and centralise the ANC), to align ANC branches with municipal wards (reducing the number of branches), and to give the NEC the power to dissolve any lower structures (Gumede, 2008:

38). In sum, the central organisation of the ANC (Luthuli House and the NEC) became significantly more powerful in 1997.

The logic of the Mbeki presidency was the centralisation of power and policy in the state and party presidencies, with Mbeki and a small group of trusted lieutenants dominating both the ANC as a party and government as a whole (Gumede, 2008: 41). For instance, Mbeki succeeded in giving the ANC Presidency the power to "appoint" premiers (through an ANC deployment system, not through a direct appointment in the state), and imposed his preferred candidates even where they were not the most popular candidate (Gumede, 2008: 42). Mbeki used this power to get rid of internal opposition and to prevent the formation of provincial patronage bases which could represent a threat to his hold on the party (Gumede, 2008: 42). Mbeki used similar powers over deployment to install his preferred mayoral candidates, and kept MPs on a much tighter leash than they had been before (Gumede, 2008: 43). Policymaking was tightly controlled by Mbeki through the location of policy units in his office, appointment of political allies to ANC policy committees, and the use of (state) presidential working groups, which meant that policies were introduced to Parliament as a *fait accompli* (Gumede, 2008: 45).

Mbeki also paid special attention to a strategy of co-opting any possible opposition, including a successful appeal to the New National Party which brought many of its elites into the ANC (although not many of its voters) (Gumede, 2008: 46). Mbeki was less successful in his appeals to the IFP, who eventually walked out of all partnerships with the ANC in 2006, and in his attempts to establish cordial relations with the DA (Gumede, 2008: 46). Mbeki was also not able to lock non-Cosatu unions (including Solidarity and the FEDUSA federation) into pacts (Gumede, 2008: 46). Nevertheless, it was clear that Mbeki sought to secure the obedience or complicity of as many interest groups as possible, either through incentivisation or through marginalisation and discipline. The upshot of seeking to keep the ANC as "catch-all" as possible was that Mbeki's major opposition in Cosatu and the SACP, who resented their declining relevance and their lack of power in the Tripartite Alliance, would become just another political lobby in an all-encompassing ANC (Gumede, 2008: 47).

Mbeki's downfall (and the first evidence of a kind of destructive factionalism) was his political miscalculation in dismissing then ANC and state deputy president Jacob Zuma, which was the catalyst for an explosion in opposition to Mbeki in both the Tripartite Alliance and in the ANC

grassroots (Gumede, 2008: 51). The disempowerment of the ANC as a party in favour of Mbeki and his allies in government had not seen much favour with lower levels of the party, who felt excluded from decision-making and deployment (Gumede, 2008: 52). The 2007 National Conference reversed many of the centralisation attempts made by Mbeki, with increased powers over deployment for lower levels of the ANC (Gumede, 2008: 52).

The Mbeki era also revealed the problems of an increasingly interlinked party and state for party cohesion. Steinberg (2014: 177) argues that the "high policing" (policing concerned with the integrity of state) function of SAPS became chiefly concerned with the policing of the ANC as an organisation. Similarly to Von Holdt (2013), Steinberg (2014: 185) notes that the combination of new networks of patronage and corruption and internal strife in the ANC meant that control of law enforcement assumed a new political importance: who was investigated, for what, and when, could determine who would control the ANC in the immediate and medium term. Mbeki kept tight control of the policing of ANC political life initially, only permitting the NPA and NIA, both controlled by political clients he trusted, to spy on members of the political establishment (Steinberg, 2014: 186). The arrival of Jackie Selebi as SAPS Commissioner heralded the expansion of the "policing" of the ANC by state structures, and SAPS' investigative capacity seemed to be turned on prominent political figures through covert operations (Steinberg, 2014: 186).

How did Mbeki manage to keep the party and Alliance together? Both Cosatu and SACP leadership repeatedly floated splitting off to compete electorally alone, and were vocal in their critique of Mbeki policies that contradicted workerist or left interests, including the organisation of a number of strikes against parastatal privatisation (Lodge, 2004b). Mbeki himself was also intolerant of dissent, and implemented the majority of his policy agenda with relatively little regard for the Alliance partners (Lodge, 2004b). One concern for union leaders and Communists may have been that positive sentiment for the ANC was actually much higher at the grassroots than among party and power elites, and that therefore a split would have little prospect of success (Lodge, 2004b: 200). Mbeki also extended olive branches to other unions and Africanist left-wing parties during his tenure, which may have been a strategy to provide some protection from new challenges on the left (Gumede, 2008). A lack of strong internal challenge probably also helped Mbeki to retain control for as long as he did: in the 2002 Stellenbosch National Conference, only incumbents were nominated for the top 5 national official positions, guaranteeing their victory (Lodge, 2004b: 211). A combination of ANC

traditions against explicit campaigning, Mbeki's use of law enforcement to scare off those with leadership aspirations who he did not endorse, and the inclusion of a sufficient number of elites opposed to Mbeki in NEC nominations, allowed for a conference where branches were not particularly assertive (Lodge, 2004b: 212).

Cherry and Southall (2006: 77) suggest that the ANC's inclusive leadership selection process encouraged disaffected union elites in Cosatu to seek to effect change from within the ANC, by contesting internal elections more regularly and encouraging more union members to take up party membership. There was also little interest among ordinary Cosatu members in breaking the Alliance (Giollabhuí, 2011: 591). Cosatu made it clear that their intention was to "stay and fight" in the Alliance, and marginalised hard-liners pushing for a breakaway or a referendum on leaving the Alliance (Pillay, 2008: 16). Prominent former unionists had managed to hold on to their party seats, with Cyril Ramaphosa highly placed on the NEC list in 1997 and 2002, and Kgalema Motlanthe installed as Secretary-General in 1997. Unionist elites not in government, including Ramaphosa and Johnny Copelyn, were also becoming increasingly wealthy due to the opportunities opened up by affirmative action (Pillay, 2008: 17). This was part of a broader trend of defusing political tensions by "deploying" out of favour cadres to the private sector (Butler, 2007: 41).

The SACP's reluctance to split may have stemmed from fears over its lack of competitivity as a political party, and the possibility that the ANC would comfortably win elections anyway (Giollabhuí, 2011: 591). SACP elites were also well accommodated by ANC candidate selection processes, and estimated its representation in the ANC parliamentary caucus at roughly 75 MPs in 2004, likely an overrepresentation due to the popularity of its senior figures among the ANC membership (Giollabhuí, 2011: 592). This kept SACP elites willing to compete within the Alliance, as they saw reasonable prospects for success in internal ANC elections.

One mechanism that sought to control factionalism was verticality in party decision-making, where the "top" of the party had increased scope to impose its will on lower structures (Lodge, 2004b: 214). Predictably, this worsened factionalism, as the capturing of party authority became increasingly high-stakes and leadership selection thus increasingly zero-sum. The relentless use of central power to control lower structures made a backlash all but inevitable (Butler, 2007: 45). Mbeki-linked elites shut down opportunities for debate and contestation at numerous junctures, driving fear amongst out-groups that lack of resistance may close their route to power permanently (Butler, 2007: 46). Mbeki also marginalised provincial elites by repeatedly appointing premiers that were loyal to him, rather than those who had topped provincial list processes (Gumede, 2005: 147).

For both COSATU and the SACP, calculations of voice over exit likely took place. Both Alliance partners were aware of growing dissatisfaction with Mbeki by ANC elites who did not form part of his in-group. Leaving the Alliance after the party had won nearly 70% of the vote and its two major challengers had collapsed would likely have relegated both groups to the political wilderness for at least 5 years, if not longer, and would have diminished their (already minimal) say in policy matters even further. With high costs of exit, and potential for the effective use of "voice" (i.e. internal dissent) at the 2007 Polokwane National Conference, a party split remained unlikely.

In both parties, it did not seem to be a groundswell of popular support, but rather elite dissatisfaction with Mbeki, that pushed a pro-Zuma agenda: a 2004 survey showed very limited support for Zuma in the ordinary ranks of the union (Pillay, 2008: 17). This is likely partly informed by the fact that unionised workers had mostly benefitted from the post-apartheid labour relations system, earning more and being retrenched less than their non-unionised counterparts (Bhorat & Khan, 2018). Cosatu and SACP elites saw Zuma as a useful rallying point against Mbeki, as part of their strategy for political contestation within the Alliance (cognisant that being out of the Alliance would likely diminish their influence and cut them off from the state) (Pillay, 2008: 18). This strategy delivered good returns at Polokwane, with two former NUM and SACP elites, Motlanthe and Mantashe, taking positions in the ANC Top Six (Pillay, 2008: 19).

For his part, Mbeki did little to manage factional tensions beyond the provision of government posts to some disaffected elites. Mbeki sought a third term as ANC president at Polokwane in what was most likely a bid to control the state presidency through an intermediary, or come as close as possible to state power as he could, given term limits. Mbeki also forced Zuma to resign his post as Deputy President, and at the very least encouraged state institutions to go after Zuma (whose record involving the Arms Deal was less than spotless), and campaigned internally in opposition to the "Zuma menace" (Butler, 2009b: 68).

Zuma for his part assembled a "coalition of the wounded" of a number of interest groups marginalised by Mbeki, most importantly Cosatu unions and most of the SACP, as well as disaffected ANC elites who Mbeki had excluded from political or state office during the course of his highly centralised presidency (of both party and state) (Butler, 2009b: 68). These leaders, the patronage networks surrounding them, and a number of nascent patronage networks seeking room to grow backed Zuma due to what it could bring them. Still other elites backed Zuma not because of what he was, but because of what he was not: Mbeki. The logic of Mbeki's dual presidencies had been extreme centralisation of political power, rents and patronage. Those Mbeki trusted and who implemented his policy and political agenda continued to be patronised, whereas those who opposed him were starved of political and economic opportunity. Zuma presented an opportunity for decentralisation of rents, and the removal of a host of executive powers Mbeki had accrued for himself (including the power to directly appoint candidates across all levels of deployment, which Mbeki had used to install preferred premiers and mayors across the country). An important marker that Polokwane was more a battle for power than for any deeply held policy outcome was evident in the "de-ideologisation" of the Zuma campaign for ANC president and the 2009 ANC campaign: there was little practical policy difference with Mbeki policy in either case (Suttner, 2009: 118). Both Cosatu and the SACP effectively abandoned many of their policy tenets as they aligned behind Zuma – perhaps in the hope he would prove to be a "useful idiot" – a miscalculation both of their own position and Zuma's political capacity.

Both Mbeki and Zuma were guilty of the use of state institutions to settle factional battles and compete in leadership elections. Zuma, for his part, used contacts in the NIA to circulate fabricated rumours around National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka being an apartheid spy, as well as fabricated communication suggesting the ANC senior leadership was targeting him; all of which played into the victim narrative he was building (Lodge, 2009: 129). Mbeki ordered a police investigation of perceived rivals (including Mathews Phosa, Ramaphosa and Tokyo Sexwale) for plotting to frame him for the assassination of Chris Hani, and the threat of implication in the investigation prompted a self-deprecating statement from Zuma stating his support for Mbeki (Lodge, 2009: 128).

ANC conventions dictate a muted campaign, at least in the public eye, where candidates pretend to be "called by the branches" rather than negatively campaigning against their opponents. Elite pact-making between wings of the Alliance also diminished contestation at conferences (Lodge, 2009: 133). Both of the above were notably absent during the later Mbeki years: concessions were not made; Mbeki held the party in a vice grip; and most significantly, Mbeki had not nurtured a credible successor for the party Presidency, preferring to stand for election himself (Lodge, 2009: 134). Mbeki's deployment of Zuma to manage relations with Cosatu and his dismissal of Zuma from government both effectively handed Zuma a platform to campaign on (Lodge, 2009: 134).

Lodge (2009: 136) proposes that the Mbeki-Zuma succession battle reflected the patrimonial nature of the ANC, wherein the battle is waged between support networks of specific candidates in the interest of future access to resources, rather than a meaningful ideological dispute. Calland (2006: 45) noted the increasing proportion of Xhosas in Cabinet, and the declining number of Zulu ministers, which allowed Zuma to assemble elites fearing more permanent exclusion on the basis of ethnicity behind him. Preferential procurement undertaken as part of affirmative action also roped in competing business interests: control of the ANC also entailed control of an immense state procurement budget, which business elites were not keen to be excluded from (Lodge, 2009: 136).

The Mbeki era denoted the introduction of highly competitive factionalism within the ANC. It is worth noting that, while factional disputes were present before 2005, they were mostly not damaging to the party's dominance, and clearly not to its electoral campaigning. The party's coherence stemmed from central control and management by a small group of elites associated with Mbeki. As Giollabhuí (2011: 583) argues, this is not necessarily inimical to party cohesion, as long as this group considers factional balance when dispensing patronage. It is clear that, in Mbeki's case, concessions were few and far between. The cohesion of the Alliance and the party during this period is likely due to two factors: the first was the high exit cost of entering a political market which Mbeki's ANC had all but monopolised, with no challenger parties remaining that were not rooted in niche constituencies. The second was the inclusive leadership selection process that the ANC's national conferences represented. This made a strategy of "voice" more appealing than party exit.

*Zuma Era: The Centre Cannot Hold*

Zuma's ascension to power at Polokwane and clean sweep of Top Six positions was followed by the conspicuous absence of a number of Mbeki-aligned elites from the party's major structures, most notably former Minister of Defence and losing Secretary General candidate Mosiuoa Lekota, although a number of ANC stalwarts (including Trevor Manuel & Joel Netshitenzhe) were kept in the NEC through conference-floor lobbying, limiting the number of disaffected elites (Butler, 2009b: 70). Cosatu President Willie Madisha, the premiers of both the Western and Eastern Capes and ANCWL President Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula were all removed from their positions in the aftermath of Polokwane (Cooper, 2017: 7). When Mbeki stepped down as President, much of his Cabinet and Gauteng Premier Mbhazima "Sam" Shilowa resigned with him (although it is unclear whether the Ministers were pushed, or went voluntarily). A number of ANC deployees who were (or were perceived to be) loyal to Mbeki in the public service were purged as well (Butler, 2009b: 69). Combined, this triggered the party split of elites who would form the Congress of the People (COPE).

COPE officials interviewed by Cooper (2017: 7-8) cited the closure of political space for dissent and the removal of Mbeki-supporting elites post-Polokwane as incentives for them to split off the party. Popular discontent with the incumbent was also beginning to increase, despite its rock-solid electoral majority, which doubtless fed into the calculation of marginalised ANC elites in opting for exit rather than voice (Cooper, 2017: 9). In essence, the

prospects of "voice" were relatively minimal given Zuma and his allies' firm control of party structures, and "loyalty" offered little reward for Mbeki elites (given their marginalisation from decision-making), making the likelihood of a party split high once they lost control of the "ANC in government" – which indeed was what happened. This argument is somewhat sustained by the fact that the majority of elites defecting to COPE had been or would be excluded from ANC structures or government positions, whereas the Mbeki elites who had been elected to the NEC or retained in government (including some of Mbeki's closest allies, Trevor Manuel and Joel Netshitenzhe) chose loyalty and voice over exit. Mbeki himself, once his strategy of undermining Zuma's party leadership from his position in government had failed (i.e. "voice"), had little incentive for exit: he could not serve another term as President, and was probably aware that COPE was unlikely to be capable of unseating even a highly divided ANC. The relative weakness, division and niche constituencies of the existing South African opposition also minimised defections to established and funded parties (Cooper, 2017: 14).

The creation of "two centres of power", due to the ANC's Conference being roughly 15-16 months before national elections, created major incentives to continue factional battles through means outside the party, including law enforcement agencies, Parliament, and purges of state officials perceived as taking one side or another (Cooper, 2017: 8). The NEC, led by a number of Mbeki's bitterest enemies, including Ramaphosa, Tokyo Sexwale, Mathews Phosa and Blade Nzimande, seized on Chris Nicholson's ruling suggesting political interference on the prosecution of Zuma to "recall" Mbeki from his state presidency, triggering the COPE breakaway (Butler, 2019b: 429; Lodge, 2009: 131).

COPE's emergence presented a unique threat to the ANC: comprised mostly of former ANC elites and other elites who had been involved in the struggle, it could campaign with a similar "moral authority" to the ANC, and its targets were generally the anti-Zuma middle classes, as well as those disappointed by poor service delivery from the state (Ndletyana, 2010b: 39). It was likely the first party to directly challenge the ANC for one of its core constituencies on a national level. While internal leadership squabbles and certain policy choices (for instance, renouncing affirmative action) harmed COPE's prospects, it nevertheless earned a significant (although to its leaders, disappointing) vote share in the 2009 elections (Ndletyana, 2010b: 42). COPE's risky strategy of poaching political elites from the ANC embarrassed the incumbent's leadership and forced the dominant party to spend its time "sniffing out" potential defectors rather than organising its 2009 campaign; although defections were not always permanent

(Ndletyana, 2010b: 43). COPE eroded the ANC's support in a number of provinces, despite disappointing performances in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga (Ndletyana, 2010b: 45). It seemed to appeal to two core ANC constituencies, the unemployed and low-income earners (Ndletyana, 2010b: 46). However, Ndletyana (2010b: 48) convincingly argues that COPE's successes were mostly present where there were high levels of factional competition within the ANC, and thus where its strategy of poaching ANC elites was most successful. A number of the elites COPE recruited were those who had lost internal ANC leadership elections or had supported losing candidates, and thus been marginalised from provincial structures (Ndletyana, 2010b: 48). COPE's lacklustre campaigning was also partly driven by a lack of resources: as a new party, it could not receive funds from the RPPF, and maintained a policy of donor disclosure that likely did not sit well with many potential donors (Ndletyana, 2010b: 50). In turn, internal factionalism led to a number of leadership defections and resignations within the party, and its eventual electoral irrelevance (Ndletyana, 2010b: 53). Nevertheless, the aggregate vote for the opposition expanded due to COPE, and it would appear that a number of its voters never went back to the ANC.

Ebrahim Rasool, ANC Premier in the Western Cape and by all accounts a reasonably popular figure, especially amongst the key swing demographic of Muslim voters, was ejected from his position in 2008 for his association with Mbeki during a damaging battle for control of the provincial ANC that has never been fully settled (Ndletyana, 2010a: 2). Internal divisions in the ANC prevented effective campaigning, and allowed the DA to capitalise by appealing to disaffected coloured voters (Africa, 2010: 5). The Western Cape's combination of high voter turnout, unique demographics and lower partisan affiliation made its elections highly competitive and thus subject to swing voting (Africa, 2010: 9). The folding of the NNP's grassroots structures into the DA in the early 2000s, despite the collapse of the NNP-DA alliance, and the DA's consistent campaigning allowed it to expand its popularity in the province, making it a realistic choice for voters seeking an alternative to an ANC-run province (the NNP elite's transition into the ANC made it the only other major party in the province) (Africa, 2010: 19). COPE made limited inroads on the ANC's constituencies in the 2009 election (Africa, 2010: 21). The ANC's campaigning was also harmed by Zuma's unpopularity in the Western Cape, which allowed the DA to run a negative campaign (Africa, 2010: 22).

The COPE split and elite marginalisation leading up to it may have hurt the ANC's electoral fortunes, and probably lost it the Western Cape for good, but they also permitted stabilisation

within the party: factional purging slowed, and Mbeki-aligned elites who remained in the ANC could now credibly threaten defection, which made compromise outcomes between ANC factions more commonplace (Butler, 2019b: 430). It also provided a unifying "common enemy" for the ANC to campaign against (Booysen, 2009: 86). Continuity of Mbeki-era policies, the retention in Motlanthe's cabinet of all ministers willing to remain, and the appointment of Trevor Manuel (much to the disappointment of Cosatu and the SACP) as Minister of the National Planning Commission indicated a willingness to compromise and spread patronage across factions (Suttner, 2009: 119; Butler, 2019b: 431).

The second party split of the Zuma presidency, of Julius Malema and associated elites, is arguably the more significant. Cooper (2015: 156) advances that the demise of Malema and his allies was less due to political pressure exerted by the ANCYL on Zuma, and more to do with Zuma's desire to marginalise Malema due to the perceived threat he posed to the continuity of Zuma's leadership. It is unclear that the two factors were not related: Malema's changing position on Zuma reflected an appreciation of the growing importance of the Youth League, and an attempt to undercut Zuma's support by shifting the party closer to ANCYL policy (Lodge, 2014: 15; Butler, 2013: 14). Zuma achieved Malema's ouster through party structures rather than personal intervention, aided by ANC elites fearing further radical brinksmanship from Malema which would jeopardise their positions, and an Alliance that was being divided by him (Cooper, 2015: 156). However, the expulsion of Malema from the party and the predictable factional struggles it engendered in the electorally important ANCYL were unquestionably bad for the party's electoral prospects and its societal dominance. The South African youth was already disaffected with the ANC – Malema's expulsion would create an outlet for their anger. In the short term, however, it delivered the gains Zuma desired: the "Forces of Change" and associated anti-Zuma groupings arrived at Mangaung in disarray, and Zuma's candidate slate made a clean sweep of Top Six positions, comfortably defeating its opposition (Cooper, 2015). Evidently, no choice of "voice" or "loyalty" was available to Malema and his allies, as they were ejected from the party.

Factional disputes and organisational weakness substantially affected the ANC's 2014 campaign machinery, despite its immense resource advantage over its opposition (Booysen, 2015: 16). Cosatu was internally divided, its anti-Zuma general secretary, Zwelinzima Vavi, had been silenced, and its largest union, Numsa, refused to campaign for the ANC (Booysen,

2015: 16). Cosatu's organisational strength had traditionally provided numerical strength for ANC campaigning – this was not the case in 2014 (Booysen, 2015: 16). The ANCYL had been a key factor in sustaining the ANC's electoral dominance in 2009, appealing to new voters, recruiting heavily in rural areas, and supplying willing volunteers for campaigning. It was all but non-existent in the 2014 campaign, given its implosion after the party ousted Julius Malema and Floyd Shivambu (Booysen, 2015: 17). The ANC also had to deal with the emergence of the EFF on its left flank, and a DA that had absorbed most COPE voters on its right (Booysen, 2015: 11). Both major opposition parties' strength was at least somewhat explained by the elite groups that had fragmented off the ANC since Polokwane. Despite spending roughly R500 million on the campaign, the ANC returned a (by its standards) disappointing result, dropping to 62,15% of the vote. It lost 9% of the vote in Gauteng, much of it to either the EFF (which won roughly 10% of the vote in working class townships, a major ANC constituency) or to a DA filling the gap left by COPE (Booysen, 2015: 28).

*Ramaphosa: The Return of Elite Bargaining?*

Booysen (2019: 2) makes the case that the Ramaphosa leadership succession process can be conceptualised partly as a strategic decision by some elites in the interests of retaining party dominance. The continued presence of Zuma (through surrogates), for ANC elites, brought the possibility of losing the ANC's electoral majority (as indicated by internal polling) (Booysen, 2019: 3). This prompted the choice to align behind Ramaphosa for the party Presidency – although it by no means translated into unequivocal support for Ramaphosa, nor did it deliver him a full slate victory at the 2017 Nasrec Conference. ANC elite fears had been stoked by continued erosion of support in 2014 national elections, and the ANC's catastrophic performance in 2016 local government elections (Booysen, 2019: 9). Zuma, unlike Mbeki, had more astutely invested his resources into cultivating a successor he could control, or at least one he could rely on to protect his interests: his ex-wife, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. Dlamini-Zuma was deployed to the African Union Commission as chairperson, at the cost of major political capital for South Africa (Booysen, 2019: 10). Zuma's support networks in provinces and leagues quickly aligned behind Dlamini-Zuma, and her record in government was talked up (Booysen, 2019: 10).

Ramaphosa's campaign for ANC presidency formally began in early 2017, although practically his campaign team was established in 2015 and his accession to the Deputy Presidency in 2012

can be seen as tactical positioning (Booysen, 2019: 11). Zuma's growing unpopularity within and without the ANC was aggravated by his repeated cabinet reshuffles to increase his access to state resources, and popular mobilisation against Zuma was widespread (Booysen, 2019: 12). This allowed Ramaphosa to benefit from a significant resource war-chest, donated by local business elites, to bolster his own financial muscle. Ramaphosa's campaign was primarily run on an anti-corruption platform, which resonated with voters and civil society, and prompted some Zuma-aligned elites to jump ship early on in anticipation of a political realignment in Ramaphosa's favour (Booysen, 2019: 14).

Elite bargaining and counter-campaigning ultimately delivered Ramaphosa the Presidency, with Deputy President hopeful David Mabuza promised support from Ramaphosa's delegates in exchange for a pro-Ramaphosa vote from his sizeable Mpumalanga contingent. Ramaphosa had strategically left the Deputy President position on his slate somewhat up for grabs. This suggests that an elite pact had been in the works for some time. Zuma supporter Ace Magashule's accession to the Secretary-General position was likely delivered by the expulsion of CR17-aligned delegates from KZN who supported Senzo Mchunu, and possibly represented a recognition amongst elites of the need for factional balance (Booysen, 2019: 17). The ANC senior leadership acted quickly to remove Zuma from the state presidency, fearing a repeat of the "two centres of power" that emerged in the Zuma-Mbeki succession era (Booysen, 2019: 18). Ramaphosa made room for a number of unaligned and Zuma-aligned political elites in his transitional cabinet, only acting to remove certain elites inimical to his platform after he had delivered a diminished but respectable ANC majority in May 2019's elections.

The immediate post-Nasrec period entailed the possibility of a party split. Elites on the Zuma side were aware of the possibility of a purge from at least the cabinet and other senior leadership positions, but announced their intention to stay put (Butler, 2019a: 71). Given the fine balance of power in the Top 6 and NEC, the odds of the Ramaphosa faction forcing a split were low, and indeed not really desirable. A new challenger party to the ANC would likely have caused the loss of a number of provincial majorities, especially Gauteng, and possibly even its national majority. A co-operative factionalism for purely electoral purposes emerged, with the Ramaphosa faction only pushing through the easiest leadership changes, and focussing on removal of Zuma-aligned civil servants in parastatals and law enforcement. The major purge of Cabinet and Parliament was reserved for after the 2019 elections, although political opponents out of government were given important positions in the party. The early

Ramaphosa era witnessed intelligent factional management by the party: Ramaphosa quickly co-opted the Zuma elites willing to switch sides, but did not leave his opponents out in the cold either. This created an environment where party exit and the loss of office it entailed was not desirable to Zuma's allies (or former allies). The upshot was that the ANC managed to hold on to its national majority and its provincial majorities in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, which would likely have been jeopardised by a purge of Zuma elites. Nevertheless, the ANC continued to haemorrhage votes due to lower turnout and the EFF's expansion into its political territory (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019).

*Perverse incentives: factionalism, ANC organisational process and decentralisation*

Factional competition has become an indisputable hallmark of the ANC at all levels. All parties have internal disputes – but why are the ANC's so persistent and so high stakes? This section attempts to understand the underlying causes of factionalism in the ANC.

Internal ANC competitions are more expensive than its national election campaigns, and provide for more elite alternation than general elections (Butler, 2019a: 76; Piper & Matisonn, 2009: 155). Cyril Ramaphosa's 2017 campaign cost at least R400m, and his opponent doubtless spent a similar amount, if not more (Butler, 2019b: 515). The freedom of party elites to control selection processes are highest in the closed-list proportional representation electoral system that South Africa has (Giollabhuí, 2018b: 983). In effect, there is no necessity for the ANC to democratise candidate selection outside of the party elite – so why does it do so? Giollabhuí (2018b: 983) suggests that ANC leadership elections may be a kind of "competitive clientelism", which institutionalises factional competition for access to state resources, thus stabilising the party. While the conference system (which exists at all levels of the ANC) may institutionalise factional competition, its stabilising effect on the party is more debatable.

Nevertheless, the ANC has sought to bring political contestation (over ideology and resources) *within* its structures, following the congress model and the experience of most dominant parties (Reddy, 2014; Giollabhuí, 2018b: 986). It is thus imperative that the ANC provide a mechanism to regulate this internal political contestation (Giollabhuí, 2018b: 987). The ANC's use of a (highly flawed) electoral system has a few upsides: firstly, although it is common cause within the party that branch elections are manipulated (Butler, 2015), the decisions of the conference, especially those regarding leadership elections, are generally respected by all ANC

elites. Secondly, the conference leadership selection system allows for a path back to power for excluded elites, which incentivises them to continue to contest for power within the party, rather than splitting off (Giollabhuí, 2018b: 987). Certainly, the Conference provided a chance at inclusion in party structures for many marginalised elites during the Mbeki period, including Jeremy Cronin and Mathews Phosa (Lodge, 2004b).

The Conference has also overseen leadership transitions and marked changes in factional balance in relative calm – both Mbeki and Zuma accepted their losses at the conference quickly, and did not seek to discredit the conference result. This is likely in part due to the use of an independent electoral commission to run the actual electoral process (Giollabhuí, 2018b: 988). Factional battles at the conference are generally concentrated on delegate accreditation, which has proven vulnerable to factional manipulation and the expulsion of delegates from factions opposed to those controlling Conference processes (Butler, 2015: 28). Most of the attempts to manipulate conference outcomes take place at branch and province level in the leadup to conference, as ghost memberships, parallel branches and meeting collapses are key tactics to secure the conference delegates that can be "trusted" by local, regional and provincial elites to vote favourably at the conference (Butler, 2015). This can often lead to the arrival of multiple sets of delegates from the same branches, or delegates from branches which either do not exist or are not "in good standing".

Giollabhuí (2011: 582-583) advances the argument that the shift to an inclusive and decentralised selection mechanism for the ANC leadership and lists at all levels positively impacted the ANC's party unity. It is not clear that this was the case: the rich rewards granted by attaining leadership at any level of the ANC, and the use of leadership slates made elections both important and zero-sum, and elite bargaining lost salience (Olver, 2018: 282). The shift to significant decentralisation of party processes that took place at Polokwane triggered increasing factionalism in the party and organisational decay, especially at branch and provincial level. In poorer provinces and municipalities, where politics often represents one of few means of social mobility, incentives for competition are even higher (Ndletyana, 2015: 104).

The outcome of the high stakes attached to ANC elections have been predictable: vote-buying, manipulation of due process, violence and party instability. Then Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe (2017: 14) decried vote-buying in his 2017 Organisational Report to the ANC's

National Policy Conference, noting that

> "*Money has replaced consciousness as a basis for being elected into leadership positions at all levels of the organisation*"

The power of a faction in the ANC is dependent on the resources under its command: funding of the ANC as a whole is increasingly limited, while the channelling of resources to factions has expanded massively (Olver, 2018: 283). This means that the funding of activities that used to be party-funded is now the responsibility of factions: they pay for their delegates' conference stays, transport and conferences (Olver, 2018: 283). More importantly, factions provide the resources for "mobilisation" to their supporters: airtime, transport, food, apparel and campaign material (Olver, 2018: 283). This speaks to increasing decentralisation of rents and the supplanting of party loyalty with factional loyalty.

Butler (2015) argues that the expansion of ANC membership in and around major leadership selection processes is driven by political elites at the branch, region and province level seeking the entrenchment of their political power and access to resources through the manipulation of ANC electoral processes. ANC membership expansions are also generally aligned around the "home bases" or major support reservoirs of elites contesting for the ANC Presidency – for instance, the Eastern Cape (Mbeki) and KZN (Zuma) both saw marked membership expansions pre-Polokwane (Butler, 2015: 21). Butler (2015) details a number of processes of electoral manipulation uncovered by ANC organisational investigations, including parallel branches (where factions both claimed control of the legitimate branch meeting), "bulk memberships" controlled by power elites, branch meeting boycotts to avoid quorum, avoidance of quorum to allow for meetings to take decisions without quorum, and ghost members who exist purely on paper. National leadership has often had little interest in correcting these organisational aberrations, and indeed seemed to at least turn a blind eye, if not actively encourage, manipulation that favoured their preferred outcome (Butler, 2015: 26).

While the ANC's conference selection mechanism has incentivised cohesion of the party as it provides an incentive for elites to compete within the party rather than leaving it, the decentralisation of power that occurred post-Mbeki has unquestionably damaged party cohesion. Provincial elites have gained increasing power within the party, and provinces have tended to vote in blocs, suggesting that provincial elites control branch nomination processes

directly or indirectly (Atkinson, 2015). While Mbeki's "presidentialism" and elite bargaining approach to party unity did not provide sufficient succour to his political opponents, and thus triggered a leadership challenge, the replacement has arguably not made the process more democratic, but merely expanded the elite bargaining process to include local intermediaries capable of branch control and manipulation. Notably, this suggests a possible contradiction to Ibarra-Rueda's (2013) approach to sub-national dominance, in which he proposes that decentralisation of power in the PRI allowed factions of the sub-national party to achieve cooperative factionalism more easily: this does not appear to have been the case with the ANC.

Lodge (2004b: 190) correctly predicted that party-state conflation and long periods of dominance would harm the ANC's party unity and give rise to factionalism. The incentives for cooperative factionalism outside of national elections declined from its rise to power onwards: there was no longer a unifying common interest, and different interests and ideologies fought for prominence more intensely. Mbeki provided stability to the party, but at the cost of near-complete control of its structures and its relationship with the Alliance, which marginalised too many powerful elites. Zuma's ability to secure cohesion was not as strong as Mbeki's, and the purging of elites, first those who would form COPE, and then the leadership of the ANC Youth League, might have been good for internal cohesion, but was bad for party dominance. The ANC's electoral decline under Zuma can, in large part, be explained by party splits and the ANC losing some of its "catch-all" character. COPE's emergence allowed the DA to win and consolidate its base in the Western Cape, and its collapse saw many of its voters choose the DA rather than the ANC. The loss of ANCYL elites harmed the ANC's campaigning ability, especially in poor and rural areas. That they decided to form their own party only aggravated the loss: the EFF has strong appeal to new voters and the urban poor, and pushed the ANC under 50% in a number of municipalities, opening the door to opposition coalitions.

It thus seems more convincing to ascribe the ANC's dominance and its decline to its ability to maintain a "catch-all" characteristic. Having a number of factions within one political party allows it to campaign convincingly to more interest groups, who may align more closely to some elites than others. Losing these factions in a party split both diminishes the incumbent's campaign capacity and reach, and creates potential opposition. In the case of the ANC, both of the above consequences materialised. Pre-existing opposition also benefitted by poaching elites and voters due to disaffection with the incumbent.

# Conclusion

*Findings and implications for literature*

This dissertation aimed to evaluate the applicability of Greene's resource theory of single party dominance in the South African context. It was first established that the ANC, due to political manoeuvres and patronage to lock opposition into the new democratic dispensation, was largely responsible for its own early dominance. That the ANC is currently dominant, although less so than before, was also established through its electoral record and its relationship with the "political, economic and social bases of control".

The major theoretical question undergirding this dissertation was "why do parties stay dominant?" Greene answers that parties achieve and sustain dominance through politicisation of public resources and the use of policy to preclude or weaken political opposition. Greene advances that, as hyperincumbency advantages accrue and the dominant party can access more resources, its recruitment and financial advantages skew the electoral market in its favour. The corollary of this is that party dominance will decline as the volume of public resources available to the dominant party declines.

The empirical problem this thesis sought to address was how to explain the ANC's dominance and its post-2009 declining ideological and electoral dominance. Greene's resource theory suggests that this should be associated with declining politicisation of public resources and policy dominance.

In order to apply this to the South African case, the ANC's politicisation of the public service and access to state resources for political purposes was detailed. It must be conceded that fully appreciating both the quantity and direction of patronage is inherently subject to uncertainty, given these flows are often concealed. Nevertheless, two key patterns emerged. The first was that the ANC has consistently made use of both public policy and accessed state resources for party political purposes. Sale of influence, promises of patronage and diversion of public funds to the party all sustained its massive resource advantage over challenger parties. The second was that there was a clear increase in the amount of patronage available to the party during the Zuma presidency. This was sustained both by the statistical proxies advanced by Greene, as

well as a case study of how Zuma's national patronage network operated.

The ANC expanded spending at all levels of government and parastatals during the Zuma presidency, and outspent its opponents on campaigning by huge margins. Yet its electoral and ideological dominance began declining in 2009 and continued to decline in 2014. The ANC's national vote share lost 7,5% between 2004 and 2014, a blow that was softened only by its consolidation of support in KwaZulu-Natal. Why?

This dissertation advances that the answer lies in intra-party politics. The expansion of the ANC's patronage capacity was accompanied by rising competition for party office at all levels. The decentralisation of party decision-making meant that rents were available to elites at municipal, provincial and national level, with relatively little oversight or enforcement down the hierarchy. This created a centrifugal effect on the party, where factions coalesced around the provincial and regional elites who controlled rents and were effective kingmakers at national level. Elites prioritised the interests of themselves and their factions ahead of the party, and funds were in fact concentrated in factions, and not in the party.

In addition to intense factionalism within the party, dissenting elites were not accommodated by senior leadership. The first evidence of party fragmentation was the senior leadership's handling of factional tensions after the 2007 Polokwane National Conference. Elites aligned with losing presidential candidate Thabo Mbeki (and some who were not, but whose ouster was convenient to the winners of Polokwane) were purged from positions in party and government, eventually leading to a factional breakaway and the foundation of COPE. COPE was likely the first party to compete with the ANC for its core constituencies on a national level. While its 2009 electoral performance disappointed and its internal problems consigned it to irrelevance by 2014, it nevertheless expanded the aggregate opposition vote substantially vote, and evidence suggests at least half of its voters did not return to the ANC.

Arguably more important was the (mis)management of tensions between the ANC Youth League's leadership and the party as a whole. The ouster of its senior leadership and its dissolution harmed the ANC's dominance in two ways. The first was the demise of one of its most powerful campaign tools, as the large and mostly rural ANCYL membership was demobilised. The second was the emergence of the EFF, a party that could appeal to new voters and the urban poor. The EFF has proven a more durable and significant opposition force than

COPE, and its local government performance helped remove the ANC from power in a number of metropolitan municipalities. Congress parties like the ANC derive some of their electoral appeal from their representativity of broader society, making factions a natural component (Reddy, 2013: 119). This makes factional management significantly more important to maintaining electoral gains.

In sum, while there is little doubt that access to state resources presents a potential political advantage to dominant parties, and has certainly allowed the ANC to comfortably outspend all of its rivals combined on campaigning, the management of rents and the intra-party competition their presence triggers is an important consideration. Greene's case study of Mexico presented a party whose institutional arrangements allowed both for rapid circulation of elites as well as highly centralised control of rents – and even with these advantages the PRI split. The ANC after 2007 presented none of these characteristics, with manipulation of conference processes at lower levels and the use of state resources to marginalise and target internal opposition commonplace. These factors likely prevented the aforementioned resource advantages from operating in the way Greene envisions, explaining the ANC's electoral decline. This suggests that party institutions are important to party dominance generally, especially where rents are concerned.

Dominance is a multicausal phenomenon, and, as Greene himself admits, different strategies will provide for dominance at different times. Certainly, the ANC's ability to provide state posts or lucrative business opportunities to almost all the elites who were disaffected during its nascent dominance allowed it to defuse tensions, and the extension of services to ordinary South Africans allowed its competent party machinery to run positive election campaigns. Some of the party's electoral success can credibly be attributed to its campaign machinery, which is a direct product of the productive use of the resource advantages it holds due to its dominance (Butler, 2019a). However, evidence suggests that the ANC's ability to present itself as a "catch-all" party through incorporation of multiple interest groups and factions was an integral part of its party dominance when it was at its most successful. In addition, politically imprudent management of internal dissent, both under Mbeki and under Zuma, and party disunity and fragmentation have the most explanatory value in assessing how the ANC's dominance declined from its peak in 2004.

*Concluding remarks*

Duverger (1964) and Greene (2007) present two diametrically opposed fates for dominant parties. To Duverger (1964: 312), dominant parties "bear within them the seeds of their own destruction". Greene's approach suggests that, as long as their access to resources remains relatively constant, dominant parties can rule more or less indefinitely. The truth probably lies somewhere in between.

Duverger's point correctly suggests that the vicissitudes of public office have a detrimental effect on parties that hold it for too long. In the case of the ANC, it has been evident that, as Lodge (2004b: 190) suggests, the longer it has stayed in power the less respect it has had for its own conventions, and the more factionalised and disunited it has been. The ANC's dominance outside of party politics has long been on the wane, as formal civil society balked at filling in for the party while its elites enriched themselves, and informal civil society took to the streets in protest more and more. Cosatu, the ANC's union ally, once represented 20% of South African workers – today it represents less than 10%. The party's increasingly incestuous relationship with the state under Mbeki and Zuma prompted party interference in affairs of state, and state interference in party politics, driven by both President's use of law enforcement as a political tool.

Nevertheless, as Greene proposes, the ANC's access to political power and the funds that come with it continue to allow it to buy off disaffected elites, make policy promises to its voters and run a party machinery that is unrivalled in size and reach in South African politics. It may lose its electoral majority in coming years, but predictions of its demise are premature: the literature has shown repeatedly that defeated dominant parties are more likely to return to power than they are to fade into irrelevance. If the ANC wants to remain dominant, however, it will have to meaningfully undertake the "Organisational Renewal" that its apparatchiks have been touting for years.

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