Citizenship and Inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Contours and Collective Responses

Carin Runciman[1]

Introduction

When the African National Congress (ANC) was elected in the country's first ever one person, one vote election in 1994 the newly elected President Nelson Mandela set out a vision for a post-apartheid South Africa of a 'people centred society… [in] the pursuit of the goals of freedom from want, freedom from hunger, freedom from deprivation' (cited in RSA, 1994: 6). In the shadow of the apartheid past, in which racialised inequalities were prescribed by law, the ANC undertook to remake South African society and in so doing forge a new form of democratic citizenship. The South African constitution was central to this and is often heralded as one of the most progressive in the world by virtue of its protection for social as well as political and civil rights. However, twenty years into South Africa's democracy inequality has by a range of measures increased (see Marais 2011: 208–211) and this seriously compromises the ability of poor, Black[2] South Africans, who were previously disenfranchised by apartheid, to claim social citizenship (Dawson 2010). This chapter provides an outline of the contours of inequality in post-apartheid South Africa and argues that the promise of democratic citizenship has been com-

---

2   This chapter follows the general conventions used in analysing 'race' in South Africa. Thus, the term 'Black' refers to all the non-white groups designated under apartheid (Black African, Coloured and Indian). While using these terms may run an acknowledged risk of reifying 'race', the particular history of apartheid means that these categories still have a lived reality both in terms of how people identify themselves but also in the enduring patterns of socio-economic exclusion. While it should be noted that poverty is not exclusively experienced by Black people it heavily racialised.

promised by a neoliberal development path. That is a development path in which the State expands and defends the role of the free market in such a way that economic rationalities seep into every area of social life (Harvey 2005; Von Schnitzler 2008). Linking the analysis of post-apartheid social and economic policy to the lived experience of informal settlement and township residents, this chapter demonstrates how the continuing and increasing inequalities serve to exclude poor, Black South Africans from democracy. Furthermore, the chapter reflects how this exclusion has formed the basis for collective political responses to rising inequality and situates this response as part of a global protest wave against inequality. The analysis developed in this chapter is based on research conducted over the last 5 years that theorises the politics of protest and social movements in South Africa.

Social and economic policy post-apartheid

When the ANC took power in a government of national unity in 1994 it faced stark social, political and economic challenges after centuries of white political domination and racialised economic exploitation. Measures of inequality are, of course, contestable and it is not the aim of this chapter to discuss the relative merits of different technical approaches to defining poverty and inequality and these debates can be found elsewhere. The indicators chosen in this chapter are intended to provide a broad picture of the contours of inequality in contemporary South Africa. At the beginning of a democratic South Africa the ANC faced considerable challenges;

- Unemployment stood at 36.1 % in 1995 with 46 % of Black Africans unemployed compared to 6.7 % Whites (Terreblanche 2002: 373).
- 24.9 % of the population lived on a monthly household income of under R 1 000, 99 % of these households were Black African and Coloured (Terreblanche 2002: 383).
- In 1994 an estimated 12 million South Africans (approximately a quarter of the population) did not have access to piped water and approximately 21 million people did not have access to adequate sanitation (Dugard 2010: 180–1).
- 49.1 % of the country's households had no access to electricity (Africa Check 2014).
- 1.4 million people, 16 % of the population, lived in informal dwellings (Africa Check 2014).

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was the centre piece of the new government's plan to forge a 'better life for all', the ANC's election slogan.

The RDP had initially been drafted by the ANC's alliance partner the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and was not only a programme of economic policies but an important symbol for national reconciliation, redistribution and reconstruction (Blumenfeld, 1997). The main impetus behind the RDP was to provide redress for decades of apartheid enforced poverty and inequality as well as to stimulate economic growth. As stated within the RDP document itself,

> the first priority is to begin to meet the basic needs of people – jobs, land, housing, water, electricity, telecommunications, transport, a clean and healthy environment, nutrition, health care and social welfare (RSA, 1994: 7).

The RDP had ambitious targets to create 2.5 million jobs within a decade, to build 1 million low cost houses by the year 2000, to connect 2.5 million homes to the electricity grid and to provide water and sewage facilities to 1 million households (Cheru, 2001). Although described as a 'left-Keynesian' document by Marais (2001), Williams and Taylor (2000) note that the redistributive content originally envisioned in the base document by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) had been significantly watered down within the final White Paper.

The RDP carried a heavy burden of expectation from all corners of South African society upon its shoulders. For the majority of ordinary South Africans the ANC's 1994 election slogan 'a better life for all' captured the essence of their hopes that the RDP would deliver much needed improvements to basic infrastructure and the provision of housing, water and electricity to the majority of the population. However, problems and weaknesses soon emerged. As Blumenfeld (1997) notes, the RDP white paper had presented a broad framework for socio-economic reform in which the fine details of actual implementation had either been left out or not worked out at all. Furthermore, the cabinet ministers tasked with implementing the RDP were largely without previous experience of government and this was compounded by the fact that the municipal and provincial tiers of government largely responsible for service delivery were still undergoing major programmes of de-racialisation and restructuring.

Despite this the RDP did achieve some gains although these were far short of the ambitious targets. During the two years of the programme 233 000 homes were built, 1 million people were connected to the water supply and 1.3 million were connected to the electricity grid (Cheru 2001). Furthermore, under the RDP, free lifeline tariffs were introduced for water and electricity and the tariff structures for these services were created to reflect 'relative affordability' (Egan and Wafer 2006). However, the scale and the need for basic services compared to delivery provided an easy opportunity for critics of the RDP to criticise the policy as unworkable. This was compounded by continuing economic instability with the Rand losing a

quarter of its value between February and July 1996. This strengthened the arguments of sections of the business community who called for a greater move towards neoliberalism (Williams and Taylor 2000). In what Adelzadeh describes as a 'panic response to the…exchange rate instability and a lame succumbing to the policy dictates and ideological pressures of the international financial institutions' (1996: 67), GEAR was introduced in 1996 as 'in keeping' (RSA, 1996: 1) with the goals of the RDP. However, for some commentators GEAR's prescriptions were startlingly similar to the economic models which had been proposed by the apartheid government only a few years earlier and reminiscent of failed structural adjustment policies that had been applied elsewhere by the World Bank and IMF (Adelzadeh, 1996; Bond, 2000).

GEAR proposed to reduce the deficit by restricting state spending, privatise some state-run enterprises and utilities and liberalise financial controls. GEAR envisioned promoting economic growth through expanding the private sector and boldly predicted average economic growth of 4.2 % a year with 270 000 jobs on average created a year (RSA, 1996: 5). The growth model proposed by the ANC also envisioned a greater role for foreign direct investment which required greater labour market flexibility and greater wage restraint (Lester et al, 2000). For Marais, the ANC's adoption of GEAR marked a 'momentous shift' (2011: 124) in the ideology of a party whose constituency was overwhelmingly based within those most affected by apartheid. However, as for McKinley (2001) the introduction of GEAR was merely confirmation of the direction which ANC policy had been moving in for quite some time.

When GEAR was introduced it was presented as being 'in line' with the goals of the RDP (McKinley 2001). However, as Marais highlights, 'GEAR set no redistributive targets and demurred on the linkage between growth and income redistribution' (2011: 116). Crucially, the introduction of GEAR had a significant impact on the structure and function of municipal governance, which carries the primary responsibility for the delivery of services. As a result of the fiscal restraints imposed by GEAR, significant reductions were made in the capital transfers made between national and local government. In 2005/6 only 4.6 % of the national budget was transferred to local municipalities. Increasingly municipalities are expected to deliver services critical for poverty alleviation, redistribution and economic growth from within their own tax base. Therefore, as van Donk and Pieterse (2006) note, the ability of a municipality to provide services rests on its ability to generate revenue from its tax base and is therefore contingent upon the degree of wealth or poverty within that base. Faced with reduced budgets and increasing responsibility for front line services many municipalities began cost cutting and cost recovery measures requiring the costs of providing services to be either wholly or partly recovered from the user. These changes unfolded at a time when GEAR had

failed to produce the expected levels of growth and unemployment remained high, particularly as a result of redundancies caused by trade liberalisation. McDonald (2002) reflects that the market logic of post-apartheid local government marked a distinctive break from that of the apartheid past in which a large proportion of services were subsidised albeit in racially disparate ways by the state.

Inequality in contemporary South Africa

The neoliberal development path set out in GEAR and in subsequent social and economic policies has prioritised economic growth and has reified inequalities. Furthermore, South Africa's reintegration into the global trade and financial markets after the decades of sanctions and boycotts during the apartheid years meant that it was hit hard by the global financial crisis. During 2008–2009 800 000 jobs were lost, significantly worsening the high unemployment that South Africa already experiences (Verick 2012). Despite this, in the campaign for the 2014 national government elections President Jacob Zuma claimed that South Africa had 'a good story to tell' twenty years into democracy. Indeed, there have been some important advances particularly in advancing the provision of water and electricity (see Africa Check 2014) however, the extension of this provision to low income households has not been without problems, as the rest of this chapter shall elucidate. Despite these gains, the harsh reality is that in twenty years of democracy and, regardless of which measures one uses, South Africa has become less poor but more unequal (see Marias 2011: 208–211).

- More than half the population (54 %), live on less than R 779 (€ 56) per person per month (StatsSA 2015).
- Average incomes are still heavily stratified by race, Black African households, which account for more than three quarters of the total numbers of households, earned less than half (44.6 %) of the total annual household income. In comparison, white households make up only 12.4 % of the total number of households, but earn two-fifths (40.1 %) of the total income (Stats SA 2012).
- The overall number of people living in informal dwellings increased is 1.9 million (13 % of the population), over 90 % of those living in informal dwellings are Black Africans (Census 2011).

While there have been some improvements in the living standards of South Africans, overall, as Marais argues, 'the racial patterns of income inequality remain so stark that one is tempted to question the demise of apartheid' (2011: 208). Indeed, as Dawson (2010) argues, the continuing intersections of race and class in South

Africa seriously compromises the ability of poor, Black South Africans, who were previously disenfranchised by apartheid, to claim social citizenship. This lack of transformation reflects that South Africa underwent a political but not an economic transformation in 1994, where it could be argued that a White political elite was substituted for a Black political elite that fundamentally left the economy unchanged, in other words still predominantly in the hands of white monopoly capitalism (Marais 2011).

Citizenship, inequality and class post-apartheid

T. H. Marshall's seminal essay, Citizenship and Social Class (1992), has formed the basis for much of the contemporary study of citizenship that has sought to link citizenship to a wider project of social justice and equality. For Marshall, citizenship is a status that comprises membership to the national community that creates a relationship of rights and duties between the individual and the state. However, the understanding of the concept has generally been grounded within a Western experience that does not reflect the politics, history and culture of states outside the Global North (Kabeer 2005). In addition, feminist scholars have criticised liberal conceptions of citizenship which often assume that rights within the statute books will automatically translate into social practice, making it appear as if social agents exist outside the realities of power and socio-economic exclusion (Dietz 1992). This critique is particularly salient under conditions of neoliberalism, which Ong (2006) has argued has fundamentally changed the basis of citizenship which is no longer achieved through membership of the nation state but through the entrepreneurship of the individual to enter into the market. Despite these criticisms, the idea of citizenship remains important due to its potential political importance as a concept. Ruth Lister argues, 'citizenship provides an invaluable strategic theoretical concept for the analysis of … subordination and a potentially powerful political weapon in the struggle against it' (1997a: 6). I argue this is particularly salient in the South African context where *de jure* segregation ended little more than twenty years ago and the ideas of equality encapsulated in the concept of citizenship are important not just as a political tool but also for analysing the lived experiences of post-apartheid citizenship.

High unemployment has been a consistent feature of post-apartheid South Africa. The expanded definition of unemployment in South Africa has since the early 2000s ranged from 34 % to 40 %. Internationally, the average unemployment rate of middle-income countries, such as South Africa, is between 5 – 10 % (Marais 2011: 177). Inequality in South Africa has not only been shaped by the specificities of the South African experience but also by global trends, particularly with

regards to how the world of work has been transformed post-apartheid with the rise in outsourced, casual and temporary forms of work. Von Holdt and Webster (2005) describe the South African class structure as an 'onion', in which there is a core of permanent workers in stable employment, then a layer of precarious, low wage workers and then on the outside a layer of people who are either unemployed or engaged in informal subsistence activities.

Precariousness is not only a feature of the lives of the unemployed in South Africa but is also acutely experienced by the employed too. Although the institution of a range of labour laws such as the Labour Relations Act (1995) and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997) were intended to provide a vast range of protections and rights, which had previously been denied to mostly Black employees, the realities have been very different. As elsewhere, the South African labour market has been shaped by processes of casualization and a decline in the real wages of low skilled workers. Indeed one of the aims of GEAR was to increase what is benignly known as labour market flexibility. According to the Department of Labour in 2008 at least half of the workforce is in work of a casual or temporary nature (cited in Marais 2011: 177). Furthermore, out of a workforce of 13 million, 5.8 million were not covered by unemployment insurance, 2.7 million did not have written contracts and 4.1 million did not have paid leave entitlement (Marais 2011: 181). Even in cases where permanent, unionised workers enjoy protections the median minimum wage for all sectors in 2012 was R 3 500 a month (€ 251) and almost 80 % of minimum wage agreements are R 5 000 (€ 359) a month or less (LRS 2013: 6). Altman (cited in Barchiesi 2011: 75–76) defines the 'working poor' as those earning less than the individual threshold for income tax exemption. In 2012 the threshold was R 5 000 a month, assuming that the minimums are paid, a high proportion of the workforce can be defined as 'working poor'. With such a significant proportion of South African either unemployed or in precarious, low wage labour many are unable to secure the kinds of livelihoods that would ensure social citizenship (Dawson, 2010). Although the constitution may enshrine social rights, as Von Schnitzler (2008) argues, under neoliberal doctrine rights are afforded to consumers with the ability to pay rather than rights bearing citizens. This is particularly the case if wonder considers access to housing, water and electricity in the South African context.

The lived experience of post-apartheid citizenship

An increasing number of scholars of third wave democratisation (see O'Donnell et al, 2004) have argued the study of democracy should not be narrowly focused on elections and institutional efficiency but also concern itself with the quality of

democracy, as experienced through everyday relations and the ability to exercise individual freedom and agency. While Freedom House, an independent monitor of freedom of expression, has consistently rated South Africa's democracy highly, based upon an analysis of civil and political rights (Freedom House 1999; 2013) this contrasts starkly with the fact that South Africans express the highest levels of dissatisfaction with democracy in the region, with 39 % reporting that they were not at all or not very satisfied with post-apartheid democracy (Afrobarometer 2011). In order to understand this, it is essential to provide a perspective on the lived experience of citizenship and how poor Black South Africans view post-apartheid democracy. As Miriftab and Wills note, 'in any formulation or discussion of citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa, the question of housing and basic services occupies the centre stage (2005: 202). This they argue is due to the way in which apartheid denied rights to housing and services in urban areas. Indeed, compared to other countries in the region South Africans are much more likely to emphasise the realisation of socio-economic outcomes as crucial to democracy (Mattes et al. 2000). Although, as noted above, the Constitution provides protection for the rights to housing and water and the RDP introduced free lifeline tariffs the provision of these has been intersected by the logic of neoliberalism.

The provision of free basic water and electricity is increasingly being delivered on a cost-recovery basis by pre-paid meters. Pre-paid meters work on the basis that once the credit for the free basic allowance is exhausted the meter shuts off access to the service until the meter can be 'topped up' or the start of a new monthly allowance. In the case of water, the Free Basic Water (FBW) policy mandated municipalities to provide 6 000 litres (6 kilolitres) per household per month, the equivalent of 25 litres per person per day based on an average household of 8. However, households particularly in Black urban townships are often larger than this. This has led poor Black households into an 'enforced weighing of basic daily priorities' (Von Schnitzler 2008: 915). Whereby households and individuals must make difficult choices about their choices regarding their water usage. As Dawson reports 'most residents cut back on cleaning activities (bathing, dishes and general household cleaning), while some reduce their direct consumption for drinking or cooking' (2010: 387). Furthermore, many were forced to give up important subsistence activities such as food gardens. It should also be noted that pre-paid meters have only been enforced in Black townships and not the formally and still predominantly White suburbs.

The introduction of pre-paid technology, Von Schnitzler argues, alters the relationship of trust between the state and its citizenry, she notes conventional meters 'are invested with a relationship of trust, and the assumption of a citizenry willing and able to pay for services' while pre-paid meters are, 'based on and invested

with mistrust. Inscribed in the technology is not only the acceptance of non-payment as a permanent feature, but also the anticipation of a non-paying user' (2008: 912–13, emphasis in the original). Furthermore, as Dugard (2010) argues, for consumers who have been made to accept the meter, the introduction of pre-paid meters means important procedural protections against disconnection are lost. On a conventional meter a final demand notice is received prior to a disconnection which allows the consumer 14 days to make representations to the Council and enter into a voluntary agreement for payment prior to a final disconnection notice being served. With pre-paid meters the disconnection is, as many Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) activists[3] describe, 'silent' and 'automatic' (author's fieldnotes), if the water supply is exhausted at night or at the weekends when water vendors are closed, people have no option but to wait without water until the vendor reopens. If one is unable to afford the credit for the meter then people are faced with the choice of either waiting without water until the next allocation of the FBW or finding ways to borrow money. Without the procedural protections of a conventional meter, people are exposed to new dangers. The consequences of pre-paid meters which were brutally illustrated in Phiri, Soweto when a shack fire broke out in March 2005. After calling the fire brigade, who failed to arrive, residents attempted to extinguish the fire themselves but after the pre-paid water was exhausted there was nothing the residents could do but watch the shack burn. It was only when the tenant of the shack returned home in the morning from her night shift it was discovered that her two children who had been sleeping in the shack had perished in the fire (Dugard, 2010).

The exclusion from social citizenship that is created by pre-paid technology has a significant impact on the lived experiences of democracy for poor Black South Africans who were most disenfranchised by apartheid. In interviews with community activists and township residents one of the dominant themes that emerged were the intense feeling of exclusion from the post-apartheid democratic settlement as Lebo reflected below,

> this democracy they are claiming to be there is benefitting a few but the majority are still suffering under that poverty, their lives have not been lifted up so we cannot say democracy has done something better for us (Interview, 7 February 2010).

The sense of the exclusion from democracy experienced by townships residents was also a frequent topic for discussion within community meetings where democracy was discussed as something 'only for the rich' (fieldnotes, 22 February

---

3   The APF was a social movement organisation that was central to campaigns against pre-paid water meters. For more see Dugard (2010) and Von Schnitzler (2008).

2010). Another common theme was the sense that the ANC has betrayed its liberation promises, as Sam expressed.

> We have hypocrisy not democracy. They [the ANC] pretend to be there for us but they are not for us. It [democracy] is beautiful in words but it is actually nothing (Interview, 3 March 2010).

The feelings of disappointment and betrayal often generate a comparison between the apartheid past and the post-apartheid present.

> Before 1994 there was [sic] problems which differ from the problems that we are facing now. Before 1994 what I would say is that people were working and the price and the cost of living was low… after 1994 people were liberated from oppression, not from the economy. Everything was privatised and people could not afford to buy bread… Apartheid is gone and the new government is in but people cannot afford to run their life. That's where we think people have been sold to capitalism because there is no difference from the previous government and the present government (Mandla, Interview, 25 January 2010).

What Mandla encapsulates here are a number of ideas which are common in discussions with unemployed community activists in South Africa. First, is the idea that the material experiences of working class Black South Africans is worse, encapsulated in the idea of being unable to buy bread. That the activist chooses to use bread as an example reflects not only the fact it is a daily staple but also that it is one of the commodities which the apartheid regime regulated the price of and thus provides a direct and immediate example of how the forces of deregulation and commodification are experienced in everyday life. Crucially, Mandla recognises that the political transition of 1994 was a political and not an economic liberation and that the daily experience of inequality stems from the forces of marketization that have been unleashed in the post-apartheid period. Furthermore, Mandla expresses an understanding that inequality is inherent to neoliberal capitalism.

Collective responses to inequality

The inequalities and the forces that shape them analysed above have not gone uncontested. Indeed, sociological engagements with citizenship have interpreted the concept not just as a status but as a social practice (see Turner 1993; 1997; Lister 1997a; 1997b, 2000; 2003; Kabeer 2005). Thus citizenship should also be understood within an analysis of the agency of citizens themselves and focusing on how

citizens interact and engage with the 'decisions and processes which affect their lives' (Gaventa 2002: 2). An analysis of the collective responses to inequality has the ability to not only provide insight into the lived experience of citizenship but to offer a challenge to the currently exclusionary and unequal experience of it.

From the early 2000s resistance to the effects of GEAR began to emerge in a collective form with the emergence of organisations such as the Concerned Citizens Group, the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign and the APF. These so-called new social movements engaged in a range of defensive battles around issues such as housing, water and electricity as well as connecting their struggles to a variety of class based political ideologies which were broadly anti-capitalist and anti-neoliberal in nature (Ballard *et al* 2006). The seeming potency of these new movement to effect change in South Africa was powerfully signalled on the 31 August 2002 when an estimated 20 000–30 000 people marched from Alexandra township to Sandton. Using the World Summit on Sustainable Development as a focal point, a range of international and local activists marched in protest against the ANC's neoliberal development framework to highlight the particular hardships that the privatisation of basic services had wrought on the most socio-economically marginalised and vulnerable sections of society. On the same day, the official ANC-Alliance march numbered less than 5 000 (Death 2010).

What became evident on that day was what McKinley (2012) has described as a split between the 'traditional' Left – represented by COSATU and the South African Communist Party (SACP) – and what he terms the 'new' Left characterised by the range of social movements and community-based organisations which have emerged, not always consciously, to oppose neoliberalism and its effects. Despite the optimism contained within a flurry of academic literature about the progressive political potential of these movements (see Desai 2002; Desai and Pithouse 2004; Gibson 2006), by 2006 many of these so-called 'new social movement' organisations had collapsed (see Veriava and Naidoo 2013; Hart 2014; Runciman 2015). Paradoxically, these organisations collapsed in a period in which protests for basic services and housing, the very things these movement organisations mobilised around, were growing.

While there is debate as to how protest should be documented in South Africa (see Alexander 2010; Nyar and Wray 2012; Duncan 2014; Alexander et al 2015) a range of different data sources clearly illustrate that protest in South Africa has since 2004 been increasing. Figure 1 presents data on protest captured from media reports by the Rebellion of the Poor protest monitor based at the University of Johannesburg. As the chart shows, protest has been increasing since 2004 with at least one protest a day occurring in 2012.

Protests that characterise this so-called rebellion take many forms: often times protestors march to the local municipality, the focus of much protest activity in

Figure 1   Number of media-reported community protests 2005–2014. Source: South Afri-can Research Chair in Social Change, University of Johannesburg
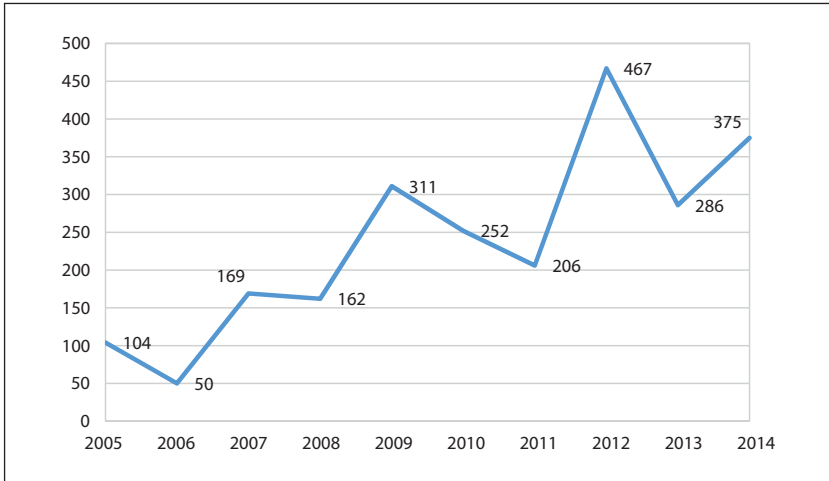
South Africa, to hand over a memorandum of grievances. Increasingly, protestors have embarked on more disruptive and even violent action including the barri-cading of roads, the burning down of local amenities such as clinics and even at-tacks on foreign-owned shops. Indeed the violence which seems to characterise South African protests has been the subject of intense debates (see Von Holdt and Alexander 2012; Von Holdt 2013, 2014; Paret 2015). The protests tend to be predom-inately led by the unemployed and focus on a range of 'service delivery' issues such as the provision of housing, water and electricity which generally emanate from particular sections of townships or informal settlements. As my colleagues and I have noted (see Alexander et al 2014), the characterisation of this wave of pro-test as mere 'service delivery' protests serves to obscure the politics which under-lie these protests. As the analysis offered above demonstrates the daily experienc-es of accessing basic services such as housing, water and electricity are intimately bound to an experience of democracy. Therefore protests about these basic goods should not be interpreted narrowly as the demands for basic services simulta-neously raise critiques about the quality of post-apartheid democracy.

While the often disruptive and violent nature of these protests may seem re-bellious, Sinwell (2011) cautions against an over-optimistic reading of these pro-tests as part of a counter-hegemonic movement. He notes that many of these protests do not contest the basis of the post-apartheid development model. In-

deed, rather than understanding this wave of protest as acting against the ANC, a range of commentators have highlighted how such protests are often a reflection of patronage politics from below in order to access local job opportunities and reflect an entanglement with rather than a rejection of the ANC (see Von Holdt et al 2011; Langa and Von Holdt 2012; Dawson 2014a). Indeed, the continued dominance of the ANC at the ballot box, securing 62 % of the vote in the last national elections of 2014, seems to suggest that despite widespread protest there is still a significant endorsement of the ANC's politics.

One of the difficulties in trying to characterise the politics of this protest wave has been the fragmented nature of these protests which Mottair and Bond (2012: 316) describe as being 'often geographically and politically isolated from each other, lack[ing] an ideological orientation and have no common programmes or bridging organizational strategies'. The seeming lack of clear strategic and political orientation of these protests has led to some commentators characterising these protests as 'popcorn' protests (see Mottair 2013), reflecting the way they seemingly spring out of nowhere but just as rapidly subside. The use of such terminology is problematic as it belies the complex dynamics of protest, which are mostly hidden from public view: the numerous attempts to engage the authorities and the rounds of community meetings which usually proceed a protest. While authors employing the term are correct to highlight that the high level of protest activity in South Africa has yet to coalesce into a social movement that would raise collective demands or pose a challenge to the political dominance of the ANC, this does not mean such protests should be dismissed as insignificant. Scholars such as Piven and Cloward (1979) highlight that collective action outside of movements may actually be more effective than collective action organised through more formalised social movement organisations.

Another criticism that has been levelled against this protest movement is the fact that it has largely been divorced from the struggles of employed workers (see Ngwane 2012). Rather than being reflective of political differences this is largely the result of the growing social distance between the employed and the unemployed as examined above. This is not to say that the mobilisation of workers within COSATU aligned movements has not been entirely absent or politically ineffectual in this period. Indeed, Ceruti's (2012) analysis of the 2007 and 2010 public sector strike provides invaluable insight into the politics of these strikes and their relation to the politics of the protest wave analysed above. However, COSATU has found itself in an increasingly contradictory position due to its position in the Alliance in which it may be publicly critical of the ANC but relies on this relationship politically (Barchiesi 2011). Furthermore, the social composition of COSATU, predominantly workers with full time permanent contracts 59 % of whom are in skilled or professional employment (Bischoff and Tshoedi

2012: 52), means that the majority of members are relatively privileged in comparison to the unemployed and precariously employed. In addition, trade unions in South Africa have increasingly become entangled in relations where becoming a shop steward is seen as a stepping stone for career progression (see Buhlungu and Tshaoedi 2012). There is also a considerable perception that there is internal corruption at all levels within unions and this has been demonstrated by a number of cases alleging misappropriation of funds (see Buhlungu and Tshaoedi 2012; Aboobaker 2015; Masondo 2015). The entangled relations of unions have increasingly led workers to organise outside of trade unions. Nowhere was this more evident than the unprotected strike of mine workers at Lonmin, Marikana in August 2012 which resulted in the massacre of 34 workers on the 16 August 2012 (see Alexander et al 2012). Similar mobilisations have also been witnessed within the Post Office (see Dickinson 2015) and amongst farm workers (see Hattingh 2013).

The protest wave that is unfolding in South Africa, although shaped by the specificities of the social, political and economic history of the country, it is also connected to a global wave of contention. Across the world protests and social movements have been emerging in response to inequalities. In the United States this took the form of the Occupy movement, which Pickerill and Krinsky argue emerged from 'the unfairness of bank bailouts juxtaposed against rising personal poverty triggered a moment of clarity of the absurdity of the current economic and political system' (2012: 279). In Chile students have mobilised against the inequities in higher education (Grugel and Singh forthcoming). While in Spain the May 15 (M-15) movement has mobilised against austerity under the slogan 'real democracy now' (Burawoy 2015). Thus, the issues raised in this chapter about the quality of democracy and citizenship under conditions of neoliberalism are not unique to South Africa. The fact that they are not unique highlights the shared structural basis of the inequalities. As Michael Burawoy (2015, forthcoming) has argued the global post-financial crisis protest wave that has arisen across the world has been generated by the forces of marketization and the forms of inequality it produces creating forms of what he class 'exclusionary politics'.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the contours of post-apartheid inequality highlighting that, the impacts of marketization and the restructuring of the labour market have created new forms of inequality and precariousness that has served to entrench rather than undo the racialised inequalities of apartheid. This, as the chapter has shown, seriously undermined the ability of poor Black South African to access social citizenship and compromised the lived experience of post-

apartheid citizenship and democracy. While this has raised important questions about the quality of post-apartheid democracy it has also provided a platform for new struggles to emerge over the content and meaning of citizenship and democracy in post-apartheid South Africa. While the current protest wave unfolding in South Africa is characterised by its fragmented political and geographical nature, the agency of collective action is a vital practice of citizenship in a highly unequal country such as South Africa. Furthermore, the chapter has highlighted how protest in South Africa is connected to a wider global wave of protest contesting inequalities generated by marketization.

References

Aboobaker, Shanti (2015) SAMWU boss faces Hawks probe. [Online] *Independent Online*. 22 March. Available from http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/samwu-boss-faces-hawks-probe-1.1835389#.VcHyv8v76po. [Accessed 5 August 2015].

Adelzadeh, Asghar. (1996) From the RDP to GEAR: the Gradual Embracing of Neoliberalism in Economic Policy. *Transformation*. 31. pp. 66–95.

Africa Check. (2014). Does the ANC have a 'good story to tell'? *Daily Maverick*. [Online] 25 April. Available from http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2014-04-25-africa-check-does-the-anc-have-a-good-story-to-tell/#.VcHdR8v76po. [Accessed: 5 August 2015].

Afrobarometer. (2011) Summary of results: Afrobarometer round 5 survey in South Africa. Cape Town: The Institute for Democracy in South Africa. [Online] Available from http://www.afrobarometer.org/results/results-by-country-n-z/south-africa. [Accessed: 10 July 2013].

Alexander, Peter. (2010) Rebellion of the poor: South Africa's service delivery protests – a preliminary analysis. *Review of African Political Economy*. 37(123). pp. 25–40.

Alexander, Peter., Lekgowa, Thapelo, Mmope, Botsang, Sinwell, Luke. & Xezwi, Bongani (2012). *Marikana: A View from the Mountain and a Case to Answer*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Alexander, Peter., Runciman, Carin., & Ngwane, Trevor. (2014). Growing civil unrest shows yearning for accountability. *Business Day*. [Online] 7 March. Available from http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/2014/03/07/growing-civil-unrest-shows-yearning-for-accountability. [Accessed: 12 February 2015].

Alexander, Peter., Runciman, Carin., & Maruping, Boitumelo South African Police Service Data on Crowd Incidents: *A Preliminary Analysis*. [Online] Johannesburg. University of Johannesburg. Available from http://www.uj.ac.za/EN/Faculties/humanities/Research-Centres/South%20Africa%20Research%20Chair%20in%20Social%20Change/Pages/home.aspx. [Accessed: 23rd July 2015].

Ballard, Richard., Habib, Ahmed., Valodia, Imraan. & Zuern, Elke. (2006) Introduction: From Anti-Apartheid to Post-apartheid Social Movements. In: Ballard, Richard., Habib, Ahmed. & Valodia, Imraan. (eds) *Voices of Protest*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press, pp. 1–22.

Barchiesi, Franco. (2011) *Precarious Liberation: Workers, the State and Contested Social Citizenship in Postapartheid South Africa.* Scottsville: University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Press.

Bischoff, Christine & Tshoaedi, Malehoko (2012) The experience of conducting a longtidunal study: the COSATU Worker's Survey 2008. In Buhlungu, Sakhela & Tshoaedi, M. (eds). *COSATU's Contested Legacy*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, pp. 32–55.

Blumenfeld, Jesmond. (1997) From icon to Scapegoat: The Experience of South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme. *Development Policy Review.* 15(1). pp. 65–91.

Bond, Patrick. (2000) *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa.* London:Pluto Press.

Buhlungu, Sakhela & Tshoaedi, Malehoko. (2012) A contested legacy: organisation and political challenges facing COSATU. In Buhlungu, Sakhela & Tshoaedi, M. (eds). *COSATU's Contested Legacy*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, pp. 1–31.

Burawoy, Michael. (2015) Facing an Unequal World. *Current Sociology.* 63 (1). pp 5–34.

Burawoy, Michael. (forthcoming) Social Movements in the Neoliberal Age. In: Paret, Marcel., Runciman, C. & Sinwell, L. (eds). *Global Resistance in Southern Perspective*. Farnham:Ashgate.

Ceruti, Claire. (2012). Unfolding Contradictions in the 'Zuma Movement': The Alliance in the Public Sector Strikes of 2007 and 2010 In: Dawson MC & Sinwell L (eds) *Contesting Transformation: Popular Resistance in Twenty-First Century South Africa.* London: Pluto Press, pp. 101–124.

Cheru, Fantu. (2001) Overcoming Apartheid's Legacy: the Ascendancy of Neoliberalism in South Africa's Anti-Poverty Strategy. *Third World Quarterly.* 22(4). pp. 505–527.

Dawson, Hannah. J. (2014). Patronage from below: Political unrest in an informal settlement in South Africa. *African Affairs.* 113(453). pp. 518–539.

Dawson, Marcelle C. (2010). The Cost Of Belonging: Exploring Class And Citizenship In Soweto's water war. *Citizenship Studies.* 14. pp. 381–394.

Death, Carl. (2010). Troubles at the top: South African protests and the 2002 Johannesburg Summit. *African Affairs.* 109(437). pp 555–574.

Desai, Ashwin. (2002) *We Are The Poors: Community Struggles in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

Desai, Ashwin, & Pithouse, Richard (2004) "But We Were Thousands": Dispossession, Resistance, Repossession and Repression in Mandela Park. *Journal of Asian and African Studies.* 39 (4). pp. 239–269.

Dickinson, David (2015) *Fighting their own battles: The Mabarete and the end of Labour Broking in the South African Post Office.* [Online] Available from: http://www.wits.ac.za/files/4qoug_15815500143228363.pdf [Accessed 5 August 2015].

Dietz, Mary. (1992) Context is All: Feminism and Theories of Citizenship. In: Mouffe, C. (ed). *Dimensions of Radical Democracy.* London: Verso.

Dugard, Jackie (2010) Can Human Rights Transcend the Commercialisation of Water in South Africa? Soweto's Legal Fight for an Equitable Water Policy. *Review of Radical Political Economies.* 42(2). pp. 175–194.

Duncan, Jane. (2014). The politics of counting protests. *The Mail and Guardian*. [Online] 16th April. Available from http://mg.co.za/article/2014-04-16-the-politics-of-counting-protests/. [Accessed: 9 October 2014].

Egan, Anthony. & Wafer, Anthony. (2006) Dynamics of a 'Mini-Mass Movement': Origins, Identity and Ideological Pluralism in the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee. In: Ballard, Richard., Habib, Ahmed. & Valodia, Imraan. (eds) *Voices of Protest*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press, pp. 46–66.

Freedom House. (1999) *South Africa: Freedom in the World*. [Online] Available from: http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/1999/south-africa. [Accessed 10 July 2013].

Freedom House. (2013) *South Africa: Freedom in the World*. [Online] Available from http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/south-africa. [Accessed 10 July 2013].

Gaventa, John. (2002). *Exploring Citizenship, Participation and Accountability*. [Online] Institute Development Studies Bulletin 33(2): Available from: http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/gaventa332.pdf. [Accessed 23 July 2012].

Gibson, Nigel. C. (2006) *Challenging Hegemony: Social movements and the quest for a new humanism in post-apartheid South Africa.* Trenton: Africa World Press.

Grugel, Jean & Singh, Jewellord Nem (forthcoming) Protest, Citizenship and democratic renewal: the student movement in Chile. [Online] *Citizenship Studies*. Available from http:doi/full/10.1080/13621025.2015.1006172. [Accessed 5 August 2015].

Hart, Gillian. (2014) *Rethinking the South African Crisis: Nationalism, Populism, Hegemony*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Harvey, David (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hattingh, Shawn (2013) Reaping what you sow: Reflection on the Western Cape Farm Workers Strike 2012. *Monthly Review Magazine*. [Online] 21 March. Available from http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2013/hattingh210213.html. [Accessed 5 August 2015].

Kabeer, Naila. (2005) The Search for Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expression in an Interconnected World. In: Kabeer, Naila. (ed). *Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expression*. London: Zed Books.

Langa, Malose. & Von Holdt, Karl. (2012) Insurgent Citizenship, Class Formation and the Dual Nature of a Community Protest: A Case Study of 'Kungcatsha' In: Dawson Marcelle C & Sinwell, Luke (eds). *Contesting Transformation: Popular Resistance in Twenty-First Century South Africa*. London: Pluto Press, pp. 80–100.

Lester, Alan., Nel, Etienne., & Binns, Tony. (2000) *South Africa, Past, Present, and Future: Gold at the End of the Rainbow?* Harlow: Longman.

Lister, Ruth. (1997a) Dialectics of Citizenship. *Hypatia*. 12(4). pp. 6–26.

Lister, Ruth. (1997b) Citizenship: Towards a Feminist Synthesis. *Feminist Review*. 57. pp. 28–48.

Lister, Ruth. (2000) Dilemmas in Engendering Citizenship. In: Hobson, B. (ed). *Gender and Citizenship in Transition*. Basingstoke: MacMillan Press.

Lister, Ruth. (2003) *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Labour Research Service (2013). The Wage Bargaining Review. *Bargaining Monitor.* 27 (179). pp 6–10.

Marais, Hein. (2011) *South Africa Pushed to the Limit: The Political Economy of Change.* London: Zed Books.

Marshall, T. H. (1992) *Citizenship and Social Class.* London: Pluto Press.

Masondo, Sipho (2015) SADTU selling principal's post in exchange for cows, sheep and goats. [Online] *City Press.* 17 May. Available from: http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Sadtu-selling-principals-posts-in-exchange-for-cows-sheep-and-goats-20150517 [Accessed 5 August 2015].

Mattes, Robert., Davids, Yul Derek., Africa, Cherrel (2000) *Views of Democracy in South Africa and the Region: Trends and Comparisons.* [Online] Available from: http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Working%20paper/AfropaperNo8_0.pdf. [Accessed: 23 July 2015].

McDonald, David. A. (2002) The theory and practice of cost recovery in South Africa. In: McDonald, David. A. & Pape, John. (eds). *Cost recovery and the crisis of service delivery in South Africa.* London: Zed Books.

McKinley, Dale. T. (2001) Democracy, Power and Patronage: Debate and Opposition within the African National Congress and the Tripartite Alliance since 1994. *Democratization.* 8(1). pp. 183–206.

McKinley, Dale. T. (2012) The Crisis of the Left in Contemporary South Africa In: Dawson Marcelle C & Sinwell, Luke (eds). *Contesting Transformation: Popular Resistance in Twenty-First Century South Africa.* London: Pluto Press, pp. 23–43.

Miraftab, Faranak. & Wills, Shana. (2005) Insurgency and Spaces of Active Citizenship: The Story of Western Cape Anti-eviction Campaign in South Africa. *Journal of Planning Education and Research.* 25(2). pp. 200–217.

Mottiar, Shauna. (2013). From "Popcorn" to "Occupy": Protest in Durban, South Africa. *Development and Change,* 44(3). pp. 603–619.

Mottiar, Shauna. & Bond, Patrick. (2012) The Politics of Discontent and Social Protest in Durban. *Politikon.* 39 (3). pp. 309–30.

Ngwane, Trevor (2012) Labour strikes and community protests: Is there a basis for unity in post-apartheid South Africa? In: Dawson Marcelle C & Sinwell, Luke (eds). *Contesting Transformation: Popular Resistance in Twenty-First Century South Africa.* London: Pluto Press, pp. 125–142.

Nyar, Ansilla., & Wray, Chris. (2012). Understanding protest action: some data collection challenges for South Africa. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa.* 80(1). pp. 22–43.

O'Donnell, Guilermo., Vargas Cullell, Jorge. & Iazzetta, Osvaldo. M. (2004) *The Quality of Democracy: Theory and Applications.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Ong, Aihwa. (2006) *Neoliberalism as Exception.* London, Duke University Press.

Paret, Marcel. (2015) Violence and democracy in South Africa's community protests. *Review of African Political Economy.* 42 (1). pp. 107–123.

Pickerill, Jenny., & Krinsky, John. (2012). Why Does Occupy Matter? *Social Movement Studies.* 11(3-4). pp. 279–287.

Piven, Frances Fox, & Cloward, Richard A. 1979. *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail*. New York: Vintage books.

Republic Of South Africa (RSA) (1994) *White Paper on Reconstruction and Development*. [Online] Available from: http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=70427 [Accessed: 4 February 2010].

Republic Of South Africa (RSA) (1996) *Growth, Employment and Redistribution: A Macroeconomic strategy*. [Online] Available from: http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=70507 [Accessed: 4 February 2010].

Runciman, Carin. (forthcoming) The decline of the Anti-Privatisation Forum in the midst of South Africa's 'rebellion of the poor. *Current Sociology*. 63 (7). pp. 961–979. [Online] Available from: http://csi.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/03/19/0011392115574784.abstract. [Accessed: 4th August 2015].

Sinwell, Luke (2011) Is 'another world' really possible? Re-examining counter-hegemonic forces in post-apartheid South Africa. *Review of African Political Economy*. 38(127). pp. 61–76.

StatsSA(2012) *Income and expenditure of households 2010/2011*. [Online] Available from: http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0100/P01002011.pdf. [Accessed: 13 August 2015]

StatsSA (2015) *Methodological report on rebasing of national poverty lines and development of pilot provincial poverty lines*. [Online] Available from: http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-11/Report-03-10-11.pdf. [Accessed: 13 February 2015].

Terreblanche, Sampie. J. (2005) *A History of Inequality in South Africa 1652–2002*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Turner, Brian. S. (1993) Contemporary Problems in the Theory of Citizenship. In: Turner, B. S. (ed). *Citizenship and Social Theory*. London: Sage.

Turner, Brian. S (1997) Citizenship Studies: A General Theory. *Citizenship Studies*. 1(1). pp. 5–18.

Van Donk, Mirjam. & Pieterse, Edgar. (2006) Reflections on the Design of a Post-apartheid System of (Urban) Local Government. In: Pillay, Udesh., Tomlinson, Richard., & du Toit, Jacques. (eds). *Democracy and Delivery: Urban Policy in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Veriava, Ahmed & Naidoo, Prishani. (2013). Predicaments of post-apartheid social movement politics: The Anti-Privatisation Forum in Johannesburg In Daniel, John., Naidoo, Prishani., Pillay, Devan., & Southall, Roger. (eds.). *New South African Review 3: The Second Phase – Tragedy or Farce?* Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Verick, Sher. (2012). Giving up Job Search during a Recession: The Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on the South African Labour Market. *Journal of African Economies*. 21 (3). pp. 373–408.

Von Holdt, Karl. South Africa: the transition to violent democracy. *Review of African Political Economy*. 40(138). pp. 589–604.

Von Holdt, Karl. On violent democracy. *The Sociological Review*. 62. pp. 129–151.

Von Holdt, Karl & Alexander, Peter. (2012) Collective violence, community protest and xenophobia" *South African Review of Sociology,* 43(2). pp. 104–111.

Von Holdt, Karl., Langa, M., Molapo, S., Mogapi, N., Ngubeni, K., Dlamini, Jacob. & Kirsten, A. 2011. *The Smoke that calls: insurgent citizenship, collective violence and the struggle for a place in the New South Africa.* Johannesburg: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

Von Holdt, Karl & Webster, Edward. (2005) Work Restructuring and the Crisis of Social Reproduction. In: Webster, Edward. & Von Holdt, Karl. (eds). *Beyond the Apartheid Workplace.* Scottsville: UKZN Press.

Von Schnitzler, Antina. (2008) Citizenship pre-paid: water, calculability, and techno-politics in South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies.* 34(4). Pp. 899–917.

Williams, Paul. & Taylor, Ian. (2000) Neoliberalism and the Political Economy of the 'New' South Africa. *New Political Economy.* 5(1). pp. 21–40.