

"WE ARE NOT
SCARED TO DIE"



JULIUS MALEMA AND THE
NEW MOVEMENT FOR AFRICAN LIBERATION

TIFFANY THAMES COPELAND



PETER LANG

The charismatic Julius Malema and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) have descended onto the South African political scene like superheroes, vowing to liberate South Africans with their radical, militant, and revolutionary stance. Their pledge in fighting the four evils of this world including colonialism, imperialism, racism, and sexism, has given them an allure of being saviors while striking fear in the hearts of the white monopoly capitalists including their African conspirators, labeled sell outs.

The nexus of this book comprises of two social media studies on Malema's eye-opening, controversial, and at times humorous rhetoric—and his audience's unfiltered reaction to it—during the 2019 South African general election season. Malema's discourse is also assessed from South Africa's historical, cultural, and socio-political environment, with special attention given to the poor black majority.

The EFF is part of an international protest movement, and connections are, at times, drawn between the South African and the African American experience—both of which have been severely impacted by an international system of white hegemony.

Ultimately, this research shows that Malema's fiery and witty rhetoric has firmly situated the EFF at the forefront of a new movement for African liberation. As Malema said, "The time for reconciliation is over, now is the time for justice," solidifying him as one of the most controversial political figures in South Africa, Africa, and perhaps one day, the world over.



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“We Are Not Scared to Die”

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Tiffany Thames Copeland

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Julius Malema and the New Movement
for African Liberation



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To my grandparents Willie and Hattie Mae Thames,
for your sacrifices.

To my parents Jerry and Berdia Mae Thames,
for showing the power of unconditional love,
the importance of a good education and the value of hard work.

To Kennard Copeland,
for being my husband, muse, best friend, and soul mate.
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This book is for South Africans and the marginalized globally,
because “when the sun sets, it sets for everyone.”

He is Muntu, man, who speaks and through the word conquers the world of things; directs it and uses it to change the world. His word is the more powerful the more he speaks in the name of his people, living as well as dead . . . Inflexibility and hate are nothing but forces he uses, which he throws into the battle as he does pearls, islands, plants, trees, weeping, and laughter.

—Jahn Janheinz, *Muntu: African Culture and the Western World*



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|------|
| Acknowledgments | xiii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Part I: Hashtag #IAmVotingEFF | |
| Chapter One: The Economic Freedom Fighters Spice Up Politics | 13 |
| Chapter Two: Social Media, Protests, and the EFF Movement | 33 |
| Part II: It's Unapologetically, Julius Malema and the EFF | |
| Chapter Three: The Root of Malema's Humor | 55 |
| Chapter Four: Malema's Rhetoric Stings Like a Bee | 75 |
| Part III: Dear Black Middle Class and Elite: "Come Back Home" | |
| Chapter Five: Malema Is the Undisputed Thorn in the ANC's Side | 101 |
| Chapter Six: "Black Diamonds" in a Sea of Poverty | 129 |
| Part IV: It's Real Talk: Julius Malema and His Digital Audience | |
| Chapter Seven: YouTube Rhetorical Analysis on Julius Malema | 153 |

x | TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter Eight: Audience Reaction to Malema's Rhetoric | 179 |
| Chapter Nine: "We Are Not Scared of Anything" | 201 |
| Index | 225 |

Table 1

| YouTube Videos Used for the Analysis | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------|-------------|------|---------|---------|-------------|--------|
| Video Title | Publisher | Date | Sub. | Views | Like | Dislike | Comment | Type | Length |
| 1 Malema Addresses EFF Supporters Outside State Capture Inquiry | SABC News | 11/18 | 1.2 million | 2 million | 8.6k | 1.8k | N/A | Rally | 29:02 |
| 2 Julius Malema Telling Ramaphosa He Is "A Shrewd Business Man" | My Africa | 2/19 | 324k | 1.6 million | 6.5k | 563 | 690 | Parl | 22:05 |
| 3 "Occupy Land" Julius Malema and EFF Removed from Parliament | My Africa | 5/18 | 324k | 897k | 5k | 734 | 1.7k | Parl | 36:38 |
| 4 Julius Malema vs Ramaphosa "Stop Dreaming and Wake Up" | My Africa | 6/19 | 324k | 497k | 4.4k | 464 | 898 | Parl | 22:59 |
| 5 Chaos—Voting on Julius Malema's "Winnie Mandela Airport" | My Africa | 3/19 | 324k | 376k | 1.9k | 248 | 659 | Parl | 23:27 |
| 6 EFF CIC Julius Malema Rally Keynote Speech | SABC Digital News | 5/19 | 1.2 million | 283k | 3.2k | 475 | N/A | Rally | 1:57 |
| 7 Julius Malema I Will Never Go Back To ANC | Live Updates/ (Make Africa Great) | 5/19 | N/A | 184k | 1.7k | 117 | 415 | Other Event | 24:46 |
| 8 Julius Malema Warns the DA and Scores Big With ANC | My Africa | 2/18 | 304k | 188k | 1.1k | 140 | 569 | Parl | 29:14 |

Continued

Table 1 Continued

| | | YouTube Videos Used for the Analysis | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------------------|-------|-------------|------|------|-----|-----|-------------|---------|
| | | SABC Digital News | 7/19 | 1.2 million | 150k | 1.3k | 141 | N/A | Rally | 28:34 |
| 9 | Malema Addresses Supporters Following Gordhan, Mkhwebane Court Bid | SABC Digital News | 10/18 | 1 million | 125k | 1.6k | 104 | 729 | Other Event | 23:07 |
| 10 | Julius Malema—The Child of A Domestic Worker Fears Nothing | SABC Digital News | 10/18 | 1 million | 125k | 1.6k | 104 | 729 | Other Event | 23:07 |
| 11 | Great Speech Which Make Africa Respect Julius Malema | Live Updates (Make Africa Great) | 1/19 | N/A | 133k | 1.8k | 154 | 902 | Rally | 42:14 |
| 12 | Julius Malema Calls Zuma, By Makhandakhandanda in Nelson Mandela Bay | Zithini Vele SA | 3/18 | N/A | 113k | 675 | 77 | 143 | Rally | 20:47 |
| 13 | Julius Malema 'I Hate Cyril Ramaphosa!' | From South Africa | 2/18 | N/A | 10k | 255 | 87 | N/A | Press Conf. | 49:56 |
| 14 | The EFF Gives Its Side of the Story on the VBS Scandal. | eNCA | 10/18 | 893k | 110k | 821 | 108 | 356 | Press Conf. | 2:06:17 |



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“Until the lions have their historians, tales of hunting will always glorify the hunter.”

–African Proverb

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Introduction

Julius Malema is the widely admired, young, firebrand leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the third-largest political party in South Africa, but he is also detested by many and has had multitudes of hate speech claims filed against him. Malema doesn't mince his words. When Jacob Zuma was the president of South Africa, Malema called him a "postcolonial disaster," a "con man," and a "trickster" (From South Africa 2018). He called President Cyril Ramaphosa, head of the ruling African National Congress (ANC), a b@stard, outraging supporters of that party (Head 2020). He has described some Africans as "rent-a-blacks" and "sellouts" (SABC Digital News 2019), as he warns other Africans about them. Malema claims the EFF is the only political party that will stand up to whites living in South Africa (ZithiniVele SA 2018); after some whites had threatened to go into exile in Australia, Malema stated that they must remain in South Africa, "because if they leave, they will poison the land" (SABC News 2019). He has even questioned the tactics of one of South Africa's most revered leaders, Nelson Mandela, the first president of a democratic South Africa. In response to his critics, Malema said, "I don't belong to a religion called Mandela" (City Press 2015).

The two main reactions to Malema's remarks are polar opposites. His rhetorical jabs have caused some to feel empowered and at times to burst out in laughter; while others feel outraged and become jittery, questioning his tactics, calling him an ill-mannered menace on the South African political scene (Steinberg

2012; Redelinghuys 2014; The Citizen 2020). The British-owned *The Guardian* published an article called “Julius Malema: The Man Who Scarred South Africa” (Steinberg 2012), describing him as a far cry from the previous genteel, refined, well-mannered black leaders. “Around dinner tables and at barbecues,” the article stated, “generations of white South Africans have died a thousand deaths, imagining the black leader who will turn on them” (Steinberg 2012). Malema’s agitation rhetoric has made him one of the most controversial politicians in South Africa, and some blame the growing levels of poverty for the rise of a person like Julius Malema (Karimi 2012; Steinberg 2012).

The World Bank (2018 121, 6) in *Overcoming Poverty and Inequality in South Africa an Assessment of Drivers, Constraints and Opportunities*, made the shocking pronouncement to the international community in 2018 that South Africa is “one of the most unequal countries in the world,” with high levels of “chronic poverty.” The report also stated that concerning consumption expenditures, South Africans are facing greater inequity than when apartheid ended about twenty-five years earlier—in fact, South Africa is seemingly in a state of emergency. The Africans, who make up 80.7 percent of the country’s population, are mostly landless and poor, too many are residing in tin shacks, and some do not have even have a toilet or running water in their homes (Statistics South Africa 2017).

The ANC (the party of Nelson Mandela) has been South Africa’s ruling party for a quarter-century, yet only 8 percent of the land in South Africa has been distributed since the end of apartheid (Africanews 2018; Bernardo 2019; Mamdani 2019). Some South Africans point fingers at the country’s African immigrants and Afrophobic (expressing a fear of or a hatred for black people) attacks, more commonly referred to as xenophobia, have continued. Conversely, the 8.1 percent of whites in South Africa control the economy and have an average income six times higher than Africans, both native born and immigrant (Fairbanks 2013; Serino 2016). This is not the “rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world” (SABC News 2015) that Mandela envisioned, although these words, uttered at his inaugural address, resonated with the hopeful audience members and viewers who tuned in excitedly from all around the world.

Some say a racial time bomb is now ticking in South Africa (Friedman 2014). Its explosion could have an impact on nations throughout the world. Moreover, if the youth of South Africa, including Malema and the EFF, succeed in their call for land expropriation without compensation, this could be a gigantic step in the eventual reversal of the tides of neo-colonialism in Africa, under which the countries of the Global North maintain significant control over those in the Global South (referred to as neo-imperialism, neo-apartheid, or even neo-slavery). Black people around the world have been trying to release the tight cloaks of

European hegemony, and some of them view Malema and the EFF as their only hope. Accordingly, the controversy surrounding Malema and his rhetoric deserves careful examination.

This book is based on the first research study on Julius Malema's YouTube rhetoric and the reactions of his audiences during the 2019 South African general election season. I incorporated a rhetorical and thematic analysis and applied a bottom-up approach to this research. In this way, I was able to understand the digital audience's reaction to Malema's rhetoric. As a non-traditional student enrolled in Howard University's *Communication, Culture, and Media Studies* doctoral program, I had visited South Africa with my husband, Kennard, prior to embarking on this research for my dissertation. The issue was especially intriguing since African Americans are confronted by similar historical and present-day injustices as South Africans. I was particularly interested in the EFF's unique way of effectively combining activism, politics, social media, and at times humor, while self-classifying as a radical and militant political organization with an immediate goal of economic empowerment.

The EFF is not alone in its efforts, it is a part of a grander protest movement occurring among young people all around the world who have become disenchanted with the operations of their respective governments—Black Lives Matter is one of the most popular movements. Young people are using new media technology, mainly social media, to facilitate their liberation struggles (Castells 2015; Bosch 2016; Daniels 2016)—making their experiences drastically different from the generations of activists preceding them. When these young people enter urban centers around the globe in protest, they display their placards and raise their fists high, and engage in hashtag activism for the entire world to see. Some African American youth have held up signs reading, “We are not our ancestors” (Brown 2020; Simpson 2020), as a way of questioning why black people are still in such dire circumstances after decades of agitation—just as the South African youth in the EFF are also questioning their oppressive circumstances.

The fight for black liberation long precedes the EFF, but this new movement for African liberation is distinguishable from its predecessors, like the African Independence Movements, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, the Negritude Movement and so many others. This new movement still combines activism and politics, but because of social media, these young African activists have easy access to relaying continuous, instantaneous, and unfiltered messages to others who are just as restless for a change in their respective society. A key finding from my research is that Malema and the EFF—after combining social media, activism, politics, and a resounding message of African liberation— have ultimately sparked a new era in Pan-Africanism, called digital Pan-Africanism.

Chapter Overview

This book places Malema's rhetoric in the South African sociopolitical context, so as to provide a holistic understanding of the discourse of one of the most controversial politicians of our time.

Chapter One highlights the EFF's rise in popularity and how the organization became what some have referred to as the big winner of the 2019 South African general election. It introduces Malema, who is known for reenergizing South African politics, and his rhetorical skills have led some to call him an unstoppable tsunami. I also provide a basic understanding of the top three political parties in South Africa: the ANC, the Democratic Alliance, and the EFF. Among them, the EFF's protest orientation, its emphasis on social media, its quick rise to becoming the third-largest South African political organization after the party's first major election in 2014, and its constant display of Black Joy in radical politics have made it stand out among all other parties in South Africa.

Chapter Two highlights the EFF protest movement and shows how Malema and the EFF have become like superheroes, as they try to save South Africans from the villainous white monopoly capitalism. It examines how the EFF has become part of an international protest movement of young people who are demanding equal rights and are using social media to aid their efforts. It shows how the EFF was officially launched at the site of the Marikana Massacre, where thirty-four miners were killed while protesting. Some of the more recent South African protests are also covered in this section, including the EFF's #BlackLivesMatter protest, #ClicksMustFall, and other #MustFall protests. The #FeesMustFall activists are highlighted, including those who have become members of Parliament (MPs) since the 2019 election, representing the EFF. I also compare the top three political parties with regard to their social media presence.

Chapter Three discusses the root of Malema's humorous disposition. In fact, some YouTube commenters have either compared Malema to or have called him a comedian. This chapter highlights some of Malema's many humorous moments, now relegated to the YouTube coffers. Also, I describe some of the world's most popular African comedians, to show how others have merged humor with social justice concerns. Featured comedians include the South African-born Trevor Noah, Loyiso Gola, and Tumi Morake; the Ghanaian-born Michael Blackson; the Ugandan Anne Kansiime, and Americans Dave Chappelle and Richard Pryor. Then, I explain the roots of Black Rhetoric, by incorporating an assessment of some of its unique aspects including playing the dozens, Henry Louis Gates's *the signifying monkey* theory, and Jonathan Rossing's critical race humor theory. This

chapter prepares the reader for a later assessment of Malema's humorous and controversial rhetoric during the 2019 South African general election season.

Chapter Four uncovers the mystery of Malema's rhetorical style, which—more often than not—stings like a bee. I first discuss the African concept of *Nommo* or the power of the spoken word—a concept Malema wholeheartedly evokes. I also discuss the findings on some of the hate speech claims filed against Malema, along with other times when some people, especially conservatives, felt he was pushing the boundaries of freedom of speech. Moreover, the EFF's numerous points of order during the 2020 State of the Nation Address, as they seized the floor in order to immediately address corruption, are considered. On that occasion, what was supposed to be a night of elegance and hopefulness turned into one of raucous debate.

Chapter Five outlines the EFF's role as the undisputed thorn in the ANC's side. Researchers involved in *South Africa's State Capacity Research Project* have indicated that a silent coup in South Africa has happened under the ANC government, which led to the ongoing *Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture* hearings. These hearings include an investigation of how private individuals and companies have controlled and misused public resources through corruption and fraud. This chapter highlights numerous scandals of the ANC's administration, particularly those involving former President Jacob Zuma, and shows how the EFF consistently applies pressure to the ANC bubble. After many years of advocating for land expropriation without compensation, Malema, representing the EFF, called for an amendment to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that would allow this action, and it was approved by the Parliament. In this context, the ANC has come a long way from the days of its military wing, uMkhonto we Sizwe or Spear of the Nation, and now some question its long-standing reputation as a liberation party.

Chapter Six centers on South Africa's so-called black diamonds and their conspicuous consumption patterns, juxtaposed against the African majority who face extreme levels of poverty. This chapter embarks on a journey of *Sankofa*, the Ghanaian concept of going back to your past to understand your present situation, by taking a look into apartheid and its antithetical, the anti-apartheid freedom fighters. I also consider what the South African Comedian Coconut Kelz—the embodiment of a white woman—focuses on when she discusses “702 blacks,” or those who have abandoned the black liberation struggle for white hegemony. Kelz makes light of this dichotomy in the spirit of William Edward Burghardt (W. E. B.) Du Bois's double consciousness concept, drawing on real-world examples in South Africa. Moreover, South Africans live in inhumane circumstances normally

associated with those of an underdeveloped country, such as not having a toilet, running water, or electricity in their homes, and as previously mentioned, their average income is just one-sixth that of the whites living in South Africa; meanwhile, due to this extreme case of inequity, the lifestyle of the black diamonds has led some to question their morality. This chapter also seeks to understand why the black diamonds were generally celebrated in mainstream media outlets, and yet Malema, as the ANCYL president, was harshly criticized for his spending.

Chapter Seven presents the findings of my rhetorical analysis of the most frequently viewed YouTube videos of Malema during the 2019 South African general election season. My goal was to uncover Malema's primary rhetorical strategies and themes, as reflected in his persuasive comments. I demonstrate that while Malema's rhetoric adheres to Aristotle's rhetorical triangle, classic African styles are embedded in his speech; in fact, Malema's rhetoric reflects the African values in the Anansi Tales or Brer Rabbit fables. Thus, Malema and the EFF supporters embody the weak ones in South Africa, operating in a clever way by exhibiting superior logic so as to defeat the powerful beast of white monopoly capital. I also explain Malema's use of Signifying, an African rhetorical truth-telling discourse that uses creative language and word play to (sometimes humorously) lash out verbally at one's opponents. Ultimately, I capture Malema's style in two major themes and four subthemes, all of which revolve around the central goal of ending the legacy of apartheid and in gaining full equality for South Africans.

Chapter Eight proceeds to the thematic analysis based on the audience's reaction to Malema's rhetoric online. Over seven thousand unfiltered comments were reviewed. Audience perceptions of Malema were overwhelmingly positive, with the exception of a slew of racialized comments focusing on the issue of land expropriation without compensation. This topic of land expropriation fueled a contentious online debate and revealed intense hostility, or white-on-black antagonism. Overall, users tended to perceive Malema as their charismatic savior. Most interestingly, Malema's YouTube videos attracted user comments throughout Africa, the Caribbean, the United States, and Europe. In doing so, during the 2019 South African general election, Malema's rhetoric precipitated a digital community of Pan-Africanism—hence, a digital Pan-Africanism.

Chapter Nine concludes the book by relating the research findings from the preceding two chapters to the present situation in South Africa, and by drawing a connection between the marginalization of South Africans and the oppressive state of African Americans. As a twelfth generation American, I begin the chapter by juxtaposing the situation of South Africans with my family's own generational experiences of racism and discrimination in America. I interweave my story into the grander narrative of African Americans, South Africans, and all other Africans

throughout the world. I explain why Malema's speech derives from an African rhetorical tradition, and how his oratory must be evaluated from within its cultural context to prevent misunderstandings. I also summarize the new phenomenon of digital Pan-Africanism on YouTube that is attributable to Malema and the EFF, since their international viewing audience during the 2019 South African general election has embraced and mimicked Malema's calls for African unity. Overall, the research findings have exposed Malema's rhetorical strategies and themes, as well as the new possibilities for African liberation that are stemming from the Global South.

The EFF is not going away any time soon, and its increasing popularity underscores the importance of this study and of understanding a man who has ignited so much controversy in South Africa—the time has come for the world to find out whom Malema really is, and the answers can ultimately be found within his rhetoric.

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PART I

HASHTAG

#IAMVOTINGEFF

The Economic Freedom Fighters Spice Up Politics

It is impossible to predict the time and progress of revolution. It is governed by its own more or less mysterious laws.

—Vladimir Lenin, *Selected Works: March 1917 to June 1918*

The Republic of South Africa has never been the same since Malema, along with his allies including Floyd Shivambu, first announced the EFF's formation in Soweto on July 27, 2013, and officially established it on October 13, 2013. At the launch rally, Malema introduced the party to the public by saying, "If you want to work with EFF, the first thing you must accept is that you must not be scared of a white person. You must be ready to confront a white person everywhere." He continued, "You must be the Malema of that factory. You must be the Malema of that street. You must be the Malema of that school. This abuse by white people must come to an end" (BusinessLive 2013). Then, Malema spoke directly to the whites who control the South African economy: "If you are not preparing to share, then you are your own enemy, but those who are going to share, we are going to kiss each other (audience laughter), black man, white, white (audience laughter, clapping). We will enjoy freedom" (BusinessLive 2013).

Malema is listed as one of Africa's top ten disrupters, according to *The Africa Report* news organization (Ayeni et al. 2020). Malema's critics have described him as a populist figure engaging in personality politics, and some have even called the

EFF neo-fascist and the party of spectacle. "In some circles [Malema is] the most feared and despised politician in South Africa," according to *The South African Journalist* Jan-Jan Joubert (2019). "Plenty of white people in South Africa find him particularly unnerving," said a BBC journalist (Harding 2010). In contrast, Malema's desire to radically alter the structure of the South African economy has caused others to refer to him as a hero, a champion of the poor, a voice of the voiceless, an unstoppable tsunami, and a firebrand leader. In fact, *The South African* newspaper has called Malema "arguably South Africa's greatest political provocateur" (2020).

A Pew Research Center study administered during the EFF's 2019 election campaign season, found that South Africans were more skeptical of the EFF than of the ruling ANC. Whites viewed the EFF more unfavorably than the ANC, at 87 percent and 73 percent, respectively; meanwhile, Africans were also more likely to view the EFF more unfavorably than the ANC, 57–27 percent, despite the ANC corruption scandals (Tamir and Budiman 2019). Nevertheless, most people recognize that the EFF has brought an energy to the South African political scene that has not existed previously, and Malema's popularity or his "favorability score" among South Africans has practically doubled in just a two-year time span to 29 percent (Citizen Surveys 2018, 28). Just one year prior to the 2019 South African general election, users tweeted with the hashtag #EFF moreso than any other party (Walker 2018), and on election day the phrase "Economic Freedom Fighters" accumulated the most online searches, at twenty thousand (Business Insider 2019).

Generally, the EFF has been credited with creating a revitalized political scene, and one only needed to attend the party-like atmosphere of the EFF's election campaign rallies for their 2014, 2016, and 2019 election seasons to experience their youthfulness and high energy. There's so much enthusiasm at these rallies that Joonji Mdyogolo (2014), the former deputy editor of *O, The Oprah Magazine South Africa*, connected the EFF to the name of a rock band, contemplating the party could have been called "Julius Malema and the Fighters." Bikers have been spotlighted at these rallies; Malema has made his appearance with a brigade of around thirty motorcyclists and other vehicles. "This is the Beatles in America. This is Thriller-era Michael Jackson," according to a *Daily Maverick* journalist (Poplak 2014).

Malema and the EFF creatively engage in call and response at rallies. At the final 2019 election rally, similar to Usain Bolt, the retired Jamaican sprinter, Malema and his entourage strided across the stadium. He transported his energy to his audience by charming them: periodically stopping and making different arm movements that audience members eagerly repeated, physically responding to Malema's call (SABC News 2019). The EFF also collectively dance and sing

songs of struggle, such as “Dubula ibhunu” (Shoot the Boers), a call and response song/chant.

Supporters are known to use unconventional items as campaign paraphernalia at these rallies, like their incorporation of mannikins and makeshift coffins. The EFF supporters throw up cream-colored dummies or more specifically, mannikin legs. One set had the words “ANC” and “Hi” spray-painted on its buttocks area; another had the word “Zuma” spray-painted right above the buttocks location. EFF supporters have held nearly life-size cardboard coffins, with a Jacob Zuma effigy filling its interior; one coffin had Zuma’s face on it and another had a Zuma T-shirt draped over it.

Malema has inspired and empowered his audience. At the beginning of Malema’s 2016 Election Manifesto launch speech at the Orlando Stadium in Soweto, he referred to the Election Manifesto booklet as a gun. “This is your weapon (clapping); this is the gun I was talking about. Take up this gun and go and shoot them ... I present to you peacefully so the manifesto of the EFF in 2016,” said Malema (SABC News 2016). He also remarked, “We are warning you. You will never defeat the power of a black nation. No one can defeat the power of a black nation. Not even an army can defeat the power of a black nation” (SABC News 2016). After these comments, the audience momentum escalated and the EFF supporters started chanting in unison while continually thrusting their arms up and down as Malema said, “This is for you, black man. This is for you, the poor people in the shacks. This is for you, the unemployed South Africans. This is for you, all of you that graduate. This is your party, history in the making. This is for you Africa. This is for the oppressed black nation” (SABC News 2016).

Poplak compared the experience of an EFF rally to those of the top two political parties in South Africa, the ANC and the Democratic Alliance (DA). He describes why the EFF is “the only party that can throw a party”:

The EFF have arrived on the scene. But that’s a cliché, and an unfair one—they are the damn scene. Almost all of the excitement (as opposed to the bitterness, disappointment, boredom, outright despair) generated by this election has belonged to Julius Malema and his Fighters. If the ANC’s closing Siyanqoba [we are winning] rally was enormous and dull, the EFF’s rally is medium-sized and cool. If the DA’s two weekend productions were slick and empty, the EFF’s is pumped up and loony. This is politics on steroids, politics as pageantry, politics as performance art. (Poplak 2014)

South Africa’s Leading Political Parties

Nearly fifty political parties vied in the 2019 South African general election—a dramatic increase from the twenty-nine parties in 2014. Approximately

17.5 million people voted. The top three contenders were the ruling ANC, the DA, and the EFF. Some other contenders included the Inkatha Freedom Party, which originated in 1975 and accumulated over 580,000 votes, at 3 percent; the Freedom Front Plus that was founded in 1994 and received over 410,000 votes, at 2 percent; the African Christian Democratic Party, which began in 1993 and garnered over 146,000 votes, at 0.8 percent; and the United Democratic Movement, which started in 1998 and received over 78,000 votes, at 0.4 percent. Only fourteen organizations won enough votes to secure at least one parliamentary seat.

The ANC maintained its position as the ruling party, but comparing the Electoral Commission of South Africa's (2019) general election results of 2014 with 2019 show that South Africans are headed in another direction. The ANC's voter base has consistently declined since the 2009 election. It won 10 million votes, at 57.50 percent in 2019, but that was a drop of about 1.4 million voters from the 2014 election. The DA received over 3.6 million votes, at 22.77 percent in 2019, but this number represented a decrease of almost 470,000 from 2014. Meanwhile, the EFF won over 1.8 million votes, at 10.79 percent, adding 710,000 more voters to its support base since the 2014 elections. Most likely, the bulk of these new EFF voters were former ANC supporters.

After the 2019 elections, the EFF's representation significantly increased in the National Assembly, a body of 400 members. When South Africa's sixth Parliament was formed, the ANC had 230 seats, far more than any other party, but representing a decline of nineteen seats; the DA had eighty-four seats, for a decrease of five; and the EFF had forty-four seats, almost doubling its previous number of twenty-five members. The EFF also has at least one representative in all of South Africa's provincial legislatures, including the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, and the Western Cape, just as the ANC and DA does.

The African National Congress

These leading political parties each have their own territory in South Africa's political history. The ANC (2019), which officially launched more than 100 years before the EFF, defines itself as "a national liberation movement" and was originally created to unite Africans in the struggle against oppression. Its purpose was, quite simply, to "find new ways to fight for black South Africans' land and their freedom" (ANC 2019).

The ANC began in 1912, but members trace its history to 260 years beforehand. Even though the African kingdoms fought bravely against their European invaders, they eventually succumbed to Europeans' brutal cruelty. The Dutch

arrived in South Africa in 1652, taking the Africans' cattle and their land. The British came in the 1860s, with their rifles, modern cannons, large armies, and horses. They vanquished the African kingdoms, like the Xhosa, Zulu, and Pedi. The British then formed the Union of South Africa in 1910 and declared that the British and Dutch settlers would be in charge of the territory, thereby legally oppressing Africans in their own native land. A European *Scramble for Africa* had occurred at the Berlin Conference of 1884, which included thirteen European countries and America, and by 1914 white people partitioned Africa and colonized every African country, but Ethiopia.

The ANC's history is firmly embedded within the apartheid struggle. The party started as an alternative way (as opposed to fighting wars) to contest Europeans' oppression of Africans and because of this goal, many African freedom fighters have emerged through the ANC. The ANC ushered in South Africa's first African government upon the end of apartheid, as Nelson Mandela became president on May 10, 1994. The ANC, along with other anti-apartheid organizations, spearheaded the Congress of the People campaign, which led to the creation of South Africa's Freedom Charter. Developed to help South Africans experience happiness through equality, the Freedom Charter calls for equity in laws, land ownership, wages, education, food access, and recreation.

A radicalized subgroup within the ANC emerged, mainly from the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL); calling themselves the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, commonly referenced as the PAC. After officially breaking away from the ANC, Robert Sobukwe became the party's first president. Its supporters were socialists, Pan-Africanist, and Africanists or those who believed in showing traditional African virtues or a Black Consciousness. They created the Azanian Manifesto, which highlighted their anti-capitalist, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist goals, and their desire for whites to return the land to Africans (Arise Vuka 1984). Their goals aligned closely with those of the EFF, which would be formed more than fifty years later—making it noteworthy to highlight that even though revolutionary leaders die and their organization declines in popularity, the demand for equality endures.

The PAC freedom fighters felt Africans should be in control of their liberation movement and they opposed the ANC's multiracial nature and its concessions to whites, Coloureds, and Indians. They felt the whites had too much to lose to be considered allies, and that aligning with them could be dangerous. When Sobukwe gave his inaugural address at the PAC's official launch in Soweto in 1959, he spoke about the dangers of aligning with whites.

It is this group [whites] which conceives of the African people as a child nation, comprised of Boys and Girls [sic], ranging in age from 120 years to one day. It is this

group which, after 300 years, can still say with brazen effrontery that the Native, the Bantu, the K*ffir (derogatory term) is still backward and savage ect. But they still want to remain "guardians," "trustees," and what have you, of the African. (Sobukwe 2014)

The PAC had actively engaged in protests and boycotts. It was behind the peaceful "Anti-pass Campaign" protest that resulted in the Sharpeville Massacre, when the police killed sixty-nine people by randomly firing into a crowd of protesters in 1960. Eventually, like their colleagues in the ANC, many PAC freedom fighters were imprisoned, and the party was banned in 1961 (PAC n.d.)—even so, they remain active.

The PAC had a military wing called Poqo. According to the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (1998, 244), Poqo, in their effort of ending apartheid, conducted "rural guerilla warfare" by randomly targeting white civilians or farmers; it was noted that members also killed police, PAC informers and agents, and traditional rulers. According to the PAC's official website (PAC n.d.), from 1961 to 1967, numerous Poqo freedom fighters were hung, including the political prisoners. "The execution of more than 50 Poqo members in the 1960s was a fatal blow to the PAC's military wing," said an *IOL* journalist (Mphaki 2011). Interestingly, more than thirty years later the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* would officially blame the PAC for the Poqo killings, instead of targeting the notorious apartheid regime for the killing of the PAC freedom fighters.

While the commission takes note of the explanation tendered by the PAC that its activities in the early 1960s need to be understood in the context of the "land wars of the time," it nevertheless finds that the PAC and Poqo were responsible for the commission of gross violations of human rights through Poqo's campaign to liberate the country. This unleashed a reign of terror, particularly in the Western Cape townships. In the course of this campaign ... groups suffered gross violations of their human rights. (*Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa*, 1998, 244)

Currently, the PAC does not have much representation in Parliament. In the 2019 South African general election, it won only about thirty thousand votes or two-tenths of one percent of the vote, and it currently has just one seat in the National Assembly, filled by Mzwanele Nyhontso. Essentially, the ANC won through popular political support, in their ideological battle with the PAC over how South Africans should fight for their liberation; however, the modern-day caveat is that South Africans are still not free. In fact, the World Bank (2018) has reported that "race has become the main factor determining inequality of opportunity" in South Africa (World Bank 2018, 66).

Although the ANC has enjoyed its status of being rooted in the Anti-Apartheid Movement, it is now facing a critical moment. The ANC is on a

downward trajectory concerning voter support. In fact, the party has lost 12 percent of the vote over the past ten years, spanning from the 2009 to the 2019 general elections. Nonetheless, the ANC still has a loyal base of especially older voters, and it has gained the most votes in every election since the end of apartheid.

The Democratic Alliance

The ANC's biggest opposition party, the DA—which is historically linked to the party that ushered in apartheid—has existed since the 2000 merger of several political parties, although its roots reach far back to the early 1900s. The DA's history began when those of the Afrikaans *National Party* (the party that would institute apartheid) merged with an opposition group called the *South African Party* to create the *United South African National Party* (also known as the *United Party*) in 1934. When the all-white *United Party* was unwilling to fight against the Afrikaans *National Party's* apartheid system, another breakaway emerged in 1959, called the *Progressive Party*. Helen Suzman, a white anti-apartheid activist, took the *Progressive Party's* first seat in Parliament in 1961—later, this party merged with others to form the *Democratic Party*. The DA resulted from a final merger of the *Democratic Party* with the *New National Party* (formerly the Afrikaans *National Party*) and the *Federal Alliance*.

The DA's current goal is to create what it calls an “open opportunity society for all,” or “a fair society which will enable the South African people to unleash their talents and ingenuity so that they can realize their full potential” (DA 2019); however, the DA is currently facing massive identity issues. Some Africans believe the DA really has white people's interests at heart. The first African DA leader, Mmusi Maimane's resignation just five months after the 2019 general election, as well as that of Herman Mashaba, the African DA representative who operated as the mayor of Johannesburg, has served to exacerbate those suspicions. According to a Pew research study, 80 percent of white people and just 32 percent of Africans have a favorable view of the party (Tamir and Budiman 2019). This statistic does not bode well for the future growth of the DA since the white minority only represents 8.1 percent of the population (Statistics South Africa 2017). Maimane alluded to this point during his resignation speech:

It is no secret that the DA in its own history have been seen as a party for minorities. That the majority of South Africans, mainly black South Africans, did not relate to the DA, and by extension struggled to trust the DA. (SABC News 2019b)

A faction within the DA did not support its direction under Maimane. As a result, the DA lost voters to the *Freedom Front Plus*, a white rights political party

(SABC News 2019a). Moreover, as indicated by the 2019 election results, the DA did not gain the trust of African voters, leaving South Africa's second-largest party in a political quandary.

The Economic Freedom Fighters

Malema and his allies, including Floyd Shivambu, created the EFF after being booted out of the ANC, along with their revolutionary ideas. This move was the direct offshoot of ideological clashes between South African youth of the ANCYL who were demanding their economic equality and the older ANC members. At the time, Malema was the ANCYL president and Shivambu was its spokesperson. The ANC prosecution team, led by Cyril Ramaphosa, expelled Malema from the ANC and suspended Shivambu for three years.

Malema originally joined the ANC at age nine and became an ANCYL regional head five years later in 1995. He was chosen as the ANCYL president in 2008 and was reelected to a second term in 2011. During Malema and Shivambu's leadership tenure, the ANCYL became highly radicalized, as they pursued the revolutionary goals of the Freedom Charter. They sought to fulfill the charter's call for economic freedom through the government's total ownership of South Africa's economic and natural resources. In fact, according to the Borgen nonprofit organization, South Africa leads in natural resources:

The abundance of South Africa's natural resources makes it one of the world's largest sources of raw materials. South Africa produces more than 10 percent of the world's gold, from more than 30 functioning mines. South Africa's natural resources also include mineral reserves of iron ore, copper, platinum, silver, manganese, titanium, chromium and uranium. South Africa is home to nearly two-thirds of the world's platinum and about half of the chromium. Gold and diamonds revolutionized the country in the 1800s. ... The South African diamond trade is one of the biggest in the world. (Borgen 2016)

Malema acknowledged the fueling tension between the ANC and the ANCYL, or respectively the rift between the old and the young, as he stated, "An elder who is irritated by kids is a problem for me" (City Press 2011). However, Malema would eventually become a bigger challenge to the ANC as an outsider and a leader of the EFF, than he ever could have been under the constraints applied to him as an ANC insider.

The EFF is socialist, and Malema has declared the EFF to be "the true inheritor of the ANC's radical agenda" (BBC 2019). It is a self-proclaimed radical, militant, revolutionary, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, anti-racist, socialist organization whose supporters seek economic liberation for South Africans. Its

goal is to achieve unity for all of Africa and for the eradication of what it calls the four evils: colonialism, imperialism, racism, and sexism (Shivambu 2017).

The EFF's name is derived from the precarious situation of massive poverty that South Africans still face, a quarter-century after the end of apartheid. The party had arisen in response to a clarion call from the people—including the working class, youth and students, academics and intellectuals, activists and revolutionaries, political parties, chiefs, kings and headmen, among others—who yearned to see economic freedom in their lifetime (Shivambu 2017). Since the majority of Africans remain landless and impoverished, the EFF's resounding slogan is "economic freedom in our lifetime." In fact, its 2019 election theme was "our land and jobs, now!" Its growing popularity suggests that the youth of South Africa have become restless.

The EFF's radicalism is reflected in its terminology, agenda, and agitational communication style. Its military and socialist orientation, including its dress code of red berets, Malema's title as the party's president and "commander in chief," what it calls its "student command," and the use of the term "ground forces" to describe the EFF, speaks to its radical stance. At its onset, the EFF's initial "central command team" adopted a Constitution and a Founding Manifesto, including its cardinal socialist pillars. The EFF's seven pillars of its Founding Manifesto, which are the same in its 2019 Election Manifesto, indicate the party's main strategies for achieving economic freedom:

- 1.) Expropriation of the land without compensation
- 2.) Nationalization of mines, banks, and other strategic sectors of the economy
- 3.) Building state and government capacity, which will lead to the abolishment of tenders [contracted government work to people or companies through the bidding process]
- 4.) Free quality education, healthcare, houses, and sanitation
- 5.) Massive protected industrial development to create millions of sustainable jobs, including the introduction of minimum wages in order to close the wage gap between the rich and the poor
- 6.) Massive investment in the development of the African economy
- 7.) Open, accountable, corrupt-free government and society without fear of victimization by state agencies. (EFF 2013, 25–47)

The EFF has incorporated a Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian objective. Marxist-Leninist was the political ideology of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). This ideology encompasses the Marxist belief that the capitalist system would inevitably lead to a social and economic revolution, because the proletariat

(working class) would eventually overthrow the bourgeoisie (elite). Lenin added to Marxist thought by stating a vanguard party would lead on behalf of the proletarians, and that the most advanced stage of capitalist was imperialism (Morgan 2015). Lenin's imperialism theory had "link[ed] [the] revolutionary struggle among 'the toiling masses' of the undeveloped countries with that which he anticipated among the proletariat of the developed world, thus uniting in revolutionary consciousness both peasant and proletarian," said Morgan (2015, 658). With the dissolving of the USSR came the moribund state of the Marxism–Leninism political movement; although, the EFF is breathing life back into this economic philosophy.

The EFF is Fanonist because of its consideration of how race impacts one's circumstances, which was Frantz Fanon's core focus. Frantz Fanon was a psychologist born in Martinique who became widely known for his assessment of colonialism's impact on the psyche of Africans. He elaborated on this concept of anti-colonialism in two of his most popular books, *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*, the latter of which has been used as a revolutionary reference for those seeking their own liberation and has been translated into twenty-seven languages (Flores-Rodríguez and Jordan 2012). Those identifying the most with the EFF's Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian objective are young South Africans.

The South African *Citizen Surveys* (2018) revealed the demographics of those who felt "close" to the EFF, as opposed to just liking or preferring them, immediately before the 2019 election, in quarter three of 2018—information which helps in ascertaining the EFF and the ANC supporters' demographical similarities and differences. Those who felt close to the EFF were racially homogenous: 97 percent were African, 2 percent were Coloured, and 0 percent were whites or Indians, greatly mirroring the ANC's racial demographics; 69 percent were male and 31 percent were female, yet the ANC showed more female support than male, at 54–46 percent, respectively. The location of the EFF's close supporters includes the metro area, at 55 percent for the EFF (ANC at 32), then the urban areas at 17 percent (ANC at 23), and the rural area at 28 percent (ANC at 45). Concerning their living standard's measure or income bracket, 76 percent of those close to the EFF reported annual income between 335,000 and 354,000 rand (about \$23,000 to \$24,000 USD), and among those in the ANC, 72 percent had income between 1,867,000 and 3,887,000 rand (about \$128,000 to \$268,000 USD). The measurement for being a part of the elite, includes incomes of more than 720,000 rand annually (over about \$50,000 USD); and middle-class incomes must be higher than 138,000 rand (about \$9,500 USD) and less than 720,000 rand (about \$50,000 USD) (Mbeki and Mbeki 2016). Overall, the South Africans who felt close to the EFF were mainly middle-class, African, male, and from the metros; meanwhile, those close to the ANC were mainly elite, African, female, and from the rural area.

The EFF is a movement of young people, and Malema stated, as the ANCYL president, that the youth must come together:

There is a space now, and we are going into SADC [the Southern African Development Community, a regional development organization composed of sixteen countries], we are going into Africa to consolidate the youth. As the youth of Africa, the future belongs to us and we must take it upon ourselves to defend that future. (Chauke 2011)

The EFF's voter base, of those who felt close to the party, declines drastically above age forty-four, or just before middle age, which comes at age forty-five (Citizen Surveys 2018). Those close to the EFF, included: 31 percent between eighteen and twenty-four years old (ANC at 15 percent); 31 percent between twenty-five and thirty-four (ANC at 26 percent); 17 percent between thirty-five and forty-four (ANC at 21 percent); and just 7 percent between forty-five and fifty-four (ANC at 18 percent); 7 percent fifty-five and above (ANC at 20 percent). Furthermore, the Center for Social Change's exit survey showed that during the 2019 election, the EFF received the highest percentage of support from voters between eighteen and twenty-four years old (Paret and Runciman 2019).

Proportionately, the EFF is getting the most attention from those who were "born free," or the first generation after apartheid who became old enough to vote for the first time in the 2014 elections. The "born free" eligible voters in the 2019 elections were between eighteen and twenty-five years old, and they are less likely than their older counterparts to express loyalty toward the more established parties involved in the anti-apartheid struggle, especially the ANC (Smith 2014). With this growing buy-in from South African youth, the EFF's future appears bright. Much of the EFF's success with the young population can be attributed to its rhetorically astute leader.

After the successful creation of the EFF and the momentum that followed, senior ANC members asked Malema to return to their party, including people like President Ramaphosa, Deputy President David Mabuza, and Member of Parliament Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. The hashtag #MalemaReturnsToANC even began trending on social media, but Malema declined the offer. At the funeral of his grandmother who had raised him, and who died at age ninety, days before the 2019 elections, Malema stated, "I want to say in front of her coffin, in her presence, that I will never go back to the ANC" (SABC News 2019b). On another occasion, he declared, "When am I going back to the ANC? Never. Not even in my next life" (Head 2020). The ANC would undoubtedly benefit from Malema's reinstatement; however, the EFF is too busy shaking up the political scene in South Africa, displaying joy while handling the serious business of African liberation.

The EFF’s Ethos at the Swearing-In Ceremony

The prevailing ethos of the EFF is their ability to convey a revolutionary message, intermingled with humorous moments and expressions of joy. The party’s capability of challenging the current ANC government in a confrontational and at times witty and bitterly humorous way, along with its transformation of parliamentary sessions into an entertaining scene, has invigorated South African politics, capturing the attention of those who are restless for change. EFF members continued to show their lively side soon after the 2019 elections, during the parliamentary Swearing-In Ceremony.

At this event, EFF members exhibited “Black Joy” by doing the unthinkable for conservatives—performing the popular and lively voshu dance, as the swearing-in was broadcast live. The pop culture term “Black Joy” refers to African’s ability of showing joy even during their marginalization, as they continue to enjoy life by laughing, singing, dancing, and loving others in spite of their current circumstances—ultimately, their joy becomes a form of resistance (Roderique 2019; Joseph 2020). City Press (2019) reported that the EFF was “the talk of the day.”

Before the event, EFF members were outside moving toward Parliament in a voshu brigade—smiling, laughing, singing, dancing, and dressed in their all-red work attire (Jo Bolono 2009). Malema and Shivambu were wearing the EFF’s signature clothing for men, their bright red miner’s outfit and hardhats, as they happily danced in the front and center of a circle-like formation of people. One could see another returning member of the National Assembly, who would become the newly elected EFF national chairperson by the end of the year, Ntombovuyo Veronica Mente. Mente was shaking her shoulders and dancing next to Malema. She was wearing the standard EFF red domestic uniform that’s designated for its female members. Her attire included a colorful patterned bandana around her neck along with an apron made from the same pattern, plus a red bandana wrapped around her head.

Two melodies were happening at once, one in the background and the other in the foreground. Phuti Peter Keetse, the #FeesMustFall activist and formerly the EFF Students Command (EFFSC) president—who became a representative for the province of KwaZulu-Natal at age twenty-five—along with the EFF’s former spokesperson, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, collectively sang the main melody of a struggle song in English, in a call and response manner: “My mother was a kitchen girl. My father was a garden boy. That’s why I’m a freedom fighter” (Jo Bolono 2019). In the background, EFF members were singing in their native African language. They collectively dipped to the rhythm of the song they were creating, to the beat

of the voshu dip. The entire group of EFF members continued to sing collectively, as they proceeded toward the Parliament doors.

During the Swearing-In Ceremony, with nineteen more members than they had in 2014, the EFF representatives performed the voshu inside Parliament. “The mood in the Parliament building on Wednesday appeared festive. The EFF seemed to be in particularly high spirits, no doubt because their total number of seats in the House has risen to forty-four,” according to a *Briefly* writer (Haasbroek 2019). The South African *EyeWitness News* edited a one-minute clip of Malema performing the voshu in Parliament, and it went viral with 280,000 YouTube views (2019). As the event was shown live on television, each time an EFF member’s name was called, she or he danced across the walkway to the podium, consistently dipping to perform the voshu properly. Even the news reporter from the South African independent eNews Channel Africa (eNCA) who was covering the ceremony live, started laughing upon noticing Malema dancing the voshu (2019a). Each dip generated clapping and laughter from the EFF members, many who were waving their hands in all the excitement. An edited video showed several EFF representatives performing the voshu, and then cut to Chief Justice Mogoeng and others who were displaying a deadly serious tone; this contrast made the video even more amusing (My Africa 2019).

Makoti Sibongile Khawula, an EFF member, contributed to the liveliness of the Swearing-In Ceremony (eNCA 2019b). Khawula, also an anti-apartheid activist who was sixty-four at the time of the 2019 elections, is known for her insistence on speaking native languages in Parliament, including isiZulu and isiXhosa. When her name was called, she danced enthusiastically to the podium with a broad smile on her round face, wearing her red maid uniform, accented by her patterned red apron. As she made each of her three dips, the EFF members of Parliament roared with happiness. After taking their oath, EFF representatives then performed the voshu together while dancing to their seats. The last person to come into the seated area was Khawula, who continued taking a long series of dips prior to sitting down—marking the sixty-four-year old, who is much older than the average EFF member, as the liveliest participant in the ceremony (My Africa 2019).

Adding to the day’s spiritedness was the swearing in of the Musician and Actor Brian Sindile Madlingozi, also known as Ringo, one of the most prominent new EFF leaders. Madlingozi, at age fifty-five, became the EFF representative for the province of Gauteng. He has been creating albums since 1996, and thus far has more than ten albums in his portfolio. During an interview, Madlingozi mentioned that as a child he would notice how the whites and Coloureds of Cape Town were treated differently, and so he wished he could belong to those groups

instead of being African (Sekudu 2019). But he has since outgrown those feelings, and as an EFF member he is now fighting on behalf of African liberation. During the Swearing-In Ceremony, an ANC member of Parliament was so thrilled about Madlingozi's presence that he was overheard urging him to sing—momentarily cooling off any sense of party-line divisions.

Who Is Julius Malema?

Malema held the sixtieth slot among “the top 100 most influential Africans,” according to *The Africa Report*, headquartered in France (*Africa Report* 2019). The American-based *Forbes* magazine ranked Malema second in its list of young and powerful men in Africa, behind only Joseph Kabila, the President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, who had assumed the presidency at age twenty-nine in 2001 and served until 2019. So just who is Julius Malema, really?

Julius Sello Malema, affectionately known as Juju, was born on March 3, 1981, into poverty, and he stems from South Africa's Seshego township in Limpopo province. This province is located in the northernmost part of South Africa, bordering Botswana to the west, Mozambique to the east, and Zimbabwe to the north. EFF supporters have also affectionately called Malema a son of the soil, just as they did with anti-apartheid activists such as Winnie Mandikizela-Mandela (a daughter of the soil), her husband Nelson Mandela, Steven Biko, and Oliver Tambo (all referred to as sons of the soil). Malema also has been called a champion of the poor. His mantra is that he is not scared of anyone or anything—including the Boers (descendants of Dutch settlers in South Africa, who also call themselves Afrikaners), the powerful politicians who support white monopoly capital, and even death.

Malema was raised in a single-parent household. His mother, Florah Mahlodi Malema, a domestic worker, passed away in 2006 after an epileptic seizure; and because of her condition, his grandmother, Koko Sarah Malema had raised him (Forde 2011). Koko died on the fourth of May, just four days before the 2019 South African general election.

Malema had created his own family after marrying Mantwa Matlala on December 27, 2014. Malema has three sons, including Munzhedzi and Kopano Malema, who are with Mantwa, and his oldest son, Ratanang Malema, who is from a previous relationship.

Malema is building his educational portfolio during a time when the opportunity to attend an institution of higher learning is still limited for South Africans. According to the last census, only about 30 percent of South Africans

have completed high school and about 12 percent of current students are likely to attend college (Statistics South Africa 2011). Although, Malema graduated from the University of South Africa with a diploma in youth development in 2010, followed by a bachelor of arts degree in communication and African languages in 2016. He earned a second bachelor of arts honors degree in philosophy in 2017. He is currently working on his master's degree; and Malema encourages others to also advance their level of education. "I am here to make education fashionable. Let us not compete for material things, let us compete for knowledge that cannot be taken away from us," said Malema (Hoo 2019). Ultimately, Malema maintains a consistency with his overall philosophy on the acquisition of knowledge, because he believes that EFF supporters will succeed by having superior logic. In fact, Malema says that colonization can never exist in a nation with an educated population (Radio 702, 2017).

Malema aims to restore South African's dignity by raising the standards that were normalized during apartheid. His overarching vision is for all South Africans to gain equality; for all Africans, including those in the Diaspora, to love themselves and to unify; and for all African countries to become one United States of Africa. As Malema (Lekabe 2019) said in his 2019 Election Manifesto speech, he believes Africans should have equitable access to the country's resources, and should not settle for anything less: "As long as there's no white person going to an outside toilet, there isn't supposed to be a black person who goes to the toilet outside. ... It must be inside the house [and] it must flush. It is not a luxury, it's a basic necessity. ... There is no dignity when the toilet is outside."

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Social Media, Protests, and the EFF Movement

The more the people understand, the more watchful they become, and the more they come to realize that finally everything depends on them and their salvation lies in their own cohesion, in the true understanding of their interests, and in knowing who their enemies are. The people come to understand that wealth is not the fruit of labor but the result of organized, protected robbery.

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) emerged by combining politics with protest, while residing in a nation dubbed as the "protest capital of the world." Indeed, the EFF has become grander than a domestic political party; instead, it is a mass movement designed to defend the rights and dignity of continental and diasporic Africans. The EFF's will to fight for the rights of the marginalized, has given them an allure of African superheroes who aid the oppressed and disenfranchised, coming to their rescue whenever and wherever they are in need of assistance. Where they show up, they support and endorse African traditions through their dancing and singing of struggle songs in their native tongue—for example, some sing in isiZulu, "What did we do? Our sin is being black." This freedom song is similar to the 1929 Fats Waller jazz tune that was later performed by *Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra* called, "(What Did I Do to Be so) Black and Blue?"—exemplifying that the struggle for freedom is not just a parochial battle.

The EFF leader, Julius Malema and his "fighters" are a part of an international movement of young people who have become more vocal about political issues. Its operation is in conjunction with a global protest movement of youth who are taking advantage of the potential reach of social media, such as those involved in the popular American social justice movement, Black Lives Matter; in fact, both organizations were officially launched in 2013. Despite the statistics indicating that South African youth are becoming increasingly apathetic towards voting, the EFF is making tremendous headway. Their protest movement has even gained momentum throughout parts of Africa as independent EFF branches have launched in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Malawi, some of which are officially recognized political parties (Head 2019, 2020).

Since its beginnings, the EFF has utilized the power of protest, which has helped in catapulting the party into a movement. At a press conference designed to introduce the EFF to South Africans in 2013, a journalist stated that the EFF seemed just like other political organizations. Malema quickly corrected this assertion, elaborating on its core differences, in one of his first descriptions of the EFF as a protest movement:

Ours is expropriation of the land without compensation, no one has spoken about that. You can't say we are like them. We want to nationalize those mines. We are going to nationalize, we are not going to pay for them. No one has said that. I mean, come on, where you from? You can't say we are like them. We are not like them. We are saying we are a protest movement. They are not a protest movement. (Multimedia Live 2018)

The EFF was born out of protests. It emerged from the Marikana Massacre of August 16, 2012, which happened in Marikana township, at the London-based Lonmin mine. The Lonmin company is considered "one of the world's biggest primary producers of platinum group metals" (NS Energy n.d.), but according to Amnesty International (2017), their miners live in "inadequate housing and squalid conditions." Thousands of protesting miners, mainly migrant workers, were seeking pay raises on that fateful day (Sanchez 2013). While protesting, the strikers waved knives and knobkerries, which are traditional club-shaped wooden weapons. The protesters blamed the ANC and its aligned union organization, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), for their unfavorable conditions instead of the British company.

The protests led to subsequent police killings, considered the "deadliest incident" in South Africa since the ANC took power in 1994 (Potelwa 2013; DW n.d.). Police doused tear gas onto the protesters and opened fire with semi-automatic weapons, shooting 400 real bullets and 500 rubber ones (Loveluck 2012); they

even shot miners as they ran away (SAHRC 2015). The shootings resulted in the deaths of forty-four people, mostly miners, and injured over seventy others (SAHRC 2015). The EFF called it “a premeditated massacre of the strikers with the intention of ending it or as part of ‘moving in to kill it’” (Shivambu 2017, 45). “Moving in to kill it,” was the phrase used by Zukiswa Mbombo, a police commissioner lieutenant-general, when she spoke of how to diffuse the situation (News 24, 2014).

Malema has been vocal concerning the injustice of the Marikana Massacre and has spoken up for miners generally, but the authorities did not want him to influence the strikers. About a month after the massacre, the police prevented Malema from speaking at the Wonderkop stadium in Marikana before a crowd of two thousand Lonmin workers. He was escorted out of the area by approximately ten police vans, with police officers hovering above in a helicopter with foot police nearby (Tau and Mpofo 2012). While the NUM leaders were telling the strikers to calm down, Malema told them that they had a right to be angry. Malema and other EFF members had even gone to the police station to charge the police with the killings of the miners (Eyewitness News 2012). About one year after the massacre, Malema would officially announce the EFF’s launch before a crowd of more than five thousand people, in the same township and atop the same hill the miners were massacred.

These miners are memorialized online through social media. On the anniversary of the massacre, protest photos are shared, like one showing some African and white police officers with their guns drawn, hovering over a group of about ten dead African miners lying on the dirt face down or the black and white headshots of all the miners who died juxtaposed together. Hashtags like #Marikana, #RememberMarikana, #MarikanaMassacre, and #JusticeForMarikana flourish on social media. These miners are remembered in a similar way online as other Africans, like the marginalized black people in America who have also been unjustly killed; some have been remembered via hashtag #CharlestonShooting, #TulsaRaceMassacre, or #WilmingtonCoup.

The #EFFBLM Protest in South Africa

Similar to the EFF, Black Lives Matter (BLM) defends the rights of black people. The Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, Inc., was cofounded by three African American women: Patrisse Cullors and Alicia Garza, who are both natives of Los Angeles and Opal Tometi, who was born in Phoenix and is the daughter of Nigerian immigrants—Cullors was the last of the three to leave

the organization, and she resigned in May of 2021. This decentralized organization began after Garza used the phrase "black lives matter" in a social media post after the acquittal of the neighborhood watch volunteer who fatally shot a black teen, Trayvon Martin; Cullors responded to her post by including the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter. The purpose of BLM is to end white supremacy and to build a local base to fight against vigilantes and the state-imposed violence on Black communities. "By combating and countering acts of violence, creating space for Black imagination and innovation, and centering Black joy, we are winning immediate improvements in our lives," according to Black Lives Matter (BLM, n.d.).

Similar to the EFF, BLM has spread nationally and has grown into an international movement. The phrase has become a rallying cry in all fifty of the United States, and has an international presence in such locations as France, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Canada, and Australia. Black Lives Matter protests have also occurred in numerous African countries, such as Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal and South Africa. The major difference between BLM and the EFF is the former is not a political party, although some of its members have run for office; notably, in 2020, forty-four-year-old Cori Bush became the first black woman elected to the U.S. Congress from the state of Missouri.

Although, turmoil has erupted within BLM after the creation of two sister organizations in 2020, the *BLM Political Action Committee* and *BLM Grassroots*. Ten local chapters, found in the Twitterverse under the hashtag #BLM10 (which would evolve into #BLM10Plus), severed their affiliation with the foundation surrounding questions over the group's funding, goals and direction; Cullors subsequently debunked the official status of some of those chapters (King 2020).

Since the EFF and BLM are both contemporary protest movements involved in the struggle for black rights, the EFF organized its own BLM protest to support the worldwide movement. It took place on June 8, 2020, outside Pretoria's *Embassy of the United States of America* and the Johannesburg and Cape Town *U.S. Consulate General* locations, as a show of solidarity for the BLM movement. (Found under the hashtag #EFFBLMProtest.) In conjunction with this protest, Malema launched an anti-racism campaign in support of the global BLM movement. Malema led the protest personally, along with the Omphile Maotwe, the EFF's treasurer-general, and Marshall Dlamini, the EFF's secretary-general, following the death of an unarmed forty-six-year-old African American man named George Floyd. During the protest, Malema made controversial statements as he spoke from the EFF's red mobile van, which opens into a stage. Malema asked Americans to "send a message back home, we are not scared of Trump, we are not scared of America, we are not scared of death, because we are dead already" (SABC News 2020a).

Floyd's death captured the world's attention. Outrage spread and protests erupted internationally after Darnella Frazier, a seventeen-year-old bystander, released a video showing a white police officer holding his knee on Floyd's neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 25, 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Later, it was determined that the police officer's knee was on Floyd's neck for 9 minutes and 29 seconds.) His alleged crime was to have forged a \$20 bill. Floyd was compliant upon being detained, yet the police officer still murdered him, with a hand casually resting in one of his pockets and with sunglasses resting on top of his head, while other police and several bystanders heard Floyd yell "I can't breathe" more than twenty times. Even though his mother was deceased at the time, Floyd said, "Momma, I love you. Reece, I love you. Tell my kids I love them. I'm dead" (MSNBC 2020). Afterwards, Floyd's cousin, Tera Brown, described his disposition: "You wouldn't be able to find a single person that knew him that didn't love him, and wouldn't tell you about his gentle spirit, his loving spirit" (Fox 9 News 2020).

Floyd's death brought to mind, from the portion of the brain that stores trauma, the similar fate suffered by Eric Garner. The hashtag #ICantBreathe originally started trending on social media in 2014, after the forty-three-year-old Garner of New York shouted "I can't breathe" eleven times before dying as a police officer strangled him in a chokehold. The officer was not indicted, but five years later he was fired. Garner's daughter, Erika—who considered herself "a daddy's girl"—became an activist fighting against police brutality after her father's death (The New Yorker n.d.). Three years after her father's passing, at just twenty-seven years old, Erika died of a heart attack. Research has shown a connection between racial disparities and life expectancy. "Substantial evidence shows that structural conditions associated with segregation and discrimination expose black Americans to more stress and fewer resources throughout life, a combination that, in turn, erodes health and increases mortality risk," said Umberson (2017).

These EFF supporters were fully aware of the condition of African Americans in the United States. In their protest, they knelt for the same amount of time that the police officer had his knee on Floyd's neck. They wore black T-shirts with the phrase "I can't breathe" plastered on the front in white letters. They dressed in black clothes, accented with red berets. Their mouths and noses were enclosed by masks, a form of protection from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic that was hitting South Africa harder than any other African country, although the United States had the highest COVID-19 infection rates worldwide, at the time (World Health Organization 2020). The EFF supporters held red placards with sayings in black or yellow print: "#WeCantBreathe," "Black People Are Not Slaves," "All Lives Can't Matter Until Black Lives Matter," "Capitalism and Racism are Two Sides of The

Same Coin," "No to Racism," "It's Time for Black Solidarity All Over the World," and "In 2025, We Will Look Back on This Day and the Years to Come and See If the U.S. Government Has Changed Its Policies against Black Americans. The World Is Watching! #BlackLivesMatter," among others (Eyewitness News 2020). As King T'Challa (IMBD 2018), played by the late actor Chadwick Boseman, said in the international blockbuster superhero movie, *Black Panther*, "What happens now determines what happens to the rest of the world."

While on stage, Malema related BLM to the situation facing South Africans, and to the experiences of other Africans internationally. "The day they [imperialists] remove their knee on the neck of the African continent, Africa will be better than America," he stated (SABC News 2020a). He also challenged South Africans who say "Black Lives Matter" but who, in his view, don't apply that principle in their own country—especially those who use the hashtag #PutSouthAfricaFirst, which he said is laced with the spirit of xenophobia:

You supported the killing of your fellow black brothers and sisters, and you have some useless hashtag on social media saying, #PutSouthAfricaFirst. That is narrow nationalism because the problem of black people is not the problem of South Africa. A black man is hated everywhere, be it in China, be it in France, be it everywhere. You cannot say South Africa first, you must say black first. And defend the black lives everywhere, including here. We will never be respected if we suffer from self-hate. (Eyewitness News 2020)

Malema displayed his commitment with a statement reminiscent of a phrase in *Black Panther*: "I don't need a pressuring hashtag, let me die with my truth" (SABC News 2020a). The movie's antagonist, Erik Killmonger, played by Michael B. Jordan, made a similarly honorable statement before dying: "Bury me in the ocean, with my ancestors that jumped from the ships, because they knew death was better than bondage" (IMDB 2018). Both dramatic statements indicate that the speaker has a guiding moral principle that he lives by and is willing to die for. Both phrases are laced with an ideology that death should be welcomed if one dies in an honorable state, as opposed to living with lies and dishonesty. This type of fearlessness is essential for those involved in the fight for African liberation, because just like the BLM protestors, the EFF supporters must oftentimes take a bold stand against the operations of their government.

South Africans are dealing with their own brutal deaths of African men. Collins Khosa, a forty-two-year-old African, was killed by law enforcement while he and his family were together at home on April 10, 2020, and his widow, Nomsa Montsha, attended the EFF's BLM protest at the Pretoria embassy. The EFF had spoken out on behalf of the Khosa family; in fact, the EFF provided legal representation in their lawsuit against the government and paid for the family's

funeral expenses. During the BLM protest, the EFF “fighters” also carried signs reading “Enough it’s Enough, #CollinsKhosa,” and “Justice 4 Collins Khosa,” and “Justice 4 George Floyd + Collins Khosa,” among others. Soldiers had allegedly brutally beaten Khosa to death for drinking at his home in Johannesburg during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, even though the government restriction covered alcohol sales, not drinking at home (Brown 2020). Soon afterwards, the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) released a report stating that its members had done nothing wrong. However, the High Court initially ruled in the Khosa family’s favor, declaring that everyone involved from the SANDF and the Johannesburg Metro Police Department must be suspended with pay, pending a police investigation. The final outcome of the investigation and the lawsuits remains pending as of this writing.

The EFF’s #ClicksMustFall Protests

Determined to reject racism wherever it pops up, in another one of its prominent actions, the EFF protested against a South African retailer. In 1968, Jack Golden launched the Clicks Group Limited, and company executives can now boast of 880 stores across South Africa including Clicks, The Body Shop, GNC, Claire’s, and Musica. The company earned 31.4 billion rand, or over \$2 billion USD in fiscal year 2019 (Clicks Group 2019). Clicks dominates the pharmaceutical sales industry in South Africa; its website states, “One in four medicines sold in South Africa today is from a Clicks pharmacy.” Furthermore, the chain operates 570 pharmacies as well as a national wholesale pharmaceutical distributor, and their goal is to open 900 stores in South Africa that include a pharmacy (Clicks Group 2019, 16).

After Clicks promoted an advertisement degrading Africans’ natural hair texture, the EFF came in like superheroes to preserve African dignity, not settling for anything less than justice. Clicks executives indicated in a letter that they would continue with business as usual, even though their ad described African women’s blown-out natural hair as “dry and damaged,” “frizzy and dull,” while calling white women’s natural hair “fine and flat” and “normal” (Current Affairs ZA 2020). The hashtag #ClicksMustFall began trending on social media as South Africans expressed outrage at the company’s demeaning advertisement. This advertisement intrinsically accommodated to colonized thinking, as it suggested that African women must adhere to superficial norms based on white standards. It encouraged African women to jeopardize their own sense of self-worth by purchasing hair care products from Clicks. The EFF viewed the ad, not just as an issue for African

women but as dehumanizing to all Africans, and their ground forces descended on shopping centers throughout South Africa.

The EFF stipulated its concerns to Clicks in a letter and said it would take robust action against the company if there was no response within twenty-four hours. In addition to demanding that Clicks close its stores nationwide for five days, from Monday through Friday, the EFF also requested a list of all people involved in the creation of the racist advertisement; the suspension of any staff who participated in its development; and the termination of the contract with TRESemmé, the company that created the advertisement. Clicks originally refused all of the EFF's demands.

As the outrage on social media escalated, Clicks simply issued an apology. But an apology was not enough for the EFF. "We have responded with just one sentence and that is to go to hell, and that is what we are repeating, and we are unapologetic about it," said Floyd Shivambu, the EFF's deputy president (News24 2020). As Malema insisted, white people will no longer be given the opportunity to say anything they want about Africans and simply apologize for it later:

White people insult us and then they apologize. They think that it is the end. We are no longer going to accept any apology, which is not accompanied by justice. We need justice, not an apology. Who is punished for projecting black people as ugly people? (SABC News 2020b)

The EFF successfully staged protests at Clicks stores nationwide, calling for a boycott of the company, after executives refused to close their stores for five days or to accept any of the EFF's demands. The EFF supporters marched in front of Clicks outlets at 9:00 a.m. the following Monday morning, September 7, 2020, to prevent their stores from opening, and continued doing so throughout the week. Protesters formed circles around Clicks storefronts, sang freedom songs, clapped their hands and danced, in their typical style of making their demands through joyful expressions of African cultural elements. Malema explained that the EFF's strategy was one of going directly after Clicks' revenue stream:

They projected us in that way because they wanted to make money. Projecting black people as people who cannot be celebrated, and their beauty is not befitting of human beings. So, we are here to say to them, since you wanted to make money at our expense. We are going to make you lose money. (SABC News 2020b)

Clicks said EFF supporters were protesting at thirty-seven of their stores throughout five South African provinces (Mlambo 2020; Reuters 2020). A legal adviser for Clicks said that the protests could affect the operations of 570 pharmacies and over thirteen thousand jobs (Zuzile 2020). Malema indicated that the protests

would be lawful and peaceful, and the EFF denied the allegations of involvement in the burning of one store and the vandalism of others.

This boycott became politically divisive, as the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) countered the EFF's efforts, accusing them of being perpetrators of violence. The EFF purportedly raided stores and supporters threw petrol bombs; although Malema denied all accusations of violence saying: "Racism is violence and the only way to defeat violence is through violence, and we are here peacefully" (SABC News 2020b). The EFF Spokesperson Veronica Mente said there was "a third force" at the protest pretending to be the EFF (Tandwa 2020). The DA expressed concern for the thousands of employees whose jobs could be threatened, and the DA's spokesperson decried the EFF's behavior at Clicks stores as political thuggery (Modise 2020). The term "thug" is a negative word used to describe African men who do not accommodate to white standards, and whites have used the term "political thuggery" to attack their black political opponents (Smiley and Fakunle 2016). Historically, "thug" is rooted in racist ideology; it associates criminality with African men to justify any unlawful deaths (Smiley and Fakunle 2016). Subsequently, the DA filed a criminal complaint against the EFF for intimidation, inciting violence, and malicious property damage, and the party called for the arrest of Malema and other EFF members. Moreover, the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) issued a statement condemning the EFF:

We equally condemn the violent actions by the EFF of vandalizing and burning down Clicks stores across the country. The actions by the EFF are nothing more than a display of a populist stance, with no meaningful solutions that will forge a non-racial and inclusive society envisioned by the ANC. The EFF must be held accountable for their violent actions as the perpetuation of such breeds a lawless society. (Chothia 2020)

Interestingly, neither the DA nor the ANCYL made a comment condemning the violent behavior of a fifty-two-year-old white woman who pointed her gun at EFF protesters during a heated exchange at a shopping mall on Tuesday, the eighth of September (Dayimani, 2018).

Overall, the EFF protests achieved significant gains. Clicks and Unilever (the parent company of TRESemmé) agreed to negotiate with the EFF (Ntsaluba 2020). Malema met with Clicks executives, including the CEO Vikesh Ramsunder, at the EFF headquarters after four days of protests. As a result, Clicks agreed to remove TRESemmé from its stores for ten days and to increase its share of local products. Clicks said it would offer five pharmaceutical university scholarships in 2021 for African women orphaned due to AIDS. It committed to making donations of fifty thousand bottles of hand sanitizer and fifty thousand sanitary

pads for women. In addition, Unilever agreed to donate at least ten thousand bottles of hand sanitizer and sanitary towels. All employees associated with the advertisement were suspended and the top executive resigned. While the protests were taking place, Shoprite, Woolworths, Checkers, and Pick n Pay stopped selling TRESemmé products, and all Clicks locations were closed on Wednesday, the ninth of September. Clicks has said it will continue to monitor their company processes and participate in additional meetings with Malema. These results proved that the EFF was not just making populist claims "with no meaningful solutions," as the ANCYL had insisted. Afterwards, the hashtag #ThankYouEFF was trending on social media (Chothia 2020).

Previous to the Clicks incident in 2018, the EFF protested against the retail company, H&M, after its executives created an advertisement of a black boy wearing a hoodie, calling him the "coolest monkey in the jungle" and provoking international outrage.

The #MustFall Movement

African youth have hybrid identities that have been shaped by global discourse, and they have been reproducing these identities and embedding them in society through social media (Iwilade 2013). These hybrid youth are aware of the global discussions on democracy and development, while simultaneously understanding the elements of disempowerment and local exclusion that they experience in their own country. This hybrid identity makes them more inclined to engage in resistance and to renegotiate their societal spaces. Bosch (2013), in a study of youth in South Africa and their use of Facebook, found that even when youth were not politically active, they were using social media as a tool to re-engage in political debate. Iwilade (2013) determined that although youth are using social media to renegotiate authority by shaping discourse in crisis situations, they are still excluded from actual political negotiations; although, this situation is changing as more young people become involved in politics. Since the EFF is among the top three political parties, its members have reduced the likelihood of engaging in mass self-communication while lacking political influence.

South African youth achieved significant progress by participating in the #MustFall movement, which has had several iterations: the #RhodesMustFall movement and the #FeesMustFall movement, which were repurposed into the #ZumaMustFall movement, and the most recent #ClicksMustFall. Through these mass movements, South African youth have been feverishly trying to remove the

cloaks of an inherited oppression by fighting for a true end to apartheid in South Africa.

Malema has expressed confidence that young people will move South Africa forward. In an interview concerning his role in the African Union's *Pan-African Parliament*, Malema stressed the importance of youth involvement in politics:

Young Africans must come out of fear and participate in politics. They must decide their own future, and not allow the older generation to decide the future on their behalf because the revolution is an activity of the youth and therefore in the absence of the youth, there won't be change. The youth must take a center stage in politics. ... The youth must unite this continent and make it an equal partner in the geopolitics. ... We ought to demonstrate that we got natural mineral resources and we must use them to build our continent to be an equal partner on the table of world politics. (Ngabonziza 2018)

The #MustFall campaigns were highly successful social media undertakings, though they were not covered widely by traditional media outlets (Dlamini et al. 2018). The #FeesMustFall campaign, in which students protested rising university fees, had substantial impact. Nearly 1.3 million tweets were posted with the hashtag #FeesMustFall from October 13 to November 10, 2015 (Peterson et al. 2016). The #FeesMustFall protests began at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and soon spread to the University of Cape Town and elsewhere. Police arrested thirty-two students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. They fired stun grenades and rubber bullets at Wits students, while students responded by throwing stones (Hauser 2016).

The students involved in #FeesMustFall refused to make the movement political, but the EFF still provided their support. A quality and free education had always been one of the EFF's seven cardinal pillars. Malema called for peaceful treatment of the protesters: "We call on all the police and security forces to act with restraint because South Africa does not want another Marikana Massacre inflicted on students by the violent and murderous regime of the ANC" (Daily Vox 2016). Ndlozi, the former EFF spokesperson and an EFF member of Parliament, said the party was demanding favorable action in response to the #FeesMustFall movement. He compared the students' actions to those of Nelson Mandela, whom the members of Parliament had praised as a freedom fighter:

We are therefore calling on all charges and sentences against #FeesMustFall activists to be dropped with immediate effect, particularly by the universities that have expelled all these activists ... the same way you freed Nelson Mandela who was arrested in possession of explosives and guns, who had sworn as an MK commander to kill people. The same way you were willing to release him from prison, calling him a freedom fighter, you must free all #FeesMustFall activists from prison, unconditionally. They

never killed anybody, they never tried to kill anybody, they were fighting for access to education. Stop criminalizing them. (Economic Freedom Fighters 2018)

The #FeesMustFall activists have become some of the youngest members of Parliament. Among those sworn in as EFF members of the sixth South African Parliament after the 2019 elections were Phuti Peter Keetse (age twenty-seven), Naledi Chirwa (twenty-five), and Vuyani Pambo (thirty).

As a University of Pretoria student, Chirwa was the EFF student commander and media and communications officer. She played an instrumental role in #FeesMustFall, for which she was arrested and later suspended from the university. Chirwa is currently pursuing a master's degree at the University of Witwatersrand in theater and performance. "I'm putting forward the politics of young people in different lengths, because I'm not just an observer of the fallists, or of the feminists, or of the gender activists; I am all those people," said Chirwa (Youth Village 2020).

As a student at Wits University, Pambo was also arrested for his involvement in the #FeesMustFall movement. He produced a documentary film called "Everything Must Fall" that won in the best documentary category at the *South African Film and TV Awards* ceremony in 2019. At the event, Pambo was dressed in all black, accented by trimmings of red patterned African print. He shocked audience members when he ended his acceptance speech by saying, "Those children [of slain mine workers] will have a quality decolonized education under the leadership of the EFF I say, vote for the EFF. Thank you very much" (Ndlozi 2019). A video of the event was tweeted by Ndlozi, a likely move from the EFF's former national spokesperson.

The participation of youth on Twitter during the protests illustrates the role of social media in the political awakening of South African youth. The hashtag #RhodesMustFall movement eventually led to the official extraction of the statue honoring the British imperialist Cecil Rhodes, the hashtag #FeesMustFall movement led to the then President Zuma to declaring that student fees would not be increased in 2016, and the hashtag #ZumaMustFall movement eventually led to Zuma's resignation from the presidency. "It is sufficient to say ... [that] the critical intersection of globalized social media and crisis have reshaped African politics in unprecedented ways and the youth appear poised to take full advantage of this to renegotiate power relations," said Iwilade (2013). Although, young people are still less likely to be involved in politics.

Malema has said that ageism is a crisis throughout Africa, even though many of the countries with the world's youngest populations are on the African continent. South Africa defines youth as all people age thirty-five and under. According to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (2018), the average age of members in the *Parliament of the Republic of South Africa* was fifty-four, and just 6 percent of

members were thirty-five years old or younger. Fewer than 1 percent of the ANC contingent in Parliament qualified as youth as of 2018, while the DA had 12.6 percent and the EFF had 17 percent. Most EFF parliamentary members fell between the ages of thirty-six and forty-five, whereas ANC members were generally from forty-six to sixty-five years old. Some politicians may have angst concerning political involvement of the youth, as was expressed by the Indian ANC member and former Minister of Communications, Yunus Carrim, in Parliament during the *Debate on President's State of the Nation Address*:

When did Lenin and Marx say that the youth would be the revolutionary motive force for socialism? Not Lenin, not Marx and not the other great hero, the great Frantz Fanon, ever said that. So, why this youth fundamentalism? Everybody beyond Malema's age is a reject, is a hack. Yet they admire China. What is the average age of members of the central committee or the government of China? (People's Assembly 2019)

Opposition to ageism has been visible in some other African countries. The Nigerian government launched a campaign to increase the participation of African youth in Parliament. The government had previously established age requirements for participation in Parliament, but President Muhammadu Buhari, seventy-two years old at the time, proposed a "Not Too Young to Run" bill. This bill passed in 2018, thereby reducing the minimum age in the Senate by five years, to thirty, and in the House of Representatives and the State House of Assembly by five years, to twenty-five (WFD 2019). Rwanda, with Paul Kagame as president has made significant gains, in a country praised for having the highest percentage of women in Parliament worldwide. The average age of a person in Kagame's Cabinet is about forty-seven years old (Tashobya 2018; Statista 2021b). As of July 2018, South Africa ranked forty-third globally in youth participation in the legislature, with 2.75 percent of lower chamber members thirty-years old or less; the United States had no members of Congress aged thirty or younger, at that time (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2018). Globally as of 2016, 1.9 percent of national legislature members were under thirty-year old, 14.2 percent were under forty, and 26 percent were under forty-five (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016).

Politics and Social Media in South Africa

The top three parties in the 2019 South African general election have used YouTube and other social networking services (SNSs) to spread their message during the campaign season. This strategy made sense in view of the widespread internet use in South Africa, which rose from 9 percent of the population in 2009 to 54 percent

in 2018 (Freedom House 2018). On average, South Africans spend three hours on the mobile internet daily (Cape Digital Foundation 2017), and at least 50 percent of the population watches videos on their mobile phones (Hootsuite 2017). Kreutzer (2009), whose research sample consisted of 441 students in the eleventh grade in a low-income section of Cape Town, found that 68 percent of urban and low-income students typically use the internet on their mobile phone daily. Further, 89 percent of YouTubers are between 20 and 29 years old (Anderson 2015), making YouTube an ideal way to reach youth during a political campaign season.

South Africans are active on all the major, mostly American and Chinese-based, social media applications. The most popular platforms among those using the internet in South Africa are WhatsApp (93 percent), YouTube (92 percent), Facebook (87 percent), Instagram (70 percent), Messenger (65 percent), Twitter (59 percent), LinkedIn (49 percent), Pinterest (45 percent), Tik Tok (38 percent), SnapChat (30 percent), Telegram (20 percent), WeChat (17 percent) Tumblr (13 percent), Badoo (11 percent) and Reddit (10 percent; Statista 2020).

EFF members took advantage of this boom in social media by establishing a more robust social media presence than either of the other top political parties. At the time of the elections, in May 2019, the ANC's YouTube channel had around 1,700 YouTube subscribers; the DA's channel had over 9,800; and the EFF had more than 30,000. Hence, the EFF had almost eighteen times as many subscribers as the ANC and three times as many as the DA.

Malema has substantial influence on Twitter. A Pew Research study found that South African Twitter users were younger than the general population and were almost three times more likely to be under age fifty, with 73 percent of all users under that age (Wojcik and Hughes 2019). Malema had the seventh most popular Twitter account in South Africa (Business Insider SA 2019), with 2.4 million followers, over 1 million more than Mmusi Maimane and 2 million more than Cyril Ramaphosa, both of which were his political opponents in the 2019 election.

Malema also outperformed the other two political parties on Facebook. Malema had over 670,000 followers, more than double Maimane's total of 288,000, while Ramaphosa had only 75,000. South African Facebook users also skewed young and were most likely to be between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four, with this age group representing 65 percent of all users in South Africa (Hootsuite 2017).

Malema was also leading by far on Instagram with 366,000 followers, or approximately 330,000 more than Maimane, with Ramaphosa trailing even further.

The EFF members have descended onto the scene like African superheros and have resurrected the youth, the children of the "zombified," provoking a new-found urgency toward the actualization of their full equality. In fact, the founding

values in the South African Constitution are that of human dignity, equality, and every person having the right to pursue her or his fullest potential (South African Government 1996). The youth are using social media combined with protest to turn these resounding virtues into a stone-cold reality. When this actualizes, they'll gain their economic freedom by having full access to Africa's treasure trove of resources, just as the Wakandans have done with their vibranium. Moreover, the EFF's first cardinal pillar includes the expropriation of land without compensation, and Malema has drawn inspiration from Zimbabwe's land reform program:

You can say whatever you want about Zimbabweans, in the next ten years they will be the only Africans in the whole of Africa who own their country, because why? They were ready to take the pain. Revolution is about pain. Revolution is change. And change is painful. We are ready for that pain. We need that pain. (Multimedia Live 2013)

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PART II

**IT'S
UNAPOLOGETICALLY,
JULIUS MALEMA AND
THE EFF**

The Root of Malema's Humor

You have not wasted your votes, we heard your cries, and we are here to champion your interest without failure. We vow to you that we never cease to ensure that Parliament remains a house with teeth that bite. Particularly adding incompetent, mediocre, and corrupt fat cats that are permanently sleeping on duty, and only wake up on payday or on the day of stealing.

—Julius Malema, *2019 SONA State of the Nation
Address Debate*

YouTube began in 2005 with a humorous elephant video and has since attracted more than 2 billion monthly users worldwide, providing a powerful new tool for modern political parties such as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). Since the first YouTube election during the 2008 United States' campaign season, politicians have intentionally added elements of humor to their campaign videos, dubbed as "politico-tainment" or "poli-tainment." Furthermore, unfiltered, controversial videos of politicians can be uploaded by independent users, extending politician's reach without the campaign staff themselves having to exert even a diminutive amount of effort. Meanwhile, the most enjoyable portions of speeches can be edited into short, side-splitting videos, which have the grassroots potential of going viral.

The EFF has benefited from the humorous nature of YouTube, since one can usually hear audience laughter at different parts of its President and Commander

in Chief, Julius Malema’s speeches, even in the least likely of places. He has become so widely recognized for his humor that some have either referred to him as a comedian or have compared him to actual comedians. Furthermore, a YouTube search for Malema’s humor using the keywords “Julius Malema” and “funny,” found that mostly all of the videos generated were recorded in the National Assembly, which means that Malema and the EFF could be altering preexisting perceptions of Parliament as drab.

Parliament has had such a reputation for being dull that even some South African members of the National Assembly were known for falling asleep during sessions. For instance, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, an EFF member of Parliament, affectionately known as “the people’s Bae”—for grabbing the hearts of young people due to his extraordinary singing abilities, charming smile, unique style, doctorate degree, and whatever else one’s mind can daydream about—has addressed sleeping in Parliament several times. (The word “bae” is an affectionate slang term short for “babe” and is also an acronym for “before anyone else”; Urban Dictionary 2017). Ndlozi has chastised the other members of Parliament for nodding off:

Had you focused on your responsibility to secure a future for the black youth, there wouldn’t have been a Fees Must Fall; instead, you came here to Parliament to sleep. Filling your bellies with resources that you are looting in state coffers. Bloody sleepists ... Had you come here to become the parents, whose role and responsibilities at all times is to secure a future for the young, you would have known that you have to prepare universities so that they are accessible, particularly for the black talented youth; instead, you came here to sleep. (Mzalendo Media 2020)

Malema has also addressed the parliamentary sleepists. “I am happy to report to you that Parliament is no longer a sleeping place ... They used to sleep in Parliament, but we have woken them up,” he said (Youth Village n.d.). Malema has even spiced up events known for their serious nature—press conferences.

A BBC Journalist Tries to Take on Malema

Certain British news outlets were fuming after Malema’s interaction with a white British journalist (Evans 2010; The Guardian 2010). Malema, while still the African National Congress Youth League’s (ANCYL) president and approximately three years prior to cofounding the EFF, held a press conference at the ANC headquarters in Johannesburg. He was speaking in the crowded room, in front of a *step-and-repeat* publicity graphic wall, which included a backdrop of repeated ANC logos spread throughout a yellow background. (The step-and-repeat

nomenclature comes from the actions of celebrities who step onto the red carpet, allowing their photo to be taken, after which another person repeats the action, or it can also refer to photo editors who have to repeat a logo for a banner design; Parsons 2016.) During the press event, Jonah Fisher, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) correspondent, began making disrespectful comments toward Malema. Malema had mentioned that the “popcorn and mushroom” Zimbabwean opposition party at that time, led by the then Prime Minister of Zimbabwe Morgan Tsvangirai, was located in air-conditioned offices in the wealthy Johannesburg suburb of Sandton, instead of in Zimbabwe’s Mashonaland or Matabeleland (Malema 2014). Malema was insinuating that the political party should show solidarity with the impoverished masses by operating out of the trenches of Zimbabwe, instead of accessing luxuries while living in one of the richest suburbs in South Africa. Suddenly, Fisher shouted from the back of the room, “You live in Sandton.” Still at the podium, Malema swiftly aimed at the root of the issue as he proceeded to tell Fisher not to come into the press conference with a “white tendency of undermining blacks.” Malema continued by saying, “Let me tell you. You are tjatjarag (audience laughter) ... This is a building of a revolutionary party, and you know nothing about the revolution.” (Tjatjarag is pronounced like “cha-chara-ch,” and it is expressed when one is annoyed by an over-eager, over-zealous, or over-talkative person; Urban Dictionary 2010).

“So they’re not welcome in Sandton, but you are?” interjected Fisher.

“So here, you behave, or else you jump (audience laughter),” Malema sternly replied. Fisher responded with a laugh, “You’re joking.” Malema told him not to laugh because his remarks were not funny. The exchange escalated as Fisher continued making remarks.

Malema asked his security to remove “this thing here,” referring to the journalist. He then continued speaking to Fisher: “You don’t come here with that tendency. Don’t come here with that white tendency (attendees clapping), not here; you can do it somewhere else, not here.” As Fisher was packing up his equipment, Malema said, “If you’ve got a tendency of undermining blacks, even where you work, you are in the wrong place. Here, you are in the wrong place.”

“That’s rubbish, that’s absolutely rubbish,” added Fisher, expressing his disbelief that consequences could stem from his behavior. “Then go out, you can go out. Rubbish is what you have covered in that trouser, that is rubbish (audience laughter). That which you have covered in that trouser is rubbish, okay,” Malema retorted, adding the insult that “you are a small boy, you can’t do anything.” Malema’s use of the term “boy,” which has been historically used by white men to greet Africans of all ages including the elderly, signified a reversal of the roles between the black or the colonized man, and the white male or the colonizer.

"I didn't come here to be insulted," Fisher stated, seemingly disappointed that he was being held accountable for his actions and could not operate freely from a position of either conscious or unconscious bias. His bias made it permissible for him to toss out red-herring microaggressions at the ANCYL president, raising personal issues that had no relationship with the political issues of the ANC.

Concluding that Fisher's behavior was unmanageable, Malema vocally overpowered him, cutting off his sentence loudly, yelling "go out, go out," calling him a "b@stard" and a "bloody agent" as people snickered in the background. Historically, the white ruling class has placed agents, either black or white, strategically in key roles in black-rights organizations or they have sent them to black activists' events as informers to later report their findings to the establishment.

After Fisher left, Malema articulated some of his rules of etiquette for the remaining journalists, stating, "It's not a beer hall here." He continued, "You don't howl here, especially when we speak, and you behave like you are in an American press conference? This is not America, it's Africa." Malema's humor is typically unscripted, raw, impromptu, and painfully honest.

This short exchange gained the attention of the global news media, and harsh criticisms of Malema's behavior came from mainstream news companies. A journalist from *The Guardian*, which is based in Britain with a readership of over 1 million, wrote that Malema was furious and had "exploded in rage" (Smith 2010); another journalist from *The Telegraph*, a British-based company with a circulation of over three hundred thousand, called him a "firebrand" and a "growing embarrassment" (Evans 2010). *The East African* (2010), a news source based in Kenya and founded by Aga Khan IV, published an article describing Malema as a "bigot" and a "racist." Yusuf Abramjee (2010), the chairman of the National Press Club in South Africa (an organization for communications and journalism professionals), issued a press statement on behalf of the organization, strongly condemning Malema's actions and insisting that his name calling had to end.

YouTube viewers had a different reaction to the exchange between Malema and Fisher—more people like it. The video of the incident was uploaded to at least eleven different YouTube channels, and the average video lasted about two and a half minutes. One of the three videos that attracted the most views and likes was posted by the YouTube channel, Sowetan Live (2010), a Johannesburg daily paper; it received over 500,000 views, with 1,000 likes and around 320 dislikes. Another channel by an independent YouTuber, domenickeir123 (2010), who only has about 250 subscribers, posted this video (with muffled audio) and attracted over 470,000 views, with around 730 likes and 145 dislikes. Yet another independent YouTuber from the Danny Revel channel (2010), which only has around 350 subscribers, received almost 95,000 views, with almost 80 likes and close to 20 dislikes.

Even though Malema's rhetoric is electrifying for many, it terrorizes others because through his humor he often attacks the implicit moral order of neo-imperialism, neo-apartheid, neo-colonialism, and neo-slavery. This intrinsic order calls for Africans to be well-behaved and to treat Europeans with respect, regardless of how demoralizing the exchange may be. Moreover, all others are expected to obediently accept these rules while happily assimilating into a foreign existence, actualizing an intensely self-agonizing simulacrum, which can be understood through an intense reading of the Martinique activist, Frantz Fanon. Fanon speaks about overcoming his own personal battles, or his Europeanized simulacrum, amidst the expectations of his Afro-Caribbean community members to act deferentially, fully assimilating into a French standard:

I put the white man back in his place; emboldened. I jostled him and hurled in his face: accommodate me as I am; I'm not accommodating anyone. I snickered to my heart's delight. The white man was visibly growling. His reaction was a long time coming. I had won. I was overjoyed. (Fanon 1952, 110–11)

Even though Fanon and Malema are of different generations and are from different parts of the world, the racism Fanon experienced still persists today. Both men have had to “put the white man in his place” so to speak, to move themselves beyond the trappings of race and its unruly cousin racism. Fanon accomplished this goal through his psychological assessments, writing, and introspection, and Malema achieved it through politics, superior logic, and his no-nonsense sheer brazenness of speech.

Trevor Noah Features Malema

Malema's confrontational and humorous rhetoric has even caught the attention of Comedian Trevor Noah. Noah, who hosts the Comedy Central news satire program *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, is the first African comedian to become a staple of the American comedy scene. Noah was born in 1984, of an African mother, Patricia, and a Swiss German father, Robert—automatically placing this German chocolate dip into South Africa's Coloured racial category. Although, in Noah's stand-up comedy routine, he expressed enthusiasm as a mixed person, for meeting the qualifications of being black in the United States of America (2019). Noah comedically alluded to the complexities of the “one-drop rule” principle, which supports a system of racial hierarchy in the U.S. It specifies that any drop of black blood makes a person (100 percent) black, whether the black relative is one's mother or one's great-great-great-great-grandmother.

Periodically, Noah also jokes about South African politicians, and in May 2019 he sparked angry responses from some EFF supporters after featuring Malema in a comedy skit, although his audience laughed hysterically. As Noah showed clips of Malema calling Fisher a small boy and a b@stard, the audience roared in laughter. "That's the best ending to an interview I've ever seen in my life," said Noah (Levitt 2019). In his effort to mock Malema's attitude towards journalists, Noah yelled out the same profane word several times that Malema used during his confrontation with the BBC correspondent, and Noah produced another joke based on his funny interpretation of Malema's rhetoric about white people.

Malema addressed a press conference on this issue six days later as anger brewed among EFF supporters on social media, and the two-minute clip of Malema's press conference received widespread attention. Malema started his press conference by saying, "We love Trevor Noah. We will continue to laugh at his jokes. He is our brother. He is doing well. He is entitled to his own opinions" (eNCA 2019). Malema went on, "It's a free country" and "We shouldn't be angry at jokes. It's a joke. Let's not be angry at jokes. Jokes we laugh at." The uploaded video of Noah's comedy skit on Malema accumulated around 550,000 views, around 4,600 likes and 600 dislikes.

Malema helped to resolve any tensions by speaking of Noah favorably, showing him brotherly love, while simultaneously speaking with skepticism. While stating that South Africans still wanted to see Noah do well, he also mentioned that he hoped Noah was not trying to please his masters whom he traveled to see in Cape Town. Malema concluded, "I will continue to watch him. South Africans should continue to watch him. South Africans should continue to support him. Despite all the nonsense he said, he remains one of our own" (eNCA 2019).

Being featured on *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* has exposed Malema to a large audience, which mirrors the EFF's core demographic. As mentioned in chapter one, Citizen Surveys (2018) found that 70 percent of people who felt close to the EFF, right before the 2019 elections were between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four. Moreover, *The Daily Show* has been the number one, late-night talk show in all youth demographics, including both eighteen to twenty-four and eighteen to thirty-four years old (Press 2017), attracting an average audience of over 1.4 million viewers (Feldman 2017). The median age of *The Daily Show's* viewers is thirty-six, younger than the median age of viewers of broadcast or cable news networks (Gottfried et al. 2015).

The Daily Show viewers have been more engaged on social media than those of any other late-night talk show, reaching 6 million actions in a single month, including retweets, likes, shares, reactions, and comments (Press 2017), thereby making humor a very effective platform. The internet culture rewards humor

by giving it more attention than user-generated content that is not humorous. “Humor as a widespread political communication device emerges as not unique to the Internet but distinctly of the Internet” (Davis et al. 2018).

Humor is a mysterious social-behavioral aspect of human functioning because of its ability to simultaneously alienate people and bring people together. It can produce a sudden release of emotions: laughter, smiling, grinning, or sudden exhalations. Humor can take many forms: wit, satire, parody, puns, sarcasm, mockery and ridicule, jokes, exaggeration, irony, scorn, ludicrous behavior, word play, repartee, and surprising juxtaposition of thoughts. As a show of appreciation for Malema's humor, many independent YouTube users have uploaded his videos to their channels—including an enormously popular one, in which Malema criticizes Africans use of blond wigs.

Malema Questions Blond Wigs

During the 2019 South African general election season, a YouTube channel site administrator uploaded an EFF press conference clip featuring Malema. The “Make Afrika Great” channel posted an edited, almost three-minute clip of Malema at a conference and integrated its own photos and video with the clip. A comical title was added: “Julius Malema Challenging PLO Lumumba, Wigs in Zimbabwe and Kenya.” Malema mentioned Kenyan, Zimbabwean, and South African judges, along with some lawyers and law professors, who wear blond wigs while also lecturing South Africans on decolonization. Actually, Malema never mentioned the popular and well respected Kenyan lawyer and activist Patrick “PLO” Lumumba (who was recognized by the *New African* magazine as one of the 100 most influential Africans in 2017) in his remarks. This short video received approximately 114,000 views (Make Africa Great 2018). The clip shows Malema speaking to the press on this issue, intermingled with user photos of African judges and lawyers wearing straight-haired blond wigs. Malema comically postulated on the symbolism and the psychology behind wearing the wig:

You can only think when you are wearing a wig that looks like the hair of white people. You are actually wearing white brains. The reason why you think properly is because of that wig, according to colonialism. We need to start doing away with those things. (Makozewe 2018)

Malema, in this instance, was speaking comedically about the need to discard colonial symbols, which is ironically what PLO Lumumba oftentimes does as well. This type of corrective comedy is known as “disciplining by laughter” (Meyer

2006). His remarks are reminiscent of the well-documented, witty comment by the United Negro Improvement Association founder Marcus Garvey, who said, "Do not remove the kinks from your hair; remove them from your brain" (Garcia 2012, 116). When social correctives occur through humor, the person ridicules what he considers a lower form of language or behavior. Thus, Malema's goal was to encourage Africans to discard colonial symbols and to start engaging in activities that unifies them, including efforts to achieve a single African currency, a borderless African continent, one dominant African language (Kiswahili), one African president and one government (African Insider 2020). "That's what colonizers did—divide us, make sure that we don't have a common language to communicate among ourselves, and then we use their language to communicate, so they can hear everything we say," said Malema (Makozewe 2018).

The Pan-African nature of Malema's remarks, intertwined with the comedy embedded in his videos, is not only effective for the wide-reaching social media platform, but allows the general viewer to maintain focus throughout his speech, as Malema moves on to the less entertaining topics or matters of a more serious nature.

Black Rhetorical Humor

Malema uses everything in his verbal arsenal to challenge the existing racial hierarchy in South Africa, including his natural humor. Though he is a serious politician seeking equality for South Africans, he is sometimes comedic. At the opposite end of the spectrum, a comedian's primary goal is to make others laugh, but sometimes a comedian may incorporate social justice issues into her or his stand-up routines. Malema makes his politicking more entertaining through his use of humor, just as comedians, conversely, make their routines more meaningful through their incorporation of social justice issues. Thus, when politics and humor are used in tandem, the performance can become a powerful force for social change, especially in the lives of the marginalized who have previously used comedy as a tool, among many others, in the fight for their own sustenance.

In their efforts to survive amidst the harshness of white superiority all over the world, and especially in South Africa and America, black people have had to develop a unique sense of humor. The humanity of Africans can be witnessed through humorous stories of their daily experiences and their expressions of Black Joy, despite the collective oppression they face. Humor can play the distinct function of enabling a broader conversation on sensitive social issues, without necessarily causing others to feel threatened. Humor has the capacity to break down

barriers by opening up discussions on racism, enabling the community not only to learn about racism but potentially to engage in political change. As the U.S. comedian Chris Rock has said, “Comedy is the blues for people who can’t sing” (Vaccarezza and Croce 2018, 173). It is also a mechanism by means of which controversial topics can be explored.

Some comedians have intermingled racism and comedy to expand our discussions of race relations. Noah made his American debut on *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* in 2014, drawing connections between the injustices happening in South Africa and the United States. Noah said, a day after arriving from South Africa, that his hands were tired—not from flying into the United States, but because he had been holding them up above his head since his arrival. “I’ve been holding my hands like this since I got here [in a hands up, don’t shoot position]. I never thought I’d be more afraid of police in America than South Africa. It kind of makes me a little nostalgic for the old days back home,” he said (The Daily Show 2014). The concluding part of his skit showed a clip of Nicholas Kristof, *The New York Times* columnist, speaking as a guest on CNN, comparing the United States’ world-leading incarceration rate to South Africa’s:

The United States right now incarcerates more African Americans as a percentage than apartheid South Africa did. The race gap on wealth in the United States right now, between the median white family and median black family, is eighteen-fold; that’s greater than the black white wealth gap was in apartheid South Africa. (The Daily Show 2014)

Kristof wrote an opinion piece in *The New York Times* titled, “When Whites Just Don’t Get It,” and he elaborated on the state of African Americans in comparison to white Americans.

The net worth of the average black household in the United States is \$6,314, compared with \$110,500 for the average white household, according to 2011 census data. The gap has worsened in the last decade, and the United States now has a greater wealth gap by race than South Africa did during apartheid. (Whites in America on average own almost 18 times as much as blacks; in South Africa in 1970, the ratio was about 15 times.) The black-white income gap is roughly 40 percent greater today than it was in 1967. (Kristof 2014)

The American comedian Dave Chappelle—who went abruptly to South Africa in 2004 because he felt pressured by Comedy Central executives, breaking his \$50 million contract—released a Netflix video in June 2020, titled “8:46.” This was a reference to the length of time a Minneapolis police officer had his knee on George Floyd’s neck, as he yelled “I can’t breathe” more than twenty times before dying. Coincidentally, 8:46 was also the time of Chappelle’s birth. Although,

almost one year later during the State of Minnesota v. Derek Michael Chauvin case, the world would learn that the exact timespan of the officer's knee on Floyd's neck was actually an even more brutal, 9 minutes and 29 seconds. The YouTube video of Chappelle's nearly thirty-minute stand-up comedy routine received almost 30 million views within three months after it was posted, with 880,000 likes and around 20,000 dislikes. American comedian and activist Dick Gregory said humor wasn't about oppression in the past: "If we could go back to Africa before colonialism, we'd find that humor reflected joy, while in the early days of the American Negro, humor reflected pain" (Schechter 1970, xi). That pain is still enduring in today's Black comedy scene.

Chappelle's stand-up routine was devoted to challenging racial injustice. He revealed that his great-grandfather was enslaved, and he went on to talk about several unarmed African American men killed by the police (or, in Trayvon Martin's case, a member of a neighborhood watch group): Erik Garner, age forty-three, of Staten Island, New York; Trayvon Martin, age seventeen, of Sanford, Florida; Michael Brown, age eighteen, of Ferguson, Missouri; John Crawford III, age twenty-two, of Beavercreek, Ohio, the town where Chappelle resides; and others. In response to a critic of the George Floyd protests, Chappelle said, "We're not desperate for heroes in the black community; any n*gger that survives this nightmare is my goddamn hero (audience applause)" (Netflix is a Joke 2020).

Black rhetorical humor is used not only to protest racial injustice, but also to challenge aspects of one's own culture. On a lighter note, the YouTube sensation and young Ugandan comedian Kansiiime Anne, known as Africa's Queen of Comedy, who inverted her birth name to the stage name Anne Kansiiime, has over 1 million YouTube subscribers on the channel featuring her show, "Don't Mess with Kansiiime" (Kansiiime Anne 2019). She makes daily life issues into humorous skits. In one of her videos, an African man playing the role of her husband tells her how she should have more food on her plate of rice and beans. He compares her plate to his, which is filled with meat, eggs, and chapati (a type of flat bread), as he says, it constitutes a balanced diet that will help him to grow strong. In response, Anne says she is focusing on food specialization like the animals, who eat very little variety of foods and whom, by the way, he couldn't even take on in a fight:

Have you ever heard of a cow which eats grass and water on Monday; on Tuesday, juice and maybe spaghetti; on Wednesday ... you know, some beverages, they change beverages, today it is water, tomorrow it is porridge? No. But then tell me, if you had a head-to-head collision with a cow, who would die? Uh huh. (Kansiiime Anne 2019)

Black rhetorical humor often highlights sensitive issues, pushing the limits of our conversations on race relations. South African comedian Loyiso Gola humorously hints at how whites claim reverse apartheid, in reference to the opportunities

allocated to marginalized Africans as a way to make South Africa a more equitable society. Gola related the serious and contentious issue of race-based privileges to the funny and light situation of how he would consider race too when administering the “1st for Women” insurance plans, which is the name of a South African insurance company that markets to women. He used the term “bwahaha,” which is a way to show overwhelming laughter in a literary work. He moves back and forth with his voice sound, to act like he is in conversation with a white person.

Gola: [I would insure] 1st for Women, 1st for Blacks. Because white people are high, high, high-risk insurance. You bungee jump, scuba dive, pets as snakes, Bwahaha, no, no, no, no. And white people would be upset.

Mocked: No, it's reverse apartheid. (Afrikaans accent)

Gola: No, just stop bungee jumping, then I will insure you. Don't just f——@ckin' jump off a [cliff].

Mocked: The land is straight. (Afrikaans accent)

Gola: Now you want to jump off?

Mocked: Bwahaha no. (Link TV 2014).

Rossing (2014) conducted an analysis of the American comedian Richard Pryor and how his stand-up routines pushed the boundaries of race discussions, including his legendary *Bicentennial N*gger* album. This album, created in 1976, consisted of a comedy routine based on America's 200 years of independence. Deriving from his research, Rossing (2014) developed the term *critical race humor*. He defines the concept by using the Greek word *parrhesia*, which means to outspokenly speak the truth and to be frank about a person or situation, regardless of the consequences. Pryor could be known as a contemporary *parrhesiastes* (i.e., a communicator of *parrhesia*), since he remembers histories previously forgotten, comically creating a counter-story to the dominant narrative.

Pryor's contemporary *parrhesia* had a rhetorical sophistication that turned a risky perspective, located on the periphery, into a shared dominant truth. Pryor made racial truth-telling less painful and less risky, ultimately making it possible for people who didn't want to listen to stories of racial injustice to hear the truth of the matter. He helped to transform institutional practices, power relationships, and cultural beliefs around racism and race by bringing to the surface the ordinary matters that go unexamined in daily life (Rossing 2014).

Black rhetorical comedy provides an outlet for the release of racial tension. The Ghanaian Michael Blackson, the “African King of Comedy” in America, has said in his routine that he would become a Los Angeles police officer if his

plans in comedy collapsed. Blackson explained how he would then treat white people:

I'm pulling over all white people for no damn reason (audience clapping and laughter). "Pull over, mother sucker. Get out your car, get the hell out your car right now. Move, what the hell is this? Oh, you're selling drugs? I don't give a damn if it is Tylenol, shut the hell up. Your @ss is going to jail. Hands up against the wall, mother sucker." (Black Godztv 2015)

Blackson humorously used the power of imagination to entice his audience. His videos can be found on his YouTube channel, which has 164,000 subscribers.

Malema has also used the power of imagination by encouraging South Africans to envision a new future for themselves so as to restore African's dignity. Malema helps Africans to visualize the possibilities, as his words adhere to the EFF's call to action for economic freedom in this lifetime:

We want to bring back the dignity of black people by giving them proper houses. Fighters ... that is disrespectful, you cannot give me a house without water. It is not called a house. It cannot be human settlement if there is not water, there's no electricity. All of those things are going to be achieved within a short space of time. (SABC News 2019)

Even though black rhetorical humor normally gives black people a venue for speaking about the injustices they face, sometimes one's community refuses to engage in discussion, even when providing a more easily digestible analogy of an unjust situation. Jacaranda FM radio personality and South African comedian Tumi Morake's comments caused outrage, mostly from white people (representing the Afrikaner groups, AfriForum and Solidarity), after she used an apartheid analogy while broadcasting live (Huffington Post 2017).

This reference was originally used by the Afrikaner Wilhelm Verwoerd as he repeated a victim's comments made during the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings. Verwoerd is a researcher on reconciliation and forgiveness, and his grandfather was the South African prime minister Hendrik Verwoerd, dubbed "the architect of the apartheid regime." The analogy Morake stated compared apartheid to a bully that forces a child off of a bike:

After apartheid, we were told that in '94 "we are all one." As opposed to going, "you broke down a people on skin color." Before you build them up, you are now saying they must just share with everybody and be friends with everybody. It is like a child whose bicycle was taken forcibly away from him, and then you say to the bully, "No, no, no, share the bike together, don't be like that." Then the kid whose bike was taken from him doesn't feel like there's been retribution, because the bully hasn't been punished, and on top of that the bully is being rewarded because he still gets to share the bike,

even though he took it from me forcefully and [has] enjoyed it for the past hour. (Chipsta 2017)

This analogy between apartheid and bullying outraged some white people. Some advertisers on the radio station threatened to drop their ads. Just as others have filed complaints against Malema for his rhetoric, classifying it as hate speech, complaints were filed against Morake. The Solidarity trade union filed a complaint with the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA), and its regulatory board ruled in Morake's favor.

Signifying: Black Rhetoric's Master Trope

Humor has also been used in ways that reflect black people's rich culture and unique social experiences. Black rhetorical humor is deeply rooted in African culture and has been integral to African folktales, work songs, spirituals, and protest hymns. The oral historians for a particular village or ethnic group, showcase their humor by entertaining the community through the witty presentation of tales, satirical and comic pieces, epic poems, and traditional songs.

Signifyin(g) is a black rhetorical trope of verbal art consisting of rhetorical play. Signifying, written with a capital "s" is a master trope that has encompassed other black rhetoric tropes, like signifying, written with a small "s" which occurs when a person makes indirect and witty insults. The master trope of Signifying was first used by Henry Louis Gates Jr., to describe several components of Black Rhetoric; Gates dropped the "g" ending to represent how black people would say the word orally, if they were speaking in Ebonics or black vernacular. Johnny Otis highlighted this art form in the blues song "Signifying Monkey" in 1969; and others have also sang about signifying. In 1975, Rudy Ray Moore, the comedian and actor who starred as the title character in the movie *Dolemite* and its sequels, told a folktale that included the signifying monkey, using the same featured plot of Otis's song. Through Signifying, a speaker can convey messages essential to black people's survival.

In *Dolemite*, Moore performed the folktale in a spoken-word format while on stage in a crowded restaurant. Audience members bellowed in laughter as Moore told the story of "the signifying monkey" (Loud Reality 2008). He incorporated an African context into his performance. Musicians were beating drums in the background and playing a piano and guitar. Moore's all-white attire was accentuated with a leopard-print scarf tied around his waist. He stood between two black women with natural hairstyles (one with a big afro and another wearing

an African headwrap). These women were dancing, while dressed scantily clad in colorful African clothing, reflective of African women's tribal wear.

According to Moore, the signifying monkey had outwitted a lion. The witty monkey, through his sophisticated verbal abilities, fashioned a scenario that made the lion go against an elephant, instead of the monkey as he would normally do—so the less powerful monkey had outwitted the big lion. When the lion stumbled back to the village distraught, after taking a beating from the bigger elephant, the monkey told the lion what he really thought of him in a barrage of direct insults, called sounding. Moore embodies the monkey as he performs this folktale:

Look here partner, you don't look so swell.
 Look like to me you caught a whole lot of hell.
 He said, your eyes are red and you @ss is blue,
 I knew in the first place it wasn't sh-t to you ...
 I told my wife before you left,
 I should've whooped your @ss, my motherf—— self
 (audience laughter, clapping).
 Shut up, don't you roar,
 Because I'll get out this tree
 And whoop your dog @ss some more.
 (Loudreality 2008)

At that point in the rendition, the black audience was clapping, excited to see that the most vulnerable character had become victorious by the story's end, as is common in the tradition of African folktales.

The signifying monkey, the name of Gates theory, is based on an oral culture of classic African trickster narratives. The monkey is not a term used in an effort to demoralize black people, but instead the monkey's origins are deeply embedded in African rhetorical traditions. Gates explained that the monkey, a common character in African folktales, is the cousin or the equivalent of Esu, the writing figure of the Yoruba ethnic group. Esu exists in cultural traditions, including praise poems, divination verses, songs, and prose narratives, among African ethnic groups in Nigeria, Benin, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, and the United States (Gates [1998] 2014). According to Gates ([1998] 2014), the character Esu has the qualities of satire, individuality, irony, parody, uncertainty, and ambiguity. Esu also has characteristics of closure and then disclosure, magic, open-endedness, indeterminacy, sexuality, betrayal, and also loyalty and chance, and the antonym groups of disruption and then reconciliation, and encasement leading to rupture.

Derivations of Signifying also exist in Africa. In Ghana, the Ashanti commonly practice *opo*, singing and chanting verses of ridicule (Schechter 1970; Foster 1986). *Opo* is a practice of criticizing the Ghanaian chiefs in a witty manner, in

order to release any existing hostilities. This is a relatively peaceful approach in a context where often, insulting a chief meant that you were insulting all of his ancestors (Foster 1986).

Signifying is an African oral art form. As mentioned earlier, it consists of signifying (indirect insults) calling out, sounding (direct insults), or playing the dozens (yo' mama jokes). It also can comprise of loud talking, marking (mocking intimidation through gesturing), hiping (running it down), toasting (relaying narrative verses), testifying, or rapping (use of rhetorical devices) (Gates 1983; Gates [1998] 2014).

Signifying also includes the following:

- Irony: the master trope, when an opposite is expected
 - Metaphor: non-literal associations
 - Hyperbole: exaggeration non-literal claims
 - Litotes: affirming through understatements, or at times the use of double negatives to invoke positives
 - Synecdoche: a piece of the object representing the whole
 - Metonymy: substituting the word with its associations
 - Metalepsis: using a figure of speech word in a new context
 - Catachresis: one word is misused in the place of another, a strained metaphor
 - Chiasmus: reversing sentence word order, creating inverted parallelism.
- (Gates [1998] 2014).

If such rhetoric is examined out of context, however, one may mistakenly view another person's clever abilities in oratorical showmanship through putdowns, as divisive.

Smitherman (2015) found evidence of Signifying in the speeches of the Activist and former Nation of Islam Spokesperson El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, who was better known as Malcolm X. His well-known messages included "The Ballot or the Bullet: Message to the Grass Roots," which incorporated a form of speech "acceptable to those born under the lash" (Smitherman 2015, 69). Signifying is humorous and painfully honest, and it uses household metaphors as a way to simplify complex information. El-Shabazz used Signifying as he metaphorically compared enslaved Africans from earlier times to twentieth-century Uncle Toms who wanted black people to practice a form of non-violence. Moreover, El-Shabazz criticized, humorously and rhythmically, the use of the civil rights song "We Shall Overcome," saying in a witty, Signifying way, "In a revolution, you swinging, not singing." On another occasion, El-Shabazz made a negative reference towards the selection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for the Nobel Peace Prize:

You can come talking that old sweet talk, or that old peace talk, or that old nonviolent talk—that man doesn't hear that kind of talk. He'll pat you on your back and tell you you're a good boy and give you a peace prize. How are you going to get a peace prize when the war's not over yet? (Smitherman 2015, 70)

Notice again the use of the word "boy," which has been used by white men in the United States as a belittling greeting or term of reference for a black man—hence El-Shabazz's reference that "he'll pat you on your back and tell you you're a good boy." This is the same word that Malema used when challenging Fisher, the white BBC correspondent, thereby inverting the traditional usage of the term "boy."

El-Shabazz also spoke about why black people should be united, in a witty and Signifying way, by showing the contradictions of black life: "You don't catch hell because you're a Baptist, and you don't catch hell because you're a Methodist. ... You don't catch hell because you're a Democrat or a Republican. ... You catch hell because you're a black man" (Malcolm X and Breitman 1989, 4).

Another form of black rhetorical humor is called *the dozens*, a practice that has helped Africans in America who had been uprooted during the Transatlantic Slave Trade to deal with their circumstances. Playing the dozens, is a game consisting of verbally outwitting others by sounding or throwing out direct insults vis-à-vis "yo' mama" jokes. The dozens is a form of verbal insults sometimes called ghetto humor; it is a pastime of gameplay in which Africans show hostility toward one another, instead of toward their white slave holder, through the exchange of insults. When playing the dozens, a black person is challenged to insult another person while maintaining a calm demeanor, and whoever excels by presenting the best arsenal of insults is judged the winner. While playing the dozens—which is usually performed by black males—people display their mental agility, verbal ability, wit, and self-control while a plethora of insults are hurled at them. The dozens has become a part of African American culture and is still practiced today; it can be found in pop culture on the popular improv and comedy game show *Nick Cannon Presents: Wild'n Out*, launched on MTV, which includes segments with "yo' mama" jokes and freestyle rap performances.

Two theories exist on the origins of the name "the dozens." Some say it was derived from field slaves who would insult the house servant's parents—the white owner and his enslaved African mistress. Since the servant's enslaved African mother would be just one of a dozen of the master's women who was raped, having to submit to his sexual whims, the servant's enslaved mother would be considered one of the dozens. Another theory suggests that the name was derived from enslaved Africans who were sold by the dozens: the overworked, disabled, or beaten down ones. In any case, playing the dozens has allowed Africans in

America to release their aggression in a game format, to aid them in maintaining their self-control in other ways and in surviving a brutal slavery system.

Malema's funniness stands in a long line of Africans and humor, but his usage is also unique, as it combines "radical" or "ultra-left" politics, blunt and humorous rhetoric, and extensive social media use through a protest movement, creating a powerful mixture. Malema's humor in discourse will be considered in later chapters, since I have examined his rhetoric during the 2019 South African general election campaign season. I close this chapter with a quotation from Malema that continues to illustrate his ability to speak about racism in a humorously serious manner. Here, he warned Africans of being ambivalent about racism, as he spoke about Patrice Motsepe is the founder of South Africa's *African Rainbow Minerals* mining company. Motsepe's net income of over 3 billion made him the first African to ever appear on a *Forbes Magazine's* top 100 African billionaires list (Forbes 2021). Malema said:

White supremacist doesn't mean all Whites. White supremacists are people who think white people are superior (yeah). ... They are not scared of Malema. They are scared of equality (yeah). When they see Patrice Motsepe, they see a garden boy, until someone tells him, "No, he's a billionaire." Then they embrace him (laughter). Why? Because everything black is a domestic worker (right), is a security guard, is a garden boy (whistling, clapping). So when you are black, then you think you are successful and you think you are high, you are nothing. Come and fight with us here (clapping), because once we are all liberated then we could have respect from White people (yes, clapping). (Make Africa Great 2019)

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Malema's Rhetoric Stings Like a Bee

The word holds the course of things in train and changes and transforms them. And since the word has this power, every word is an effective word, every word is binding. There is no harmless, noncommittal word. . . . The force, responsibility, and commitment of the word, and the awareness that the word alone alters the world; these are characteristics of African culture.

—Jahn Janheinz, *Muntu: African Culture and the Western World*

Julius Malema's blunt rhetorical speech, intermingled with his natural sense of humor, creates a combustion powerful enough to make people on other continents explode in anger. His utterances appeal to the sensibilities of his supporters, not only because of how he performs his rhetoric—as entertaining as the traditional male West African griots or their female counterparts, the griottes—but because he does not restrain himself or interrupt his rhetorical power. Malema's rhetorical stings, coupled with his excellence in repartee, create a heightened emotional reaction from others. This is a well-documented characteristic of African rhetoric, in the form of Nommo.

Nommo, derived from an African philosophical tradition, refers to the magical power manifested in the spoken word. Nommo is the life force of African oral traditions, including folktales, proverbs, incantations, chants, praise songs, and poetry, and is embedded in the griottes and griots' historical accounts (Janheinz

[1961] 1990). These griottes and griots are masters of the spoken word and the oral historians of their village, reciting long genealogies or histories from memory.

Malema's rhetoric is oriented toward the disruption and disobedience of colonial legacies in order to reconstruct the world into a new reality. This strategy has stimulated outrage and contempt but also praise and admiration. Malema refuses to suppress this powerful force stored deeply within his verbal arsenal, and he is prepared to challenge anyone who stands in the way. "No business man, not even a thug—no criminal, no gangster, no amount of intimidation can stop the EFF," said Malema (Multimedia Live 2019).

Malema is equally ready to challenge South Africa's President, Cyril Ramaphosa. He chastised Ramaphosa at the EFF's sixth birthday party, celebrated approximately two months after the 2019 South African general election. Malema believes Ramaphosa has a preference for employing people of other races within his administration. "Your private office in the presidency is white and the only black people in your private office are Coloureds and Indians. You don't like Africans," Malema asserted. "They've made you to hate your own people so that they can use you. Ramaphosa, come back home" (Dlwati 2019).

Malema's abovementioned comment about racial categorization, correlates with economic opportunities. South Africa's *Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003* and its amendment of 2013, which works to economically level the playing field for South Africans, classifies Africans, Indians, and Coloureds, as black. Although, in the South African census, the word "black" is only used as a racial category for Africans. Malema says the policy is unfair, as he speaks to an African audience, "Who are the beneficiaries of BEE? It's Indians, because they are rated as black and therefore they get the same priority as all of us, yet during apartheid, we were not oppressed the same." Malema continues, "Fighters, we need to make sure that we continue to speak truth to power. We must never be scared to speak truth to power" (We Love Africa 2018).

Malema's blunt oratory, which enrages some and pleases others, is a characteristic trait of his rhetorical style and is far removed from the multiracial, rainbow nation concept touted by the new South African democratic government. Malema uses agitational rhetoric to reveal what is hidden under South Africa's blanket of corruption as he contemplates the contemporary meaning of Mandela's rainbow nation idea, which—about twenty-five years after the end of apartheid—has been questioned and called out as a myth by prominent news organizations, political magazines, and foreign policy think tanks. Sample titles include *The New York Times's* article titled, "The End of the Rainbow Nation Myth" (Msimang 2015); the *Institute for Global Dialogue's* research report titled, "The Rainbow Myth: Dreaming of a Post-Racial South African Society" (Sall 2018); and *Foreign Policy's* article

titled, "Think Again: Nelson Mandela - The Man Behind the Myth and the Tenuous Future of South Africa" (Campbell 2013).

The idea of a rainbow nation was born during a time of great optimism in South Africa. The Nobel Peace Laureate and the then Archbishop of Cape Town Desmond Tutu coined the "rainbow nation" phrase, with the same euphoria that most citizens felt soon after apartheid was abolished. Tutu also referred to South Africans as "*The Rainbow People of God*," in this 1994 book of the same name (Tutu, 1994). Tutu mentioned to an audience in Norway that at large meetings of white and black people in South Africa, he would say, "Raise your hands . . . Move your hands. . . Look at your hands—different colors representing different people. You are the rainbow people of God." He continued by explaining to his audience, "And you remember the rainbow in the Bible is the sign of peace. The rainbow is the sign of prosperity. We want peace, prosperity, and justice and we can have it when all the people of God, the rainbow people of God work together" (Tutu 1994, v). Mandela elaborated on Tutu's concept; in Mandela's May 10, 1994, inaugural speech, he described South Africa as "a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world" (SABC Digital News 2015). Mandela later appointed Tutu as the chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC). As the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission's proceedings began in 1995, the country was depicted as one where all races could now live together in harmony and equality—unfortunately, the optimistic vision of a rainbow nation has never been fulfilled.

Malema has been vocal about his opinion of Mandela. Mandela's grandson Mandla expressed concern over rumors that Malema had allegedly called this iconic African leader a "sellout" while speaking at the Oxford Union in the United Kingdom. Malema rebutted this accusation and challenged Mandla to a debate over Mandela. Malema believes Mandela did not go far enough and that he never delivered on the promises established in South Africa's new Constitution, which took effect in 1997. In his response to Mandla, Malema also stated that he is not a subject of the Mandela royal family, nor does he belong to the religion called Mandela: "Everything I say about Nelson Mandela is true. Mandela before prison spoke about nationalization. Mandela in prison spoke about nationalization. Mandela after prison spoke about nationalization. Did Mandela nationalize? The answer is no. What is an insult about that?" (Eyewitness News 2015).

Signifying at Winnie Mandela's Funeral Service

Despite his criticisms of Nelson Mandela, Malema enjoyed a close relationship with Mandela's former wife, the anti-apartheid activist, Winnie Mandela, until

the end of her life; in order to understand the bond between her and Malema, one must understand Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. Madikizela-Mandela is affectionately known as "Mama Wetu" or the "Mother of the Nation," and "Mama Winnie". She met and married Nelson Mandela in 1958, while he was going through a prison trial in Pretoria (Kevin Harris 2011), and eventually they would have two daughters together including Zenani and Zindziswa, also known as Zindzi. While Mandela was in prison, Madikizela-Mandela continued the apartheid struggle, and she faced many consequences for her rhetoric of liberation.

As an anti-apartheid freedom fighter, Madikizela-Mandela fought the apartheid government head on. Subsequently, the police harassed, jailed, interrogated, and placed her in solitary confinement; she often faced banning-orders and was placed on house arrest (Mandela and Benson 1985; Kevin Harris 2011; Hanes 2018). While in jail, "She was interrogated without break. She was forced to sit upright for days and nights, to the point that her body swelled and she blacked out," said the *Independent* journalist Hanes (2018). Madikizela-Mandela described her time under banning-orders, while she was banished near Brandfort township for almost a decade. She called it her time in "exhile," because of her inability to intellectually interact with her community, and the extreme isolation she faced from her friends and children. Although, while in banishment, Madikizela-Mandela showed that she was not demoralized, and that she still had a fighting spirit:

Even exile is so worthwhile, because I'm absolutely certain we shall obtain our liberation, and even being in exile really is a constant reminder of the sickness of our society and that we are virtually in prison even in our country. Those who are outside prison walls are simply in a bigger prison, because the black man is virtually a prisoner, and all those other fellow whites and other groups that are as oppressed as we are. We are all really in prison, in a bigger apartheid prison. (Kevin Harris 2011)

Madikizela-Mandela received cheers from her audience in townships, but she experienced a backlash from the mainstream media after her remark, "The year 1986 is going to see the liberation of the oppressed masses of this country ... together, hand in hand with our sticks of matches, with our necklaces, we shall liberate this country (Lapierre 2008, 204)." She also said at another township speech, "We bring up the white man's children. We could have killed them any day we wanted to. With our necklaces we can liberate this country. Amandla" (Ousauk 2017). When a tire soaked in gasoline is placed around a suspected government informer's neck and set alight, it is called necklacing. Madikizela-Mandela had struck fear in those who supported apartheid, with comments that seemed to have condoned the practice of necklacing or a "death by tire fire," which was in stark contrast to the praised non-violent approach to fighting a system of oppression.

“She was a political insider who often played the role of outsider. While other leaders moved to luxurious, previously all-white suburbs, Madikizela-Mandela stayed in Soweto, an black township southwest of Johannesburg,” according to the *Independent* journalist Hanes (2018). Madikizela-Mandela empowered South Africans, as she said:

You are not going to fight this government with AK47's because you haven't got any. We have got these hands: our power, the people's power. We are going to dismantle apartheid. We are not prepared for any so-called reforms to apartheid. You cannot reform a sin. Apartheid is a criminal act against our kind (applause). We are no longer prepared to tolerate that criminal act by a minority. The white man has the audacity: he is three and a half million, we are thirty million. The apartheid regime can go to hell (applause). Power to the people. (Ousauk 2017)

The phrase “power to the people” derives from “all power to the people,” which was the *Black Panther Party for Self-Defense's* popular slogan. As college students, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale started the revolutionary political organization in 1966 in Oakland, California, to protect America's black residents from police brutality. Members wore black berets and were sometimes fully armed as they sought-after freedom for black people in the areas of employment, housing, education, and the criminal justice system. The Black Panther's demanded the release of black men from jails, an end to white robbery, and the right to a trial. The Black Panther's slogan means, “All power comes from the people, and all power must ultimately be vested in them. Anything else is theft” (Newton and Anderson 2009, 178).

Mandela ascended to the presidency in 1994, while still officially married to Madikizela-Mandela; although, she would become a politician in her own right. Madikizela-Mandela was the African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL) president; the deputy minister for arts, culture, science, and technology; and a member of Parliament. She described herself by saying, “I am the product of the masses of my country and the product of my enemy.”

Due to her commitment to harshly criticizing and mobilizing others against the rampant injustices happening in South Africa, Madikizela-Mandela was both beloved and despised. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) accused the anti-apartheid activist of being responsible for criminal actions, as it relates to her formation of the Mandela United Football Club (TRC 1998). Even though Madikizela-Mandela denied any knowledge of the accused member activities, she was held responsible for failure to address the problem of members killing informers (TRC 1998, 243, 265).

It is no denying that Madikizela-Mandela has shaken up the apartheid system, with her relentless pursuit of liberating South Africans, and Malema too has this audacity, a quality that has made them both beloved and despised.

Madikizela-Mandela had known Malema since his childhood, and she supported him and the other EFF members as adults. She attended a celebration in December 2017, after Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, the former EFF spokesperson, graduated from the University of Witwatersrand with a Ph.D. degree in political science, and Malema stayed close by her side. As Malema introduced Madikizela-Mandela, he emphasized that she had not been properly honored by the South African government. When he called her to the stage, everyone in attendance stood up and smiled, sang songs, and danced during this joyful moment. Upon taking the stage, Madikizela-Mandela provoked a call-and-response moment by shouting "Amandla," which means "power" in the Xhosa and Zulu languages; in response, the crowd roared "Ngawethu" or "it is ours" and "viva, EFF, viva." Her entire speech was punctuated by frequent laughter from the audience as she made statements like the following: "We are hoping that in the near future, this youth that is here [i.e., the EFF members/supporters] will be the leadership of South Africa. We are hoping that we have a South Africa that will not be captured" (EFF 2017). The word "capture" was a reference to South Africa's ongoing state capture proceedings, which have drawn attention to the corruption-laden relationship between former South African President Jacob Zuma and the billionaire Gupta family.

Madikizela-Mandela passed away almost four months later, on April 2, 2018. After her death, Malema went to her house in Orlando, Soweto, and praised her while talking to reporters:

We have lost a fearless fighter, a giant, a mother of the nation, a title which was bestowed on her by the people of South Africa. ... We are here to say to the people of South Africa, "The spear has fallen, and we are here to pick up that spear and continue the fight." (AP Achieve 2018)

Malema gave a fiery tribute at her funeral service, held at the Orlando Stadium in Soweto. As he was called forward to speak, the EFF supporters—dressed in red T-shirts with a photo of Winnie, her hand clenched in a black power fist, plastered on the front—stood to applaud him. At first, there were sounds of disorganized chatter and clapping, but it quickly evolved into organized singing and dancing among thousands of people, and suddenly drums began beating to the rhythm of the song. Before Malema started his speech, he began with a call-and-response chant, saying "Amandla" twice; each time, the crowd responded with "Ngawethu" (My Africa 2019). He continued: "Long live the undying spirit of Winnie Mandela,

long live ... long live the defiant spirit of Winnie Mandela, long live ... long live the fighting spirit of Winnie Mandela, long live." After each phrase, the audience responded with "long live." Then Malema shouted, "Forward to expropriation of land without compensation, forward," and "Forward to nationalization of mines and banks, forward." After these phrases the crowd shouted "forward" in response.

As Malema moved into his speech, he spoke about how Madikizela-Mandela died "a perfect death, a death of a revolutionary because she never sold out. We shall all be happy because her name will be written in the eternal book of life. The book of all who died for the betterment of all." He also said, "I am here not so much to bury Mama, because Queen Mothers do not die, they multiply into a million red flowers of love and freedom."

Malema first mentioned Madikizela-Mandela's supporters who had attended her funeral service, including: the Winnie Mandela Support committee members; Stompie Seipei's mother; Mama Lebogang Maile, the Congress of South African Students' (COSAS) former president; the people from the Winnie Mandela squatter camp; and everyone in the EFF's leadership team.

Malema called out Madikizela-Mandela's enemies in a truth-telling Signifying manner by telling her that "some of those who sold you out to the regime are here," in attendance at the funeral, and they were the ones "crying the loudest." He mocked them by continuing, "Mama, you never told me how we must treat them when they come here; I am waiting for a signal, Ma." He criticized the United Democratic Front (calling it the "UDF Cabal"), saying the party disassociated itself publicly from Madikizela-Mandela at a time when the regime was murdering its citizens, and at her funeral he said they were "crying crocodile tears." He mentioned the ANC leaders who did not allow her to speak at Peter Mokaba's funeral, even though she was the ANCWL president at the time and played a substantial role in the development of his political ideas. Malema spoke of the ANCWL's national executive committee members who resigned and had called Madikizela-Mandela a "criminal"; yet they were at the service, and some even had played a major role in her funeral arrangements. He asked her what they should tell the Marikana widows who were still grieving the death of their husbands, and "what about those who killed their husbands . . . for selfish profits, what do we do to them? Tell us Ma." Acknowledging that life was often unfair, Malema went onto sternly warn the above-mentioned establishment politicians, "We see you in your beautiful suits. Betrayers. Sellouts. We see you (standing applause)."

Later in the speech, Malema explained why he would not go back to the ANC: "Mama, you said to us we must come back to the ANC. We heard you, but which ANC do we go to—of the same people who sold you out, of the same people who were ready to give you to the enemy?" He closed with a challenge: "If

it is true that the ANC honors Winnie Mandela, name the capital airport Winnie Mandela Airport. Thank you (standing applause)."

Malema is not only deconstructing the narrative of the ANC's liberation movement and the current status of South Africans, but he is also challenging capitalism and imperialism head on. These systems have produced massive injustices against African people—apartheid and neo-apartheid, colonialism and neo-colonialism, slavery and forms of neo-slavery like sharecropping and the prison industrial complex—and Malema calls for an overhaul of these entrenched systems with straightforward, unapologetic, and witty rhetoric. Essentially, Malema is picking up where the Truth and Reconciliation Commission never dared to go, as he seeks to dissipate trust in a depleted and now imaginary rainbow nation concept so justice can triumph.

The EFF and the Unforgettable State of the Nation Address

On February 13, 2020, nine months after the 2019 South African general election, millions of South African citizens watched the SONA by live broadcast or internet stream, and they participated in the conversation on social media by using the hashtags #SONA2020 and #GrowSA. This ceremonial event brought all branches of government together, including the executive (president, deputy president, and cabinet ministers), judiciary (chief justice, president judges), and legislature (National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces). Essentially, it was a red-carpet, politician-studded event that followed a parade and included high-profile guests dressed in formal attire. Politicians were flaunting formal gowns and some were wearing elaborate traditional attire. Prior to the event, journalists asked the arriving attendees what they were wearing or what inspired their look, in an event that promised to bring a night full of glitz and glamour.

In contrast, EFF members arrived at the event collectively and dressed uniformly, singing and dancing closely together, as they moved forward along the red carpet. They did not receive questions about what they were wearing, because they were all wearing the EFF's typical red work attire; the men were in miner's coveralls and hard hats, the women in maid's uniforms and headscarves. After the event, Malema stated that it was ludicrous to dress in formal attire for the SONA: "To come here and wear gowns and ties and parade on the red carpet, creating a wrong impression that the country is going well, is misleading and disingenuous, and the EFF is not going to be a part of such nonsense" (Eyewitness News 2020).

President Ramaphosa and his wife Tshepo Motsepe, with a special police and military escort, were greeted by Thandi Ruth Modise, the Speaker of the National Assembly; Nkosiyakhe Amos Masondo, the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces; and Baby Tyawa, the Acting Secretary to Parliament. Eventually, Ramaphosa and his wife stood alongside Modise and Masondo on the red-carpeted steps outside the National Assembly, next to a stairwell that read on one step, “freedom and democracy,” and on the next, “equality and diversity.” The South African National Defense Force gave Ramaphosa a twenty-one-gun salute while the military band played the *South African National Anthem*, along with the performance of an air force jet flyover—truly making this a high-profile event. The combined budget for the 2019 and 2020 SONA events was a grand 7.3 million rand, or around \$425,000 USD (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2020). But as the EFF members mentioned South Africa’s pending issues, the day was guaranteed to not end as perfectly as it began. Their comments descended SONA’s attendees and viewers back into reality, as they were confronted with having to deal with the real issues of how South Africa should manage its history of apartheid and the existence of neo-apartheid.

The theme of the 2020 SONA was “Following Up on Our Commitments: Making Your Future Work Better,” and the EFF took the topic very seriously. As soon as it started, before President Ramaphosa could begin to speak, Malema stood up on a point of order and said that F. W. (Frederik Willem) de Klerk, South Africa’s last apartheid president and Mandela’s deputy president, should be removed from Parliament. At SONA, de Klerk and his wife, Elita Georgiadis, were seated in the upper-level gallery section with other former First Families, including Thabo Mbeki (the second post-apartheid president) and his wife, the former First Lady Zanele Dlamini Mbeki, and Kgalema Motlanthe (the third post-apartheid president) and his wife, Gugu Mtshali.

Malema and the EFF opposed de Klerk’s presence as an invited guest at SONA. Malema said, “We have a murderer in the house. We have a man who’s got blood of innocent people in this house, which is supposed to represent the wills of our people.” He continued, “The people of Boipatong are turning in their graves, and de Klerk has said apartheid was not a crime against humanity. He is an unrepentant apologist of apartheid” (My Africa 2020). (Malema had referred to the Boipatong Massacre of 1992, where forty-five people of the ANC-aligned Boipatong were murdered in a raid of hundreds of men, during South Africa’s transition to democracy—it was suspected that the state was involved; Simpson 2012.) Many other EFF members spoke out against de Klerk and the Minister of Public Enterprises Pravin Gordhan (former finance minister twice under Jacob Zuma); they requested that the National Assembly to go into suspension so the

chief whips could fire Gordhan. In this way, the EFF fully irritated Speaker Modise and others who stood up and spoke out against the EFF.

In the week prior to the SONA, on the second of February, de Klerk mentioned, in a probing interview with Manelisi Dubase, a SABC reporter, that he was not fully in agreement with apartheid being considered a crime against humanity—making a gut-wrenching remark that since there was no genocide, no crime was committed. Making matters worse, the former President Mbeki publicly stated that de Klerk said he did not realize the United Nations had declared apartheid a crime; to educate de Klerk, Mbeki sent him the UN's *International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid* (1976), which clearly described apartheid as a crime against humanity.

The EFF was the only political party to question de Klerk's presence at the 2020 SONA, or to raise the issue of firing Gordhan. Malema and the EFF believed that Gordhan had been involved in corruption and was working with white monopoly capital; although, the state prosecutor dropped the fraud charges brought against Gordhan in 2016. As the Minister of Public Enterprises, Gordhan oversees seven of South Africa's State-Owned Enterprises, including South African Express Airways; Eskom (the electricity utility provider); Transnet (overseeing freight, rails, ports, and engineering); Denel (providing oversight to arms and advanced manufacturing); Alexkor (focusing on diamond mining); and the South African Forestry Company. Even before the event, Malema said, "I want to tell Cyril Ramaphosa today that if he can't fire Pravin before the State of the Nation Address, the State of the Nation Address shall be about Pravin" (EFF 2020).

Malema was not bluffing; SONA 2020 became about Pravin and de Klerk. After Malema spoke, about fifteen other EFF members made points of order, over a span of more than one hour; after their microphones were turned off, many EFF members stood up to object. Ramaphosa's speech was delayed by one and a half hours. Even though no vote was taken on the issue, the remarks from Cabinet ministers and non-EFF representatives indicated they believed the EFF had inappropriately interfered with the timely presentation of the president's address. Malema's response was unapologetic:

The president must fire Pravin. We cannot proceed in this Parliament as if things are normal. Things are not normal and therefore you cannot have a normal State of the Nation Address. ... Cyril must decide if he wants a peaceful Parliament or if he wants his friend Pravin. He must choose between peace in Parliament and Pravin. (Eyewitness News 2020)

The politicians chastised the EFF. They claimed that the party had abused and embarrassed them; described the EFF's conduct as "deplorable and disgusting" squabbling and an "act of criminality"; referred to them as ill-disciplined; and

called the EFF's elected officials a minority that could not "impose their rights on a [ANC] majority" (My Africa 2020). One politician went so far as to invite the EFF members to take the issue outside, implying that he wanted to brawl with them. Malema responded to Speaker Modise's remarks, disagreeing with her perspective that the EFF was disrupting Parliament and disrespecting others and that there were limits to members' freedom of speech. Malema wondered how they could deem it suitable to violate this core principle of democracy:

You keep on saying members of Parliament are disrupting Parliament, when we stand up and speak through you. You cannot call that a disruption. You cannot call our inputs here a disruption. We've got the right to be here. We've got the right to speak here, and that's what we are getting paid for. We can't execute our responsibility saying, "No, we don't have time." We've got all the time. (My Africa 2020)

The ANC, including Speaker Modise, allowed de Klerk to stay in Parliament, indicating that he was welcome (Mlambo 2020), and they did not consider suspending the meeting so that the chief whips could fire Gordhan—so the EFF applied more pressure. Eventually, after the National Assembly went into recess, the EFF members of Parliament, all of who were on the main floor, turned upwards toward the gallery where de Klerk was seated, faced him, and began chanting "de Klerk must go" rhythmically to a beat, shaking their hands in the air to the rhythm as if shooing him away from a distance.

When the session officially reconvened, after a recess due to the EFF's demands, the EFF members walked out to show their disapproval of continuing the session without having a concern for their issues. Many people expressed their opinions after this event, including Zindzi Mandela, South Africa's Ambassador to Denmark. (Zindzi is also Nelson and Winnie Mandela's daughter, as mentioned earlier. She died just five months later at age fifty-nine after becoming infected with COVID-19, although it is unclear whether she died from the virus). Zindzi tweeted a photo of her mother being handled aggressively by the police and soldiers, and she spoke of her disappointment with the ANC:

As a loyal and dedicated member of @MYANC I am heartbroken this happened to my Mother and many others under de Klerk's watch. According to his interview, he justified this, therefore saying that my Mother and others deserved this aggression. What do we stand for? (Mandela 2020)

On social media, many others chastised the ANC for allowing de Klerk to stay, but de Klerk did not retreat. On February 15, 2020, the F. W. de Klerk Foundation released a statement titled "EFF's Attack on F. W. de Klerk at the Opening of SONA," which only made the situation worse:

The idea that apartheid was “a crime against humanity” was, and remains, an “agit-prop” project initiated by the Soviets and their ANC/SACP allies to stigmatize white South Africans by associating them with genuine crimes against humanity—which have generally included totalitarian repression and the slaughter of millions of people. (F. W. de Klerk Foundation 2020a)

Many were outraged by the foundation’s words. The South African Council of Churches (SACC) asked de Klerk to apologize and to retract the statement. “For us, it is not only a crime against humanity, it is actually a sin; it is a sin against the humanity of all black people who are treated as subhuman,” said Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, a SACC member (SABC News 2020). Also, Archbishop Emeritus Tutu asked de Klerk to retract the statement. On February 17, de Klerk withdrew the statement and posted on the foundation’s website, “I agree with the Desmond and Leah Tutu Foundation that this is not the time to quibble about the degrees of unacceptability of apartheid. It was totally unacceptable.”

An apology and a withdrawal were not enough for the EFF. The EFF representatives demanded the following: a full inquiry into de Klerk’s role during apartheid, the revoking of his Nobel Peace Prize (which he received along with Nelson Mandela in 1993), and the loss of all his privileges as a previous head of state. An online petition was started by Daluxolo Christopher Mpofu, also known as Dali, an EFF central command team member and former national chairperson, who is considered the “most famous lawyer in South Africa” (Anderson 2018), even before joining the EFF. Dali quickly gained ten thousand signatures on a petition for de Klerk’s peace prize to be withdrawn, and as of this writing he is still working on this request. Although, the peace prize statutes include that “no appeals may be made against the decision of a prize-awarding body with regard to the award of a prize,” and that if a person has an inquiry as to the considerations for a specific awardee, they have to wait fifty years after the date of his request (Nobel Prize 2021).

Because of the SONA situation, the EFF was reported to the *Power and Privileges of Parliament* committee to investigate any action that could be taken. Nevertheless, Malema and the EFF stood by their actions. Malema explained why allowing an apartheid apologist at SONA was unacceptable:

Why did Parliament continue to invite de Klerk, after de Klerk said apartheid was not a crime against humanity? ... We thought that de Klerk bought into the agenda of forgiveness and reconciliation. And when he said apartheid was not a crime against humanity, we knew that de Klerk was an unrepentant apartheid apologist who doesn’t regret those murder cases committed under his leadership: the Freedom Front Plus Boipatong massacre, Chris Hani, and many other people who were tortured and killed. We cannot sit in a democratic Parliament with an apartheid apologist who does not accept that apartheid was dangerous and was a crime against humanity. (Eyewitness News 2020)

Before and after the SONA, the F. W. de Klerk Foundation has sought after the disciplining of the EFF on numerous claims. The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) investigates potential violations of human rights and seeks redress from violators. A complaint was submitted to the SAHRC, alleging that the EFF engaged in the “intimidation of innocent bystanders” during the Clicks Must Fall protests by making “racial outbursts” (F. W. de Klerk Foundation 2020b). In September 2020, the foundation welcomed the South African Human Rights Commission’s decision to conduct proceedings in Equality Court regarding two statements Malema posted on social media. One statement was a retweet from Robert Mugabe, the late president of Zimbabwe, (who died on September 6, 2019), which read, “The only white man you can trust is a dead white man”; the other tweet stated, “Our party must continue to strike fear in the heart of the white man, our real enemy” (F. W. de Klerk Foundation 2020b). Multitudes of other complaints have been filed against Malema, all centering on his rhetoric.

Malema’s Rhetoric: Hate Speech or Freedom of Speech?

The SAHRC consolidated five different “hate speech” complaints filed against Malema; and the commissioners released their findings in March 2019, approximately two months prior to the 2019 South African general election (SAHRC 2019). The South African Human Rights Commission was formed in 1995 to provide support for South Africa’s new constitutional democracy, and it enforces South Africans’ behavior by making decisions on whether defendants must pay monetary damages and/or issue an apology for a human rights violation. Some of the complaints concerning Malema’s rhetoric will be highlighted to enhance our understanding of it and to zero in on the crucial question of whether his rhetoric is expressing his right to freedom of speech in a constitutional democracy or if it should be declared hate speech.

First, the F. W. de Klerk Foundation filed a complaint against Malema concerning his rhetoric about whites. Malema had drawn criticism for contending that Africans existed peacefully in South Africa before the Europeans came. Furthermore, since most South Africans do not own land, Malema referred to the minority whites who had taken the land from the indigenous Khoikhoi and San people and the Xhosa, Zulu, and Ndebele groups as criminals. Europeans’ strategy upon arriving in South Africa was first to settle in an African territory; then to start a war over the land, successfully pushing the Africans out of the area; and finally, to include the defeated Africans in their trading system (Plaut and

DuPlessis 2019). Malema sparked outrage among some in 2016 when he spoke about European's treatment of Africans:

They found peaceful Africans here. They killed them. They slaughtered them like animals. We are not calling for the slaughtering of white people, at least for now. What we are calling for is the peaceful occupation of the land and we don't owe anyone an apology for that. (SAHRC 2019)

Malema made a similar comment in 2018, during an interview with a Turkish news channel, TRT World. "We have not called for the killing of white people, at least for now. I can't guarantee the future," said Malema (TRT World 2018). This video received almost 250,000 views, 5,100 likes, and about 520 dislikes on the TRT World YouTube channel.

The F. W. de Klerk Foundation filed a complaint against Malema over his statement, arguing that his comments incited violence.

The SAHRC (2019) declined to classify Malema's statement about not calling for the slaughter of white people yet as hate speech, since Malema did not actually call for whites to be slaughtered, ultimately posing no threat.

Second, Malema's rhetoric has been targeted on multiple occasions due to his revival of the "Shoot the Boers" struggle song, known as "Dubula iBhunu" in Zulu. Boers, who also call themselves Afrikaners, are white settlers in South Africa who trace their ancestry mainly to the Dutch, South Africa's first white settlers. When the word "Boers" is spelled with capital "B" it means the Boer people, but a lower case "b" is the Afrikaans word that means farmer; although, the Boers are generally connected with farming (Roets 2019). Peter Mokaba, a former ANC member of Parliament, ANCYL president, and deputy minister, was the first to sing "Dubula iBhunu." He did so in 1993 at a Cape Town rally in remembrance of Chris Hanu, the former South African Communist Party leader and chief of staff of uMkhonto we Sizwe, whose murder was plotted by a right-wing Conservative Party leader (South African Press Association 1997). This South African struggle song would later be sung at Mokaba's own funeral in 2002 (Free Speech Debate 2012).

The Afrikaner separatist political party called the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) filed a complaint against Malema with the SAHRC concerning this song back in 2003. The commission declared that Malema's singing of "Dubula iBhunu" was an expression of hate speech. Afterwards, Malema continued singing the song, but he changed the lyrics. Instead of "shoot to kill, shoot to kill ... kill the Boer, kill the Boer, kill the farmer," Malema modified the song to say, "shoot to kill, shoot to kill ... kiss the Boer, kiss the Boer, kiss the farmer." AfriForum filed another complaint in 2011, in response to which the SAHRC declared that the new version of the

song was still hate speech, since the word “kiss” really intended to communicate “kill.” The SAHRC based its decision on the literal meaning of killing Boers, as the Afrikaners still interpreted the song in this way. Their literal interpretation trumped the figurative meaning widely accepted by South Africans—namely, as purely symbolic of the destruction of the apartheid regime.

Meanwhile, in 2012, in a case against Malema presented by AfriForum, Judge Collin Lamont, the Equality Court justice in Johannesburg said the words could not be used in public (News24 2012) because using words to incite others is “how a genocide can start” (Conway 2011). Judge Lamont indicated Malema would face criminal charges and prison time if he sang the song again (Conway 2011). The ANC was appalled by the decision, claiming that when they say “Boers” they really mean the apartheid system (Free Speech Debate 2012)—essentially arguing that the lyrics should not be interpreted literally. “We view this judgment as an attempt to rewrite the South African history, which is not desirable and [is] unsustainable. This ruling flies against the need to accept our past and to preserve our heritage as an organization and as a people,” the ANC declared in a statement (Conway 2011). The ANC appealed the decision to the Supreme Court of Appeals, although the judge indicated that it would first wait for the ruling of the SAHRC (News24 2012). The ANC and AfriForum then entered into mediation, as the judge recommended. They later agreed to the following: dropping the charges before the Equality Court, encouraging ANC members to restrain from singing this hurtful song, and encouraging healthy cultural debate about freedom and one’s heritage (Mlambo 2020). Malema did not attend this meeting because of university-related obligations (Mlambo 2020).

Later, after Africans complained that the SAHRC had taken the song out of its cultural context to support a socially advantaged group, the SAHRC reconsidered its decision and reversed its position in 2018, indicating that it was no longer possible to claim that “Dubula iBhunu” either intentionally harmed or promoted hate against Afrikaners. In fact, Africans were still most of the victims in their complaints alleging hate speech, because of South Africans widespread use of the pejorative K-word that is akin to the N-word (SAHRC 2020). In this way, South Africans won the battle to preserve their historical legacy through songs, but the battle was not finished, because the case was brought to the United Nations.

AfriForum complained to the United Nations about the SAHRC’s ruling (SAHRC 2020). Bongani Majola, chair of the SAHRC, argued before the United Nations that “socioeconomically, the white group remains privileged in South Africa, and largely enjoys far greater access to various rights such as education, adequate housing, and healthcare, than the black majority, which remains poor and

thus socioeconomically vulnerable." He continued, "The black majority continues to suffer from poverty and inequality, much of which is the persistent legacy of hundreds of years of colonialism and apartheid" (SAHRC 2020).

Moreover, Malema has been vocal about the unfair hierarchy of races in South Africa, and the Democratic Alliance (DA) eventually filed a complaint against him over his comments about Indians. At a 2018 event commemorating South Africa's *Youth Day* (observed on June 16 in remembrance of the Soweto Uprising that happened on that day in 1976), Malema discussed the differing levels of discrimination by race, contending that African oppression was worse than Indian oppression. "The majority of Indians hate Africans," he stated bluntly. "The majority of Indians are racist, and we must never be scared to say that. They are racist. I'm not saying all Indians, I'm saying the majority of them. The same thing applies to some of the Coloured brothers; they see themselves as more white than being black. It's a reality we have to deal with" (eNCA 2018).

Malema was not found guilty of using hate speech for his remarks about Indians. The SAHRC ruled in Malema's favor on the DA complaint for various reasons; he had mentioned that not all Indians were racist, and he referenced Africans as being "significantly more vulnerable" than Indians during apartheid. In response to the complaints, Malema insisted that he was not racist, but simply opposed to corruption. He explained:

When we go after South Africans, we are not racist. We are not all of that, but touch a minority [and] "Hey, you're racist." That is self-hate. If you are an Indian or a Coloured, or an African, or a white person, don't violate the Constitution and hide behind race. (Multimedia Live 2019)

The results of the cases in which Malema was charged with hate speech indicate that in South Africa's new democracy, controversial statements are deemed admissible and have freedom of speech protections. In March 2019, just two months before the general election, the SAHRC made a groundbreaking declaration concerning all of Malema's statements, indicating that Africans have a right to share their experiences:

The impugned statements made by Mr. Malema constituted robust political speech, which enjoys special protection as expression that lies at the heart of the right to freedom of expression. It is found that although offensive and even disturbing, the statements—viewed in their full context—do not amount to hate speech. These statements enjoy some constitutional value in dealing with matters such as land reform and interracial relations. (SAHRC 2019, 29–30)

Malema has also made critical remarks regarding the ANC and the DA, the EFF's leading political rivals at this point. At the National Assembly in 2012,

Malema claimed that the ANC had “massacred” the Marikana mineworkers, since they were killed while the ANC was in office. After Malema refused to retract this statement, Modise, the chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, took Malema to court. However, a judge determined that it was within Malema’s democratic rights to express his feelings toward the government and that the court could not impede political speech (Chabalala 2016).

Whereas all the above-mentioned cases were resolved in Malema’s favor, not every outcome of the attacks on his rhetoric has been favorable to him. After the regional elections of 2016, four young women stood sternly in silent protest in front of a podium where the then President Jacob Zuma was speaking, holding up signs for Fezekile Ntsukela Kuzwayo, who operated under the pseudonym Khwezi. At the same time, social media users were using the hashtag #RememberKhwezi. They were protesting an event that had occurred eleven years earlier, when Khwezi, an HIV-positive woman whose father was a member of the ANC and a good friend of Zuma, filed charges of rape against him. Zuma had been a father figure to Khwezi after her own father died in a car accident in 1985, and she said the sexual encounter happened in Zuma’s home. Zuma denied all allegations, claiming that the sex was consensual.

Many ANC supporters spoke out against Khwezi. The ANC, the ANC’s Women’s League, and Malema (then the ANCYL’s president) all opposed Khwezi’s claims. Malema delivered particularly biting criticism, stating during a rally at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology that Khwezi must have had a “nice time” with Zuma because she didn’t leave early in the morning, but instead ordered breakfast and later asked for taxi money. The audience cheered his remarks. However, the Sonke Gender Justice Network took Malema to Equality Court, alleging he had engaged in hate speech, female harassment, and discrimination. The court ruled in the network’s favor. Malema had to make a public apology and pay Khwezi 50,000 rand, or about \$3300 USD.

Another situation that did not result in a favorable outcome for Malema involved comments that he and Floyd Shivambu made about Helen Zille, the DA’s then president, roughly one year before the EFF was founded. The two called Zille, who is a white woman, various names and accused her of comparing black privilege to white privilege. Zille also complained that the ANC’s practice of singing traditional struggle songs in Parliament was “deafening” and “irritating,” among other comments that were viewed as racist (Du Preez 2019).

Malema and Shivambu matched Zille’s insults with more insults. Malema called her a “sick woman,” a “racist,” a “colonialist,” and an “imperialist,” while Shivambu called her a “racist girl.” Concerning Malema, the ANC forced him to apologize to Zille. They also required apologies from him on other occasions,

including one to Fisher, the BBC journalist whom he ejected from his press conference after becoming unruly (see Chapter Three).

Africa's Tradition of Respect

On its surface, Malema's rhetorical style, which oftentimes alludes to war terminology, contrasts with the tradition of respect and friendliness that permeates African culture and is embedded in the South African's philosophical system of Ubuntu. South Africans have a deeply entrenched belief that the youth should not question the authority of their elders, and they should show respect to authoritative figures. Therefore, some Africans have dismissed Malema and the EFF's message because they equate the party's tendency to confront others directly, sternly, and aggressively, as showing rudeness and being angry. On the other hand, Ubuntu affirms others by promoting social harmony, which is the greatest level of good. According to Tutu's interpretation of Ubuntu (1999), "anger, resentment, lust for revenge, even success through aggressive competitiveness, are corrosive of this good." Ultimately, the consequences for violating Ubuntu are severe; anyone considered to be not living in accordance with its principles is no longer considered a human being.

Some have caricatured the EFF's commitment to addressing issues impacting South Africans as a simplistic display of bad behavior, essentially reducing them to annoying youth, all the while residing in a so-called altruistic nation, where authoritative figures promote harmony among all. People of other races have used the key principles in African culture, like the show of respect, to fuel and spearhead the dissent against Malema and the EFF. Ebrahim Fakir (2014), the Indian manager of the political parties and parliamentary programme at the *Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa* (EISA), said during an address at Rhodes University, "The EFF appears to be a little more than a rabble-rousing band of miscreants." Johann Rupert, a white man living in South Africa with a net worth of over \$7 billion (Forbes 2021) and chairman of Compagnie Financière Richemont, the Swiss luxury goods company that is best known for its Montblanc and Cartier brands, said while Malema was the ANCYL's president, "The ANC Youth League is like a mosquito in one's tent" (Shivambu 2017).

Sesanti (2010) says that African culture has been misunderstood and respect between the young and the old was actually mutual at one point. To clarify, Sesanti explains that Africans have respect for all who need special attention, including children and elders. Seen from this perspective, Africans would not be expected to give elders an unconditional level of respect, and the elders would not be able to exploit the intricacies of African culture for their own selfish gain.

Some leaders have connected Ubuntu to the rainbow nation concept, in order to help recover South Africa from apartheid; so, they have recommended that South Africans practice forgiveness in their reconstruction of a new nation, where all citizens are able to live together in harmony (Buqa 2015). "To forgive is not just to be altruistic. It is the best form of self-interest. What dehumanizes you inexorably dehumanizes me. It gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanize them," said Tutu (1999), as he draws on Ubuntu's requirements for being human.

While South African leaders spread a message of social harmony, essentially connecting Ubuntu to its reconciliation efforts, its people, including the young and old are still suffering as the whites continue to oppress them—a polar opposite of Ubuntu's core principle of communitarianism. Since Ubuntu is a traditionally African concept, it is understandable that people of other races, like the whites living in South Africa, more than likely would not find its principles compelling. Therefore, Malema has questioned this forgiveness that Africans have been encouraged to show, "We are hated, and then people come here and tell us forgiveness and reconciliation, reconciliation of what? . . . Forgive the people who have never asked for an apology. . . . They [apartheid leaders] never said sorry. They never apologized for their crimes. They are not in prison for their crimes." He continues, "You only forgive the people who show remorse and apologize. They have never apologized; we will never forgive them until they apologize (audience applause; eNCA. 2019)." Ubuntu even necessitates an apology in order to remedy a situation and to maintain optimal relations between neighbors.

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has been widely praised and is a testimony to the incorporation of African philosophy into politics. Instead of seeking revenge, Africans sought after reconciliation. South Africans aimed for higher ground in dealing with some of the worst atrocities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was able to provide Africans with a moral and humane solution to their current problem, one that was already suitable to their ontology, but was it enough when those who control the South African economy, the whites at 8.1 percent of the population, do not operate from an African philosophical system?

According to Buqa, the humanitarian concepts of Ubuntu and the rainbow nation seem to be losing their relevancy:

It is diabolical that the concepts of Ubuntu and rainbow nation seemed to be fading in practical terms. . . . Some people perceived the rainbow nation as an empty term when they do not have water to drink or a place to sleep or when they do not receive the practical help that they have been promised by the government. (Buqa 2015, 7-8)

Even so, South Africans should not have to relinquish their philosophical system in order to suit modern-day circumstances. Instead, Ubuntu must face a massive re-interpretation to deal appropriately with their current situation, because the beast of white monopoly capitalism has found a home in South Africa. This alternative should provide South Africans with nothing less than justice.

The ANC was created in 1912 to provide an alternative to fighting wars against the Europeans, which wasn't successful for the South Africans in light of their incomparable war technology; now there is a need for another alternative, in order to provide South Africans with the full range of their democratic rights.

Malema summed up what one could call his modern-day interpretation of Ubuntu in a couple of sentences, providing a new option for South Africans, both young and old, in the spirit of achieving real social harmony in the near future. As he said at a stadium rally just a few days before the 2019 South African general election, "White people, all we want is to join you at the dinner table and eat with you. ... If you do not want us to sit with you at the table, then we have no choice but to destroy the table" (Magome 2019).

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PART III

**DEAR BLACK MIDDLE
CLASS AND ELITE: "COME
BACK HOME"**

Malema Is the Undisputed Thorn in the ANC's Side

We [ANC] have lots of problems, you know. And you [EFF] seem to know our problems better than we do (laughter). Every day, you insult us in Parliament. You are doing a very good job (laughter). And you are doing exactly what I sent you to do in Parliament (laughter). And we are hoping that in the near future, this youth that is here [i.e., the EFF members/supporters], will be the leadership of South Africa (clapping). We are hoping for a South Africa that cannot be captured. We are hoping for a South Africa that is non-racist.

—Winnie Mandela, *Dr. Ndlozi's Graduation Ceremony*

A Silent Coup in South Africa

Researchers involved in South Africa's State Capacity Research Project (SCRIP) stated in their report, "Betrayal of the Promise: How South Africa is Being Stolen," that a silent coup has taken place in South Africa. This study involved participants from six major institutions, including the University of Cape Town, the University of Witwatersrand, the University of Johannesburg, Stellenbosch University, the South African Research Chair Initiative, and the South African Council of Churches. This silent coup, referred to as "state capture," had effectively removed

the ruling African National Congress (ANC) as the main force for societal transformation in South Africa (SCRP 2017). State capture happens when “a symbiotic relationship between the constitutional and shadow states is maintained, but with real power shifting increasingly into the networks that comprise the shadow state” (SCRP 2017, 3). South Africa’s state capture includes a small number of companies or private individuals who have exerted a major influence on party politics, through unsavory methods. These methods often involved providing personal benefits to public officials.

Five months after the release of the SCRП, South Africa’s Public Protector or Ombud, Thuli Madonsela, released her sixth report of 400 pages, called, “State of Capture: A Report of the Public Protector” (Madonsela 2016). The public protector is the state’s designee in defending the country’s democracy, ensuring fairness and accountability. The alleged accusations against Zuma were raised on the report’s front cover. Madonsela called his relationship with the Gupta family—removing ministers, appointing State-Owned Enterprise directors and ministers, and the possible awarding of state contracts to the Guptas—unethical and improper (Madonsela 2016). The *State Capacity Research Project* report (2017, 2) stated, “The Zuma-centered power elite has built and consolidated this symbiotic relationship between the constitutional state and the shadow state in order to execute the silent coup.”

The ANC’s move from reforming to repurposing the state, through the established relationship between the shadow state and the constitutional state, has been an ongoing concern. The early stages of this transition could be seen as far back as 1996. It moved into a new phase after the ANC’s 2007 Polokwane conference, when Mbeki was unseated as the ANC president (SCRП 2017). In 2012, during Jacob Zuma’s time as president, the silent coup was in effect (SCRП 2017). Zuma’s instrumental role in South Africa’s state capture had largely gone unnoticed:

Commentators, opposition groups and ordinary South Africans underestimate Jacob Zuma, not simply because he is more brazen, wily and brutal than they expect, but because they reduce him to caricature. They conceive of Zuma and his allies as a criminal network that has captured the state. This approach, which is unfortunately dominant, obscures the existence of a political project at work to repurpose state institutions to suit a constellation of rent-seeking networks that have been constructed and now span the symbiotic relationship between the constitutional and shadow state. This is akin to a silent coup. (SCRП 2017, 2)

The researchers based their findings on South Africa being beholden to state capture on their analysis of four major events: the Marikana Massacre in 2012; the Gupta plane landing at an air base in 2013; the efforts to bribe the former Deputy Minister of Finance, Mcebisi Jonas, into selling the National Treasury to a shadow

state in 2015; and a Cabinet reshuffling orchestrated by white monopoly capital in 2017 (SCRP 2017). The Gupta family became one of the main focal points of the state capture investigation.

State capture in South Africa has generally been associated with the expansion of public services, which allowed for the creation of a politically dependent and compliant bureaucratic class. It included circumstances like the firing of the good police from the intelligence services and police departments and the hiring of loyalists who supported “illegal rent seeking,” or a company’s procurement of monetary gain without offering a return. The loyalists would stay silent while the procurement processes of State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) such as Eskom (the electric utility) and Transnet (the railway network), moved toward those who favored the Gupta-Zuma network. A Cabinet subversion was also involved, which led to the establishment of elites who favored Zuma, the decision-making body for the executive authority. Zuma was at the center of a “party boss” network of those who dictated appointments and controlled votes, ultimately ensuring that the ANC’s loyalty was sustained (SCRP 2017, 4). The researchers stated that there is no way of knowing exactly how many people were involved in South Africa’s state capture:

We in turn have no idea how many others accepted these kinds of unimaginably enormous bribes. Those who resist this agenda are systematically removed, redeployed to other lucrative positions to silence them, placed under tremendous pressure, or hounded out by trumped up internal and/or external charges and dubious intelligence reports. (SCRP 2017, 61)

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), on the other hand, has an anti-corruption platform and its leadership has a clean record. The EFF, in its 2019 Election Manifesto, listed fifteen items dedicated to making the state operate more efficiently in rooting out corruption and in penalizing those guilty of it (EFF 2019). An EFF-run government would do the following: preempt corruption and ensure that the courts respond swiftly to corruption cases; protect the independence of any public representative or institution monitoring corruption; abolish private companies’ fulfillment of government duties and functions or delivery of government services; ensure public officials are not allowed to conduct business with private companies and businesses, nor use any consultants; fire and blacklist for recovering money stolen by the corrupt; and strengthen the protections under whistleblower legislation. The EFF’s tough policy on corruption also includes a proposed twenty-year minimum sentence for corrupt politicians. Moreover, the party would seek a constitutional amendment to make the National Prosecution

Authority (NPA) accountable to Parliament, in order to ensure its independence. The EFF would also pursue other penalties, beyond imprisonment:

- (a) Compulsory imprisonment plus community service during and beyond the term of imprisonment to pay back to society any money gained through corruption and send a clear message that corruption does not pay
- (b) Corrupt offenders employed in the public sector to forfeit their pensions and other benefits
- (c) Corrupt offenders to receive lifetime bans from employment in the public sector. (EFF 2019, 39–40)

Since its founding, the EFF has closely monitored corruption both among state employees and in the private sector. While in Parliament, Malema has constantly addressed corruption, as he said, "For as long as there is corruption, we are going to expose that money" (My Africa 2018). For instance, Malema attempted to address the corruption he felt was happening in the intelligence committee. He declared in Parliament that the EFF would not abide by that department's oath, because it covered up their internal corruption. He went onto say that Ellen Molekane, the deputy state security minister, was, "The most defender of corruption in the Intelligence Commission" (My Africa 2018). In response, Solomon Tsenoli, the deputy speaker of the national assembly, said Malema's allegations were "quite hectic" and that he would have to withdraw the statement due to parliamentary rules, which lead to the following exchange:

- Malema:** They are not going to steal money of our people here and you tell us we cannot raise issues here. If we cannot raise issues in this Parliament where are we going to raise issues? You know these people are continuing to steal under your leadership. They are stealing.
- Tsenoli:** Honorable Malema, there are rules in this house.
- Malema:** What rules? Rules of stealing? Rules of stealing? Rules of stealing? (My Africa 2018)

Although the researchers of the SCRP said that state capture was in full effect by 2012, Malema and the EFF have suggested that the ANC has been "captured" since 2008 (News24 2016). Malema contends that ANC members have been "zombified" by wealthy South African families, including the Menell, Rupert, Oppenheimer, and Gupta families. He explained how this zombification of select ANC members began:

They started zombifying with Mandela. ... The Menell family gave Mandela a house when he left Soweto. We must not be told here to worship Mandela and to treat

Mandela like a Jesus Christ. We are taking an account of where did we go wrong, and this government started with Mandela. ... He was zombified, that's how zombies operate. You get taken from the house into the backyard of your handler. Then they moved to zombify the rest of them [other ANC members]. (News24 2016)

Malema accused President Cyril Ramaphosa and Trevor Manuel, the minister of finance from 1996 to 2009, of being zombies. He did not hesitate to criticize ANC members openly, and his relationship with the ANC began declining while he was operating in a leadership role with the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), which eventually led to Malema's expulsion.

Friction existed between the ANCYL and the ANC during Malema's turbulent tenure as the ANCYL leader (2008–2012). The standard explanation of Malema's five-year suspension and eventual expulsion from the ANC, which took effect in April 2012, is that he was creating divisions within the party. For instance, Malema openly insulted Zuma, who was president at the time, due to his lack of action on poverty. He also called for regime change in Botswana, hoping to create a command team there that would unite its opposition and democratically take down what he described as a puppet regime of the United States government (Chauke 2011). The ANC repeatedly reprimanded Malema for his agitational rhetoric, a style that usually irritates status-quo operations. Malema was ordered to attend anger management classes and the ANC fined him 10,000 rand (about \$1,300 USD) after he (1) ordered a BBC reporter to leave a press conference (as described in Chapter Three), (2) endorsed the land reform policy of former Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, and (3) sang the "Dubula iBhunu" or the "Shoot the Boers" song (Baldauf 2010).

Malema stated when he was ANCYL president, there was an ambivalence among ANC leadership regarding meeting the goals of the Freedom Charter, thereby creating a rift between the ANC and its youth league. In *The Coming Revolution* book, it is stated that the ANCYL was not disbanded due to its alleged disorderly conduct, as the ANC had claimed, but it was a concerted effort to disperse those who were in the forefront of the call for nationalizing the mines and other sectors of the economy:

It is no secret that not a single demand of the [Freedom] Charter which has to do with property relations has been implemented or inserted in macroeconomic frameworks post-1994. Further, one can't help but suspect that the real reason why the ANC Youth League had been disbanded had nothing to do with "disrespect of leadership and consensus" or "undermining democratic centralism" but that the league wanted to advance—with whatever right or wrongful intention of their leadership—the demands, and specifically pertaining to property, of the Freedom Charter. (Shivambu 2017, 67)

In contrast, the EFF's stance is that after Malema was expelled, "a corrupt ANC faction" captured the ANCYL and it has ever since been reduced to a "lapdog, waiting for its master's next instruction" (Shivambu 2017, 7).

The *State Capacity Research Project* report (2017) indicated that the EFF's proposal for the nationalization of land and mines had provided an alternative to the ANC's failed Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) initiative. BEE backfired since white companies would front African employees by giving them positions but no decision-making power; moreover, businesses not only had to prove they met race conditions, but other considerations such as amount of years' experience—thus leaving the white monopoly capital firmly intact. Although, the researchers stated that the ANC was touting another message, saying that Africans could have control over or own large companies and that the economy could become radically transformed—all of which still has not transpired. Due to their conflicting methods of actualizing the goals of the Freedom Charter, eventually Malema and Shivambu were forced to leave the ANC.

Malema believes the ANC simply has not adhered to the revolutionary promises it made at the end of apartheid and has instead succumbed to corruption by supporting white monopoly capital at the expense of South Africans. In fact, the economic situation in South Africa is grim, and poverty is a "constant threat" since only 20 percent of South Africans are a part of the middle class—quite disappointing statistics for a middle-income country (World Bank 2018, xviii). Mbeki and Mbeki (2016) noted that half of the South African population over age fifteen was considered part of the underclass, and a little less than half of the population was underemployed or not working jobs that truly reflected their skill level. In addition, South Africa has the highest youth (age fifteen to twenty-four) unemployment rate in the world, at 56 percent (World Bank 2018). Therefore, Malema and his allies creation of the EFF has enabled them to directly challenge injustices in the South African system, including the issue of land redistribution, without having to face constant retaliation from their own party members.

The EFF and the ANC's Stance on Land Redistribution

The EFF has come closer to achieving "economic freedom in our lifetime" (EFF 2019, 9) for South Africans. In accordance with what would become the EFF's 2019 election theme, "Our land and jobs now" (Economic Freedom Fighters 2019, 2), Malema submitted a motion calling for a constitutional amendment of Section 25 to enable land expropriation without compensation, and the motion passed with 241 members in favor and 83 against, on February 28, 2018. Then, just two

months after the 2019 elections, the members of the National Assembly were collectively singing and clapping their hands, just before they voted to approve the EFF-proposed ad hoc committee that would work to amend the constitution. Everyone was dancing to the beat of the EFF's mission since land expropriation without compensation had always been their clarion call. As a matter of fact, the EFF's first of seven cardinal pillars in their 2014 and 2019 Election Manifesto has been, "Expropriation of South Africa's land without compensation for equal redistribution" (EFF 2019).

After this historic motion passed, Malema mentioned that South Africans did not have to accomplish this feat by beating the whites up or through inflicting genocide; rather, it came into fruition through the political process:

If you go to Twitter now, white people have caught feelings after expropriation of the land without compensation. We are exercising political power. It is more hurtful, more painful, than a gun. It is more painful than a spear. We hurt you and take from you without a drop of blood. That's the power of democracy. (Multimedia Live 2018)

The EFF has been spearheading this land issue in Parliament since the party's inception as the leading plank in its policy agenda, but had to get buy-in from the ANC members. For instance, in 2017, Malema made a similar motion but it was rejected by 261 against to 33 in favor. Furthermore, the EFF has come a long way from the days when Malema gave his supporters permission to conduct illegal land grabs; or when they—right before being forced out of Parliament—collectively chanted in a call-and-response fashion, "occupy land" and "without compensation," due to the slow movement on this issue. Malema said in Parliament that no one could stop them from occupying land:

So our people must continue to occupy land. This land belongs to us. If the ANC wants to kill our people for rightfully claiming the land, let the ANC do so. You have done it in Marikana, do it with the people who are seeking their own land. It is their land. They require nobody's permission to occupy this land. (My Africa 2018)

In February 2018, the EFF was able to negotiate with the ANC, since the ANC agreed to expropriate certain land without compensation, as long as doing so did not interfere with food security or agricultural production. Meanwhile, the EFF had wanted all the land to be state-owned. In the end, the ANC supported the motion, as did other political parties including the National Freedom Party, Agang South Africa, the African Independent Congress, and the African's People Convention. Those opposing the measure included the Democratic Alliance (DA), the Inkatha Freedom Party, Freedom Front Plus, the African Christian Democratic Party, and the Congress of the People (Makinana 2018).

The Ad Hoc Committee on Section 25 was created to introduce legislation, the Eighteenth Amendment Bill, that would amend the Constitution, but first they sought after consultation from experts and public opinion on the matter. Mathole Motshekga became the committee chairperson. This Joint Constitutional Review Committee (Joint CRC) tabled a report to the National Assembly after holding its first set of public hearings in thirty-four venues from all nine provinces, in a six-week timespan in 2018. The report indicated the following: land ownership was skewed and unequal; there should exist an assurance of the "security of tenure" for farm tenants, farmworkers, and for those inhabiting communal land; the threats to land reform includes corruption, and an insufficient budget and capacity; the state's policy must have clarity to redress past wrongs; and the expropriation of the land without compensation should be listed in the Constitution as a viable land reform option (Parliament n.d.). The members of the National Assembly agreed with the Joint CRC's findings that Section 25 should be amended, and voted in December 2018, to support their findings.

At a Joint CRC meeting, Malema spoke about how this issue of land had become a racially divisive issue: "All of us should make one observation, that not a single white person supported the amendment of Section 25, and therefore ours is not a class division. It's not a class division, it's a racial division" (News24 2018). When a white person in the room became visually upset, Malema told the white people not to be sensitive, because he was not sensitive when they were saying "senseless things," and that the whites view land ownership as their privilege (News24 2018).

The second set of public hearings were held in 2020, and based on the outcome of the hearings, the committee determined that the following sections would be amended, to the objectives listed below:

- Subsection 2(b): Provides for a court of law to make a decision for nil compensation when land or property is expropriated for land reform.
- Subsection 3: Sets out the conditions and circumstances that must be considered when a decision is made by a court regarding the amount of compensation.
- Subsection 3(a): National legislation must be passed that outlines the circumstances when a court may arrive at nil compensation for expropriated land or property e.g. The Expropriation Bill. (Parliament n.d.)

The Joint CRC is still meeting as of this writing. When finished, the National Assembly must vote and agree to the Eighteenth Amendment of the Constitution, then it must go through the National Council of Provinces to complete the amendment process. The Expropriation Bill is pending the constitutional amendment

process, which would have to become law in order for expropriation of the land without compensation to be actualized.

In an effort to provide a historical perspective on this matter, a review of Nelson Mandela's positioning on this issue is important. Mandela, in 1994, had promised the transfer of 30 percent of the land to African owners in just five years, by 1999, through a "willing-seller, willing-buyer" program, but in that timespan, only 1 percent of the land had been distributed. More recently, the debate has focused on Section 25 of the South African Constitution, which is the property clause Mandela agreed to in 1996 (Mamdani 2019). It was designed to protect all South Africans' property rights, including white people's rights; meanwhile, the ANC government promised that the land would be returned to Africans (Ntsebeza 2018)—in almost twenty-five years after apartheid ended, no one had ever challenged Section 25 which essentially prevented land expropriation from being actualized. Further, the ANC had pushed its goals even moreso down the timeline, by pledging to redistribute 30 percent of the land by 2014, which did not happen (Stoddard 2018).

Accordingly, more than twenty-five years after the end of apartheid, Africans still do not own the land. The South African government's Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (2017) conducted a private land ownership land audit and noted that Africans were still at the bottom when it comes to land ownership. With regard to agricultural holdings and farms in South Africa, 72 percent of the land is owned by whites who have a total of almost 27 million hectares (66 million acres) of land; Coloureds own over 5 million hectares (13 million acres), at 15 percent; Indians own about 2 million hectares (5 million acres), at 5 percent, and Africans are at the bottom of landownership and only own 4 percent (a number that's rounded up), or 1 million hectares (3 million acres) of land, and there are other categories that accumulate to 3 percent.

The EFF's positioning on the land issue is articulated in their manifestos. Their goals, as outlined in their 2019 manifesto, are to do the following: ensure the amendment of the Constitution took immediate effect; ensure Africans would have ownership over the majority of the land; pass land reform acts and set up a people's land council and a land ombudsman; and to provide at least 50 percent of land to women and youth. In addition, the EFF also promised to abolish foreign land ownership; reconfigure the Land Claims Court; establish the right of land, and the same land protections to those on communal land; abolish the renting of land; allocate free land for agricultural, residential, or industrial use; preserve inheritance rights and the land rights of traditional leaders; and nationalize all game reserves (EFF 2019).

Although the EFF has had to tussle with the ANC, often being classified as bad-mannered, it has been the force behind the ANC's developments on land reform. The EFF has pushed for land reform so relentlessly that the *Pan South African Language Board*, along with the *Focal Points and Newsclip* research companies, announced that "land expropriation without compensation" was their "word of the year" for 2018, having been used more than twenty-five thousand times in traditional and new media (South African News Agency 2018). Even President Ramaphosa has had to acknowledge the importance of the EFF-proposed land reform amendment; he did so during his speech for the ANC's 109th anniversary:

The struggle to ensure that the land is shared among those who work it remains an historical and economic imperative. Land reform is essential to meeting the aspirations of the Freedom Charter and to redressing the wrongs of the past. During the course of this year, we expect Parliament to approve an amendment to Section 25 of our Constitution, clearly outlining our circumstances in which land may be expropriated without compensation. This will give effect to an important resolution of our 54th National Conference and will contribute to the acceleration of land reform in our country. (MyANC 2021)

Since the passage of the constitutional amendment on land expropriation without compensation, the EFF has been working to ensure that South Africans can live in better areas. The history of South Africans and land distribution was significantly affected by the 1913 Native Lands Act, which gave Africans so-called homelands that accounted for just 10 percent of the land, even though Africans represented 80 percent of the population. Africans are still residing on that land today, so Malema is concerned with the areas Africans will be granted land, and he expressed this concern to Ramaphosa in Parliament:

Our people are now subjected to concentration camps which we call townships, and we mislead ourselves that those things are residential areas. ... Now, did you come up with a plan and instruct the minister of human settlement to expropriate land closer to town and suburbs? ... We cannot continue to subject our people to a situation that is inhumane, where others even say we must give them title deeds to be permanently stuck in that arrangement. So we are asking, "Are we going to expropriate the land closer to the suburbs, defeat racism, and create mixed residential areas?" (eNCA 2018)

The Spear of the Nation Has Fallen

Many key moments have punctuated the ANC's history since it began in 1912 as the South African Native National Congress, eventually changing its name to the ANC in 1923. The ANC experienced a "somewhat moribund" period in the 1920s

and 1930s (Plaut and Du Plessis 2019, 37). The ANC Women's League (ANCWL) was formed in 1943. Nelson Mandela, along with others such as Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo, created the ANCYL in 1944, and Malema would become the president of this same group sixty-four years later. Members took on the challenge of ending apartheid in the 1950s by launching the ANC's defiance campaign and developing the Freedom Charter in 1955.

The ANC's revolutionary arm, uMkhonto we Sizwe (or Xhosa for Spear of the Nation), also called simply "MK," was formed in 1961. It comprised of a revolutionary guerrilla liberation army and an underground network of exiled soldiers committed to a sabotage campaign against the National Party, the ruling Afrikaner political party that instituted apartheid in 1948. Umkhonto we Sizwe's formation in 1961 followed the Sharpeville Massacre, in which the police opened fire on a crowd of thousands of protesters, killing sixty-nine of them. Umkhonto we Sizwe's goal was African liberation. The Soviet Union and its allies provided training to these freedom fighters, who learned to operate limpet mines to carry out bombings and foster insurrectionary violence. The security forces retaliated by arresting and charging these revolutionaries with treason or other war crimes, placing them on house arrest, or even attacking and assassinating the activists.

These revolutionaries would not surrender in this armed struggle; instead, they chose to risk death. After an ANC guerrilla member, Thanduxolo Mbethe, died while involved in the armed liberation struggle, people attending his funeral spoke of the need for revolution. "If they shoot all of our children, then the women must take the AK-47 and shoot back," a speaker said (Crais and McClendon 2014, 431). Umkhonto we Sizwe members would pay an enormous price for their actions.

At the Rivonia trial of 1963, sixteen top-level uMkhonto we Sizwe freedom fighters were accused of two counts of sabotage and two other counts of fomenting a violent revolution, some of which included Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Dennis Goldberg, Ahmed Kathrada, Andrew Mlangeni, Raymond Mhlaba, and Elias Motsoaledi. The police had found documents from the ANC's Rivonia hideout at a farm. They accused the group of recruiting people for the manufacture and instruction of military training and explosives, paying others to help them in committing sabotage and executing acts of sabotage, plotting a conspiracy of guerrilla warfare by violent revolution, and moving toward communism (United Nations Centre Against Apartheid 1969).

While on trial, Mandela remarked at the Pretoria Supreme Court that the ANC members saw violence as the only way to move forward:

We felt that without violence there would be no way open to the African people to succeed in their struggle against the principle of white supremacy. All lawful modes of expressing opposition to this principle had been closed by legislation, and we were

placed in a position in which we had either to accept a permanent state of inferiority, or to defy the Government. (Mandela [1979] 2008, 2)

In his statement, Mandela affirmed that he “cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony—and with equal opportunities. Mandela continued, “It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die” (United Nations Centre Against Apartheid 1969, 5).

The freedom fighters were found guilty of recruiting people for guerrilla warfare, using explosives, and furthering communism while receiving money from other African countries, among other crimes. They received sentences of life imprisonment. Afterwards, the actions of the crowd were documented:

The crowd outside the court shouted *Amandhla Ngawethu* (“Power to the People”), broke into song and unfolded posters which read: “You will not serve these sentences as long as we live,” “We are proud of our leaders, no tears will be shed,” and “Sentence or no sentence, we stand by our leaders.” (United Nations Centre Against Apartheid 1969, 7)

The South African freedom fighters, like Mandela, received jail sentences at the notorious Robben Island prison starting in 1964, and others went into exile. Originally, the enslaved Khoikhoi who disobeyed their white colonial masters were sent to this jail, and by 1961 it was designed solely to hold the “enemies of apartheid” (Johnson 2012). Indres Naidoo, a member of *uMkhonto we Sizwe* and an anti-apartheid activist, who served a ten-year sentence at Robben Island, spoke about the horrifying conditions:

They’d make a hole in the ground and would bury a prisoner up to his neck, leaving him the whole day like this. Sometimes in the course of the day the warden would come along and say, “do you want water,” and then urinate into the mouth of the prisoner. Other forms of torture was to hang a prisoner, handcuff him and sustain them from the ceiling, with his toes barely touching the ground. (Global News 2019)

The jail has since been transformed into a museum; it is a World Heritage Site.

During the first seven years of Mandela’s time in jail, Mandela’s brother *Mayeza Mandela*, his mother *Fanny Mandela*, and his oldest son (he had with *Evelyn Mase*), *Thandekile*, age twenty-four, all died. The government did not allow him to attend any of the funerals (Gumede 1965).

Many significant events occurred, as it relates to Nelson Mandela, in the 1980s and 1990s. In the 1980s, the campaign to release Nelson Mandela was increasingly popularized and the *Freedom Charter* became widely distributed. In 1990, Mandela was finally released from prison, after serving twenty-seven years

on Robben Island. After almost three decades in jail, Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, the ANC president from 1967–1991, agreed that it was best to negotiate a settlement with the National Party, so the armed struggle was suspended in August 1990, and those in exile returned to South Africa. In 1993, Mandela and F. W. de Klerk, the last president of an apartheid South Africa, were awarded the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize. The ANC won South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, and it has won every election thereafter.

Traditionally known as a liberation movement, the ANC has changed significantly since the days when it had an uMkhonto we Sizwe revolutionary wing. Now, it holds power in South Africa, but is also mired in scandal.

State Capture under an ANC Government: The Scandals

ANC leaders, including its founders, are far removed from their days of being primary targets of the establishment; now, they are the establishment. Since Nelson Mandela was elected the first African president of the Republic of South Africa on May 10, 1994, the ANC has enjoyed a wide majority in South Africa's Parliament. But controversy has engulfed the ANC, as in the case of Zuma that was vividly illustrated in the SCRP.

Nearly all of Zuma's life has been spent within the ANC. Zuma joined the organization at age seventeen and became part of uMkhonto we Sizwe two years later, in 1961. At age twenty-one, he was sentenced to time at Robben Island on charges of attempting to overthrow the government, after he and about fifty of his comrades tried to go through Botswana for military training in Zambia. They were caught in transit after an informer revealed their plan to the police (Gordin 2010). He was held in an almost exclusive state of solitary confinement for ninety days in the Hercules Police Station, and afterwards he spent ten years at Robben Island, from 1963 to 1973, for sabotage and attempting to overthrow the government. Many uMkhonto we Sizwe members died young, but Zuma survived and has attained elder status, becoming the fourth president of South Africa and serving from 2009 to 2018.

Even though Zuma once sought the liberation of all South Africans through his involvement in uMkhonto we Sizwe, his presidency and before that, his vice presidency were tainted by allegations of corruption that tarnished his image as a liberator. Zuma resigned as president in 2018, after calls for #ZumaMustGo began to resonate widely. Previously, as vice president to Thabo Mbeki, the third president of South Africa, Zuma was fired over corruption allegations. It is possible

that he could face more corruption charges at the conclusion of the still-ongoing state capture inquiries.

The Gupta Scandal

The SCRP report revealed that the National Treasury had been captured, and the "Gupta-Zuma family network," or the collaboration of the Guptas with companies and individuals was instrumental in this state capture (SCRP 2017, 2). The connections between Zuma and one of South Africa's richest families, the Gupta family, have been widely reported over the years. The Gupta brothers, Ajay, Atul, and Rajesh, relocated from India to South Africa in 1993 to explore potential business opportunities. They established the Sahara Group parent company and its subsidiary Sahara Computers, which had around ten thousand employees (BBC 2018b). The family had stakes in the technology and media, mining, energy, and air travel industries. They had owned at least four mansions in Johannesburg, including one previously owned by the son of the former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (BBC 2018b). They have since moved to Dubai and claimed they would sell their assets off, but some believed they would maintain some type of connection to their businesses (BBC 2017). Their total holdings are reportedly valued at approximately \$3.2 billion USD (Forbes 2020).

As mentioned earlier, the Gupta family was suspected of having influence over the hiring and firing of government ministers during Zuma's administration. The DA asked for the creation of an ad hoc committee to investigate the speculations surrounding the Guptas. The EFF member Fana Mokoena asked for an ad hoc committee on the Guptas to investigate minister captures, reshuffling of minister positions, and the capture of individuals in major State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), like Eskom (electricity), Denel (military equipment), South African Airways (SAA), and the South African Broadcast Corporation (My Africa 2017). Some of these SOEs have been on the brink of financial collapse, showing 1.4 billion rand spent from irregular expenditures (Business Tech 2019). Years later, at the State of the Nation Address (SONA), Malema explained why he felt Pravin Gordhan, South Africa's minister of public enterprises who oversees SOEs needed to be fired:

Our sisters are going to lose jobs in SAA; our fathers, our brothers, our mothers are going to lose jobs in Eskom; our brothers are going to lose jobs in Denel, in Transnet (railway transport), because of one man who doesn't have the capacity to run State-Owned Enterprises, and because he is the one who raised money for the president in London during his campaign when he wanted to be the ANC president. He has become untouchable. The president is scared of Pravin. ... The EFF touches the untouchable. We go where no one wants to go. (Eyewitness News 2020)

A scandal known as Guptagate had erupted after Zuma was accused of allowing the Gupta family to engage in state capture. It included the questionable 2017 firing of Gordhan (whom Zuma eventually rehired) and the firing and reshuffling of other ministers. Attention was drawn to the following incidents: a High Court's access to a preservation order detailing an unsubstantiated transfer of millions of dollars from the South African government into Atul Gupta's bank account; Zuma's family members functioning as employees of Gupta-owned companies; the granting of government contracts to the Gupta family; and the Guptas' ability to gain VIP landing access for their private chartered plane at a military air base on the occasion of a relative's wedding, a privilege normally reserved for heads of states and diplomats (February 2019). Malema declared the Guptas should not be allowed to colonize South Africa:

We cannot have a situation where South Africa is colonized by a family. We will do to the Guptas what we did to colonizers and apartheid. We didn't send them love letters, we engage them directly. It's time to engage the Guptas directly. (Eyewitness News 2016)

In fact, so many scandals concerning Zuma and the Guptas seized the public's attention that the Gupta family eventually hired the British public-relations firm Bell Pottinger in 2016, paying them 100,000 euro monthly through its Oakbay investment firm (Cave 2017; BBC 2018a; Segal 2018). The DA eventually filed a complaint with the relevant UK industry trade association, the Public Relations and Communications Association, against Bell Pottinger for sending Twitter posts from a fake account criticizing white monopoly capital and economic apartheid. Bell Pottinger administered this secret campaign to heighten racial tensions in South Africa, with hopes of distracting people from the high-profile scandals involving the Guptas and Zuma (BBC 2018a). One hundred thousand of Bell Pottinger's emails were leaked to the public, and the trade association expelled Bell Pottinger for five years.

According to Malema (SABC News 2021), the EFF went through the legal system, demanding the creation of a commission that would hold the executive accountable for corruption.

State capture inquiry hearings started in August 2018 and are ongoing as of this writing (Commission of Inquiry 2019). Seven hundred people have been named as witnesses who will have to answer questions in court, and none were EFF members. Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo is chairperson of the *Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption, and Fraud in the Public Sector Including Organs of State*, referred to as the Zondo Commission.

During the state capture trials, people have been interviewed to determine South African governmental officials' level of involvement in state capture. Zuma

took the stand on July 15 to 19, 2019. He denied all charges made against him, indicating that they were part of a plot designed by foreign intelligence officers who had become spies inside the South African government (Burke 2019). He claimed there was a "conspiracy" against him and that his character was being "assassinated" (Commission of Inquiry 2019, 14, 16). Gordhan also testified in court, alleging he was harassed and intimidated by the Guptas. Meanwhile, the EFF held a rally outside the hearings, and Malema said that the EFF was going after Gordhan because of his connection to white monopoly capital:

Zuma stood between us and the white monopoly capital. That's why we had to get rid of Zuma, so that we can go directly to white monopoly capital. Our attack on Pravin Gordhan is an attack on white monopoly capital, because Pravin is a dog of white monopoly capital. We must hit the dog until the owner comes out. (SABC Digital News 2018)

The Arms Deal Corruption Case

Zuma is facing arms deal corruption charges stemming from his role as South Africa's deputy president in 1999, in a court case that began in 2005 and is still ongoing (BBC 2018a). Zuma signed contracts of \$30 billion rand or \$4 billion USD (Herskovitz 2011) to purchase military hardware from Germany, Italy, Sweden, Britain, France, and domestic suppliers. Zuma was charged with accepting bribes from a French arms dealer to protect the company from any form of scrutiny. He faces sixteen counts of corruption, with the charges totaling \$2.5 billion of the \$30 billion, and he allegedly accepted almost 800 illegal payments (Burke 2019). "The spending of billions of dollars on new fighter jets, helicopters, submarines and warships was contentious in a country where millions lived in poverty" and where no imminent threat existed, according to a BBC article (2018a).

Various political organizations, even including members of the ANCYL under Malema's leadership, pressed for charges against Zuma. The DA brought the matter to court before Zuma became president, but weeks before he assumed the presidency, the NPA said no new charges would be sought in the case. The DA persisted and won a court challenge asking for the sealed case records to become public. Once the records were released, the DA argued that dropping the case was unwarranted (BBC 2018b).

Journalist Jon Herskovitz explained why Malema, as ANCYL president, and his supporters pressed for a reopening of Zuma's arms deal case:

Zuma's biggest political fight now is with ANC Youth League leader and party power-broker Julius Malema. The two appear to have already had a tit for tat exchange of corruption allegations, and are squaring off in an ANC disciplinary hearing that

could derail Malema's political career. Youth League officials in Malema's home-base stronghold of Limpopo told financial daily *Business Day* they would press for an investigation into the arms deal to gain leverage for the league's leader at his ANC hearing. (Herskovitz 2011)

Before Zuma resigned as president in 2017, the Supreme Court determined that the NPA's 2009 move to drop the charges was unjustified. Then in April 2018, two months after Zuma resigned from office, the NPA reinstated the charges. Zuma maintains his innocence.

In an act of compassion, Malema remarked that he did not agree with Zuma going to jail because of this matter. "Jail time for an old person like that [referring to Zuma] is not suitable. What kind of society have we become to jail such old people?" he said (Madia 2020). As of this writing, the case is ongoing (Reuters 2020).

The Nkandla Scandal

Zuma became entangled in another major scandal after putting 260 million rand, or around \$20 million USD into renovations of his mansion in Nkandla and ignoring the South Africa Public Protector (or Ombud) Thuli Madonsela's requirement that he payback a reasonable portion of the money, as outlined in her report describing his actions as unethical (Calland 2017). Zuma's renovations included a cattle enclosure, a chicken run (i.e., a fenced area where chickens can run freely), a visitor center, a swimming pool, an amphitheater, and a parking garage for VIP guests. Zuma said all the renovations were done for security purposes only, but later his attorney denied this point. Even though Madonsela ordered Zuma to pay back the taxpayers' money used for renovations to his home, Zuma did not initially respond to her recommendation. Subsequently, the main opposition parties, the EFF and DA, played crucial roles in enforcing accountability from Zuma concerning Nkandla.

During a session in Parliament, Malema pressurized Zuma on the Nkandla issue, and other EFF members joined him. Malema demanded a response as to when Zuma would pay back the millions of tax dollars spent to upgrade his mansion, as the public protector had suggested. Zuma said that he had responded to the public protector already and that her points were only recommendations. He said those authorized by the government will determine whether he needed to pay back the money, and he refused to say anything else on the matter. Many EFF members continued to ask when he would pay back the money. The Speaker then demanded that the EFF members leave the National Assembly, but they instead began chanting in unison, "Pay back the money, pay back the money" (SABC News 2014).

A Powers and Privileges parliamentary committee investigated their behavior, and the National Assembly, adopting the committee's recommendations, found twenty EFF members guilty of contempt of Parliament for disrupting Zuma's presentation and the day's scheduled business. Some of the offending members, including Malema, Floyd Shivambu, Mpho Ramakatsa, Khanyisile Litchfield-Tashabalala Gadi, and Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, were given a thirty-day suspension without pay; others were suspended for fourteen days without pay; and the remainder had to apologize and their pay was docked for fourteen days without a suspension (eNCA 2014). The ANC's spokesperson said the suspensions sent "a strong message that anarchy, disruption, total disregard for the rules of the house and the rulings of the presiding officers" was intolerable (BBC 2014; Mothapo 2014).

But Malema persisted. In another parliamentary session, Malema mentioned to Zuma that twelve months after the report's issuance, he still had not paid back the money. Zuma responded that the case had been dropped and that the recommendation contained in the report was not a verdict. Zuma then proceeded to joke, "I hope lawyers, you have them there, I'm sure they'll help you to interpret this (ministers clapping, Zuma chuckling). Thank you very much" (My Africa 2015). Another time, as Zuma spoke in Parliament, Malema raised an objection, stating that if they continued allowing the president to speak, the EFF would take them to court, forcing them to discipline Zuma. Loud sounds could be heard in the background as Malema continued, "These howlers can howl, there is nothing they can do. You are a group of howlers; the voters have rejected you because of the conduct of one man. You have lost metros [urban areas] because of this attitude of howling" (My Africa 2016). The Speaker of the House repeatedly demanded that Malema take his seat, and eventually she turned off his microphone, but only after Malema spoke these words:

I am not going to take my seat; you must tell Zuma to leave. Why must I listen to you when you don't tell Zuma to leave this house? I am not disrupting any house. I am not going to allow a criminal to speak in this house, when you are doing nothing about this criminal. This man is collapsing our country. All of you, you are scared of him. You are scared of one man who's collapsing this country singlehandedly. I am not allowed to speak when a man who has broken his oath of office is being allowed to speak here. We are not going to allow that. (My Africa 2016)

The hashtag #PayBackTheMoney was trending on social media by this point, and the opposition parties came together against Zuma.

The EFF and DA, along with the public protector, Madonsela, brought Zuma to court concerning this matter and called for his impeachment. The top court in South Africa determined that Zuma had breached the Constitution by disregarding the order from the public protector to repay the money to the public.

It ruled that he must pay back the money spent on any renovations of the mansion that were not done for security purposes (My Africa 2015). The court also chastised parliamentary members for their failure to hold Zuma accountable.

More than a year later in 2019, during South Africa's state capture inquiries, Zuma insinuated that he was really a victim of the Nkandla situation:

You'll recall that when I was building my home at Nkandla, problems arose there about corruption, and again you'll recall that the media in this country mentioned the figure of the money I have squandered, and everything. At that place there were two structures of government that investigated, they found nothing on Zuma, but I've been so much vilified in the world and everywhere that I'm the most corrupt person. (Commission of Inquiry 2019, 25)

The Jonas Scandal

Yet another scandal involved the Guptas' efforts to bribe Mcebisi Jonas, the former deputy minister of finance, in 2015. They allegedly wanted him to sell South Africa's National Treasury to the shadow state. During a meeting with Jonas, the Guptas tried to get Jonas to commit to increasing their 6 billion rand in state agency contracts to 8 billion. Jonas revealed to the public protector that at this meeting, the Guptas offered him a promotion to the minister of finance government position, but only if he could facilitate their National Treasury access. Jonas said he rejected the Guptas' offer of 600 million rand (SCRP 2017), and alleged that Ajay said they would kill him if he had ever shared the details of their meeting (Munusamy 2018). Also, Pravin Gordhan, the former finance minister, presented evidence of seventy-two suspicious transactions in one year from Gupta-associated accounts, totaling almost 7 billion rand.

The VBS Scandal

The VBS (Venda Building Society) scandal was also widely publicized, even though the VBS Mutual Bank was a small and relatively unknown black-owned bank—until Zuma received a home loan of 7.8 million rand, or about \$600,000 USD, to repay the public for the millions spent on his home residence, placing the bank at the center of the scandal. The Venda homeland government had created this black-owned bank in Limpopo in 1982, and its largest shareholder was the Venda royal family. Advocate Terry Motau (2018) called the VBS scandal “The Great Bank Heist” after conducting a five-month investigation commissioned by the South Africa Reserve Bank. Fifty-three people, mostly the bank's leadership,

were implicated in stealing almost 2 billion rand, or about \$110 million USD, between 2015 and 2018.

The VBS scandal started at around 2016 and led to the arrests of eight people in June 2020 for racketeering, corruption, fraud, and theft, and in total about fifty people were implicated. The corruption took on several forms: the bank's approval of deposits and redistributing the money to its executives, and to executives' friends and companies; bribes paid to municipalities; accounts created by people or companies who never made deposits, but were credited with money; money sent into external accounts; and credited accounts that would indefinitely overdraw (van Rensburg 2020). The National Treasury has paid back the money lost in this scandal, and this black-owned bank is now closed.

There was considerable media coverage of a possible relationship of the EFF to the VBS scandal—some mainstream media outlets seemed eager to accuse the EFF of corruption, especially since the EFF leadership has never been convicted of corruption. Although, news reports pointed out that Brian Shivambu was the brother of Floyd Shivambu, the EFF's deputy president, while mentioning that Brian Shivambu had been implicated for a sum of approximately 16 million rand, or around \$1 million USD. This connection may have led people to presume that high-level members of the EFF were involved in the scandal, which was not the case. According to Malema, "The man who was at the center of this thing, makes concessions and confession, mentions no EFF leader, he mentions no EFF in those confessions. ... Why is there no headline in the news that the EFF is not implicated, when we used to project that it is involved in VBS?" (Newzroom Africa 2020). Moreover, Brian Shivambu never held a seniority level status in the EFF: he never served on the command team, nor was he ever a member of Parliament, instead he was a general EFF member. Following the logic of those who tried to connect Brian Shivambu's actions to the EFF political party, would be akin to holding the EFF leadership accountable for the actions of its practically 2 million voters, the DA accountable for all of its almost 4 million voters, and the ANC accountable for its 10 million voters.

Malema observed that others holding important positions, including ANC members, had been personally implicated in criminal trials without receiving as much media attention as the EFF did for claims involving:

The Communist Party got money in the VBS, the Hawks people (African Police Service) got money in the VBS bonds. ... ANC Limpopo, ANC national got money in the VBS. But today, they don't carry that dark cloud of VBS, it is carried by us, because the intention is to discredit us. (News24 2020)

Malema said Brian Shivambu had become the “face of VBS loot,” even while the ANC was suspending Florence Radzilani, the deputy leader of Limpopo, and Danny Msiza, the treasurer, for their involvement in the scandal (Madisa 2018).

Malema said if only the EFF were involved in the VBS scandal, members would have already been implicated:

Me and you can die and wake up again, and live to the same age and die again; there will not be a single EFF person arrested for VBS. ... You know how much these people were troubling them—not only the government of the ANC, including the establishment—by now they would have dealt with us, sent us to jail for a very long time. For sure, everybody who hates us in the corridors of power in the establishment always says, “but why are the EFF members not being arrested on VBS?” They will never be because there is nothing. ... You can write graphs and change the color of the same graphs, project them as a new graph, you will never find leaders of the EFF in VBS. (Newzroom Africa 2020)

Zuma's Resignation

The EFF and DA, and subsequently members of Zuma's own political party, the ANC, all began calling for Zuma's resignation. The hashtag #ZumaMustFall became a movement. In April and May 2017, massive protests attracted tens of thousands of people calling for Zuma's departure. Finally, Zuma paid back a portion of the money spent on Nkandla, 7.8 million rand, as requested by the treasurer. After nine years in office, he resigned on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2018, perhaps in an act of love for his country. This gave the ANC a little more than one year prior to the May 2019 general election to salvage its floundering reputation. Malema pointed out that the EFF had been working to force his resignation for a long time:

Jacob Zuma has finally surrendered to the political pressure which the EFF was at the center of for the past three years. The ultimate fall of Zuma is the direct result of the political and parliamentary work done by the EFF. (Whittles 2018)

After Zuma resigned, the Gupta family fled South Africa—another demand that Malema had been making for years.

South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, age sixty-five, was elected in 2018 as South Africa's new president. At that time, according to Citizen Surveys (2018) the president's approval numbers spiked upward from a 22 percent rating during Zuma's last month in office to a 68 percent approval rating during Ramaphosa's first month in office. His popularity indicated a general hope that he would not be involved in corruption and showed that most South Africans associated the corruption with an individual in the party, that is, Zuma, as opposed to

seeing the party as corruption laden, that is, the ANC. The EFF did not agree with this optimism. Malema (Multimedia Live 2018) explained, in a televised press conference after Zuma's resignation, that he was not excited about the situation, because the ANC was only swapping seats from one corrupt politician to the next: "The problem is not Zuma, the problem is not Ramaphosa, the problem is the ANC."

The Rejection of Apartheid Symbols

Along with ending corruption, the EFF has continually engaged in the rejection of any semblance of apartheid symbols in South Africa. Some of these issues will be discussed.

The EFF filed a motion in Parliament to change the name of *Cape Town International Airport* to Winnie Mandela Airport, in order to name more places after freedom fighters, especially female ones, in an effort to debunk the idea that women were not involved in the freedom struggle. This motion was blocked in Parliament by the ruling ANC, the DA, and the National Freedom Party. The reason provided was that the *Airports Company South Africa's* leadership team was already looking into the matter and had additional names under consideration (van Diemen 2019).

The EFF has long been a critic of the ANC's 1997 combining of a Boer poem and the African anthem into one official *South African National Anthem*. Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika (Lord Bless Africa), South Africans' once-banned liberation song dubbed the people's anthem, and the Boer poem called *Die Stem* were combined into one official anthem under an ANC government. Interestingly, Malema's master's thesis proposal was titled, "Should 'Die Stem' Fall? A Critical Analysis of the Relationship Between Die Stem And White Supremacy" (Malema, 2018). Malema has called the South African National Anthem an "apartheid-celebrating anthem" and has accused the ANC of instilling "mental slavery" by permitting the merging of these two songs (Current Affairs ZA 2019). Malema said both the flag and the *Die Stem* Anthem are symbols of white supremacy. When the Equality Court made the ruling in 2019 that the display of the apartheid flag amounted to hate speech, Malema said, "In light of this ruling, we call on Ramaphosa to remove *Die Stem* from our national anthem. Forcing black people to sing *Die Stem* is like asking them each day to salute the apartheid flag" (Mahlati 2019).

In addition, the EFF has called on South Africans to not refer to the celebration observed on the twenty-fourth of September, as National Braai Day (Braai is an Afrikaans word for barbecue) but as Heritage Day. Jan Scannell, known widely

as Jan “Braai,” spearheaded this campaign for this day to be a day of cookouts. Although, the date was originally used to celebrate Shaka Zulu, until the ANC government ruled that the day should instead be a public holiday, in honor of all of the cultures of South Africa. Malema tweeted that South Africans should instead use the day to pronounce Africans names correctly, and he completed the message with the hashtag #OurNamesMatter (Malema 2016).

The EFF also believes *Kruger National Park* should be renamed. It is named after Paul Kruger, a South African Republic president from the nineteenth century (Head 2019).

“This was a Powerful Generation”

Malema, along with the EFF, have become the undisputed thorns in the ANC's side. As the ANC tries to live up to its revolutionary past, it must accede to some of the demands of the self-proclaimed radical, militant, and revolutionary EFF to stay in the good graces of the South Africans. As Malema says, “We are not going to give Ramaposa roses. We are going to give him hell, and he must know that. . . . Why? We are an opposition: not just an opposition, an effective opposition (clapping, whistling)” (SABC Digital News 2019). In Parliament, Malema mentioned the progress made by the EFF over time and how the ANC had acquiesced to its demands:

The EFF did what a party of 60 percent couldn't do for many years, and imagine if this party had the same percentage, what would have delivered. In our discussion after the 2016 elections, we gave the ANC certain conditions, and one of those conditions was that #ZumaMustGo, #DieStemMustFall, one capital city, Gupta commission [Zondo Commission], and free education, and the ANC seems to be meeting all of the conditions we have given them, during those negotiations. (SABC News 2018)

The EFF is traveling the rocky road of rigorously seeking justice and economic emancipation for South Africans, in their lifetime, and Malema consistently motivates EFF supporters as they continue with their honorable work:

We are now getting land in our lifetime. Our children are going to worship us forever, [they'll say,] “This was a powerful generation that brought the land back to the people, back to the rightful owners, without genocide, without a drop of blood.” (Multimedia Live 2018)

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“Black Diamonds” in a Sea of Poverty

It becomes more necessary to see the truth as it is if you realize that the only vehicle for change are these people who have lost their personality. The first step therefore is to make the black man come to himself; to pump back life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth.

—Steven Biko, *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*

An outburst of enthusiasm greeted mainstream media reports after a study by the University of Cape Town Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing, published in 2013, stipulated that by 2008, South Africa’s black middle class had been cumulatively spending more than its white counterparts. This came after the institute’s previous research had indicated that in 2004, 4.2 million black South Africans, or almost 10 percent of the population had become part of the middle class, whom they called “black diamonds” (University of Cape Town News 2013). (The term “black diamonds” is used to refer to South Africa’s rare instances of affluent Africans who indulge in conspicuous consumption, making them valuable to the economy.) Among the expressions of celebration, a United Nations *Africa Renewal* magazine article was titled “A Toast to South Africa’s Black Middle Class” (Dürr 2013); *Bloomberg News*, headquartered in New York, titled its article “South Africa’s Black Middle-Class Doubles, Study Shows” (2013). Moreover, as the black middle

class has grown, so has a "super-rich category of black elites" (Krige 2010, 128). In this chapter, it is not my intention to make a blanket generalization about South Africa's black middle class; rather, attention is drawn to those Africans who exhibit conspicuous consumption without showing regard for their fellow impoverished Africans.

Contrast this excitement around black diamonds with the contempt shown just a few years earlier when Julius Malema was ostracized and singled out for his spending habits, while serving as the ANCYL president. Journalists mentioned Malema was wearing a Gucci suit and an expensive watch; noted the "silver buckles of his Louis Vuitton shoes" (Quintal 2014); referred to the vehicles he was driving (a black C63 Mercedes and a Range Rover); and stipulated where they had assumed he was living, in "a luxurious Sandown Estate home" in Sandton (IOL 2009); and listed the price tag of each item (Serrao 2010). One may suspect that whether African affluence is celebrated or ostracized in mainstream media reports depends on exactly who is living lavishly.

Malema (Donaldson 2014) refuted these accusations: "Our struggle is not to live with our people in the shacks." He asked, "How are you going to inspire them when you are also going to stay in a shack?" (Quintal 2014). In an interview with Al Jazeera news, the journalist questioned Malema about his spending behavior, "who paid for the house, who paid for the cars, who paid for the watches, who pays for the clothing" (Chipsta 2018). Malema explained that while operating as the ANCYL president, many of those items were given to him by comrades who believed in his message. He said he borrowed the Range Rover, accepted some of the watches as gifts, and that the house in Sandton was being constructed for him and his comrades. As the journalist continued to press him about his clothing, Malema comically moved his jacket over his shirt to insinuate he had overstepped the boundaries of the interview, but still responded to his remarks.

I was working, I bought them. I was not going to work naked, even those clothes were mine The difference was that I was presentable and people confused a person who is presentable to be a person who is wearing expensive clothes. Some of the watches that I was wearing, I was given by comrades whom I was very close with. . . . In the ANC there are rich people, there are rich black people, and they gave them to me because, you know, when you are the president of the youth league you got all sort of well wishes. (Chipsta 2018)

Even though the general pronouncements of black spending were enthusiastically celebrated, the great majority of Africans remained—and still are—severely disenfranchised and have experienced a plethora of setbacks, which continue to surface in many ways, including in the general election.

The 2019 election season produced the lowest voter turnout for a South African democratic election, at just 66.05 percent of registered voters (Electoral Commission of South Africa 2019). This percentage was in stark contrast to the 89.3 percent turnout for Mandela’s reelection in 1999. Even in the midst of the enthusiasm the Unilever report stimulated within the business community, only 17.7 million people voted in the 2019 general election, almost 10 million eligible voters chose not to even register to vote (Electoral Commission of South Africa 2019), and 60 percent of the people who did not register were under age thirty (World Economic Forum 2019)—the EFF’s primary voting base. People have become disenchanted with the South African government’s overall operations and with those in governmental senior positions—the well-to-do blacks. The hashtag trending on Twitter was #IWantToVoteBut, and each post included the reason why that person refused to vote in the upcoming election, sometimes their message would be accompanied by a humorous photo (OkayAfrica 2019).

Twenty-five years earlier, euphoria spread worldwide with the Republic of South Africa’s inauguration of its first African president. In 1994, millions witnessed the former attorney and anti-apartheid activist Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela’s inauguration, as he became the first democratically elected president of a free South Africa after spending twenty-seven years imprisoned at Robben Island. Previously, on February 2, 1990, Mandela and the leader of the Afrikaner National Party, Frederik Willem (F. W.) de Klerk, had officially ended apartheid in a speech that was closely monitored by the British and American governments.

The De Klerk government, recognizing the true nature of the crisis, negotiated its terms of surrender mainly with the [Margaret] Thatcher and [George H. W.] Bush administrations. In effect Britain and America were made referees because they had the power to restore capital flows and therefore a settlement acceptable to them had to be reached This re-negotiation of the old colony–metropole relationship happened because both sides wanted it. Thus, De Klerk’s famous speech of 2 February 1990 abandoning apartheid and welcoming back the ANC and other exiles in order to negotiate a democratic settlement had been cleared in advance with both the British and the Americans. (Johnson 2015, 12)

A quarter of a century later, not many Africans have been able to overcome the haunting legacy of apartheid and its cousin, neo-apartheid. As *The New York Times* article pointed out, “Ten percent of all South Africans, the majority white, owns more than 90 percent of national wealth. . . . Some 80 percent of the population, overwhelmingly black, owns nothing at all” (Goodman 2017). The slowly rising

black middle class dubbed “black diamonds” is the small exception to this skewed, race-based norm.

Black Diamonds’ Cognitive Dissonance

The African middle class is in a precarious situation, since they are sandwiched in between the working-class Africans and white capital (Southall 2016), experiencing a cultural schizophrenia of sorts. Even though apartheid has officially ended, only a small number of Africans have been able to break through the obstacles. As *Forbes* magazine observed, “South Africa is two countries in one—the First World and the Third World that have been physically segregated for too long. And here, as people from the Third World become upwardly mobile, they want instant gratification” (2010).

The black middle class has spending power. In 2007, 12 percent of Africans, or the black middle class, possessed 54 percent of all black buying power in South Africa (Pollock 2007). These Africans have exercised their democratic right to spend, so their new middle-class identity is closely connected to consumerism, as they imitate white-privilege patterns of consumption (De Coninck 2018). “Black leaders have substantially occupied former white identities,” said Fairbanks (2013). So they buy items associated with holding a higher status. They can be seen driving flashy vehicles, wearing designer clothes, and eating at high-end restaurants. Meanwhile, many South Africans are having problems accessing enough food, and 13 percent of households have had to skip at least one meal in a twelve-month timespan (Statistics South Africa 2016). Moreover, 10 percent of South Africans do not even have access to electricity in their homes (Statistics South Africa 2016).

Black diamonds depend on credit, while South Africa’s majority blacks eke out a bare survival. Black diamonds use of credit makes them susceptible to debt, which means that they are unlikely to be in a secure enough position financially to help their African compatriots. It is perhaps no coincidence that the term “black diamonds” came from a Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing study, since businesses like Unilever would want to take advantage of Africans’ new spending power. Furthermore, black diamonds are not creating jobs, since most of them are employed in government positions. Their existence has not changed the stark reality that Africans are the face of poverty in South Africa, with many of them remaining at the extreme low end of the economic ladder. For instance, as of 2018, 47 percent of African households were poor, as compared to 23 percent of Coloured households, about 1 percent of Indian households, and less than

1 percent of white households (World Bank 2018). Whites’ poverty numbers are so low, in fact, that they are an indistinguishable speck on a bar graph (World Bank 2018).

The black diamonds are educated African professionals who oftentimes live in predominately white suburbs such as Sandton, one of South Africa’s richest communities. Sandton is a part of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality or the metro area, which comprises of almost twenty cities or towns. Predominantly white neighborhoods like Sandton are posh, gated locations with high walls lining the homes. Here the neighbors usually do not know one another, but the locations are ideal because of their proximity to shopping centers, good schools, office jobs, and transportation. Sandton’s racial demographics are 48 percent white, 35 percent African, 11 percent Asian, and 2.5 percent Coloured (South African Market Insights 2017).

Sandton has many desirable features. Its skyscrapers include Africa’s tallest building; it is the home of the nation’s stock exchange and ten thousand businesses; it has the largest convention center in all of Africa; and it includes Nelson Mandela Square, a plaza with cosmopolitan restaurants, a large shopping mall with luxury brands, and a twenty-foot statue of Nelson Mandela near its entrance, all making the Sandton experience an enjoyable one. As for utilities in Sandton, 94 percent of the population has piped water, nearly 98 percent have electricity, and 97 percent have a sewage system connection (South African Market Insights 2017). The majority of resident incomes, at almost 40 percent, are between 308,000 and 1,229,000 rand, or between around \$18,600 and \$74,000 USD (South African Market Insights 2017). However, since these suburbs are usually dominated by whites, some African residents feel a sense of alienation in their new location.

Black diamonds have a vastly different experience when they leave their residential areas to visit the townships, where most African’s live. These townships were created in 1913 when the whites forced South Africans into small geographic spaces, representing just 10 percent of the available land in South Africa. Townships exist on the outskirts of cities, as dormitory towns that lack basic services such as water and electricity. Today, one can see streams of satellite TV dishes on top of matchbox homes, in the landscape of townships such as Khayelitsha. In contrast, Cape Town, the second-largest city in South Africa, is just thirty minutes away. According to the official South African Tourism website, Cape Town is ranked among “the most beautiful [cities] in the world” (South African Tourism 2020).

Cape Town is a premier destination due to its picturesque scenery. It is the home of white sandy beaches, beautiful mountains, a waterfront, world heritage sites, botanic gardens, nature reserves, and art galleries. The South African Tourism website describes it as a “quintessential melting pot of creativity,” with a

cuisine that incorporates "Malay, Dutch, French, Portuguese and African flavour" (South African Tourism 2020). The population of Cape Town includes 42 percent Coloured residents, 37 percent African, 16 percent white, over 1 percent Asian, and 2 percent are classified as "other" (World Population Review 2020).

Less than twenty miles away is Khayelitsha (although this township doesn't come up if you search on South Africa's official tourism site), South Africa's second-largest African township with almost four hundred thousand residents. The name literally means "new home" in the Xhosa language (World Population Review 2020).

The tourist experiences in the townships, shantytowns, or tin cities like Khayelitsha will not be as pleasurable as those in white suburban areas, for those expecting basic amenities. Ninety-nine percent of Khayelitsha residents are African and they live a vastly different lifestyle from the whites: 64 percent of residents have not completed a high school degree, 55 percent live in informal settlements, and 38 percent are unemployed (City of Cape Town 2013). The informal settlements are composed of closely packed, rusty-colored tin shacks that appear to be crumbling atop dirt. Residents might spray-paint a number on their house, as an informal indication of their address, but they really do not have an address. Rusty poles extend intermittently between shacks with wires tangled above for potential access to electricity, and some shack roofs hold satellite dishes. Some residences have barbed wire around their dwelling, and their small windows are covered with bars. No open yards exist in this area. As for what's inside the shacks, 62 percent of the residents of Khayelitsha lack piped water, 28 percent have do not have a flush toilet, and 19 percent do not have electricity (City of Cape Town 2013). The residents' income is only a tiny fraction of what those in Sandton earn. Seventy-four percent of them had a monthly income of 3,200 rand or less (around \$193 USD) as of 2013, so if those people were employed throughout the entire year, their typical annual income would be 38,400 rand or around \$2,300 USD (City of Cape Town 2013).

In his position as the EFF President and Commander in Chief, Malema contrasted the trash he saw throughout Khayelitsha during a walk-through of the area, with the appearance of the white suburbs:

You can go anywhere, any suburb of your choice, and you can find it [a refuse removal truck or garbage truck]. Why? Because they are white people. Black life is cheap, they don't care about it, they can ill-treat it the way they want and nothing happens. (SABC News 2016)

While serving as ANCYL president, Malema visited a township in the Free State province, an ANC district, and complained about the 1,600 open-air toilets, which made people who used those toilets appear in plain view.

Generally speaking, the economic situation of Africans living in the townships is dire. They reside in shacks of corrugated sheets or ramshackle wood, and rely on communal water taps and port-a-potties. Due to the lack of flush toilets, some people embarrassingly relieve themselves in plastic bags or in buckets in their home. Communal toilets have become especially dangerous for women, who risk becoming victims of sexual assault while heading to a port-a-pottie. In fact, a team of Yale University professors, Gonsalves, Kaplan, and Paltiel (2015), found that increasing the available number of toilets would lead to a 30 percent decrease in sexual violence against women. Furthermore, according to the South African community census report, an intercensal survey of the country-wide South African population, indicated that 56 percent of the population do not have access to running water inside their dwelling, 14 percent do not have access to safe drinking water, and 10 percent cannot access piped water (Statistics South Africa 2016). Concerning toilet facilities, 54 percent do not have a toilet inside of their home, 37 percent do not have access to a flush toilet—connected to either public sewage or a septic tank—and 2 percent do not have toilet facilities (Statistics South Africa 2016).

These are the daily dichotomies that confront black diamonds, as they travel back and forth between their well-developed residential communities and the drastically undeveloped areas in South Africa, which look far worse than American ghettos. In fact, over 70 percent of suburban Africans regularly visit their family and friends in rural areas, about 86 percent regularly visit the townships, and about 60 percent feel as though they have more than one home, according to John Simpson, the director of the Unilever Institute (News24 2007). The black diamonds engage in a lifestyle of conspicuous consumption, without trying to aid the masses of poor Black people or even critique the system that maintains this inequality, making them susceptible to high levels of cognitive dissonance. Some have made light of this situation, not only helping South Africans to deal with the pain of their oppression but also perhaps helping black diamonds to deal with their precarious position.

The South African Comedian Lesego Tlhabi, also known as Coconut Kelz, has described the irony inherent in the lives of black diamonds. Coconut Kelz places the issue of "coconuts"—a term used in South Africa describing people who have white insides but black outsides—as the core theme in her comedy routines. She plays the role of a privileged African who no longer supports black people ideologically but has instead aligned with the whites. When Coconut Kelz performed a comedy skit interviewing her stepmother, Redi Tlhabi, a popular journalist, she talked about a "702 black." Hence, Coconut Kelz performs in her role as a "coconut" in her radio show on a primarily white radio station, Talk Radio

702. Her caricatured role is that of a white woman trapped in a black woman's body, who lives in Sandton and belongs to the conservative and overwhelmingly white Democratic Alliance party. Through her wit and humor, Coconut Kelz has transformed a psychologically disheartening state of existence into a lighthearted matter.

Black diamonds are not held to a higher standard of expressing loyalty to the black liberation struggle. Some have referred to them as sellouts, clever blacks, or tenderpreneurs, because they have benefited from the system and have reoriented their allegiances toward whites instead of the poor black masses. These Africans gained the opportunity to live at substantially better income levels after the then South African President Thabo Mbeki created the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) affirmative action programs, designed for the most highly educated black people. These programs made it mandatory for large companies to hire blacks in high positions. But along with its expanded definition as to who can classify as "black," including Africans, Coloureds, and Indians, some claim that this program has actually expanded social inequality (Fairbanks 2013).

Many South Africans question the role of African politicians. According to Fairbanks (2013), "The country is stuck in an eternal cycle in which the heroes of today, as they move up in society, become the oppressors of tomorrow." Zizek (2013) noted, "The main change is that the old white ruling class is joined by the new black elite." The EFF has questioned the intentions of the 702 blacks, considering them sellouts. At one EFF rally, Malema warned people not to be fooled by the 702 blacks:

There are dangerous black people in this country who are advancing the agenda of the white man. Cyril Ramaphosa, Pravin Gordhan, Trevor Manuel (native language, laughing and clapping). Those comrades are dangerous and they're 702 blacks ... but when they are with us, they speak like us (laughing). (SABC Digital News 2019b)

The members of the black elite originally fought for the liberation of Africans, but their wealth is now in stark contrast to the lifestyle of the regular people they represent (Fairbanks 2013).

Unfortunately, minimal change occurred after the new black ANC government peacefully took office (Mbeki and Mbeki 2016). The new government consisted of African political figureheads who changed the Constitution but were not allowed to control the financial sector of South Africa (Mbeki and Mbeki 2016). Rather than seeking to fully demolish white South African rule, it focused more on unity and reconciliation; hence the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, rather than a forceful push to overcome economic and racial inequality (Johnson 2015; Serino 2016; Schwikowski 2018), leaving

major economic issues such as land redistribution on the back burner. Concerning the minimalist role of black South Africans in Parliament, Johnson compared their position to that of fans at a tennis match:

They were more like spectators at Wimbledon watching the interplay of white politics over their heads, observing the relative luxury of white society and envying the superior schools, hospitals and other facilities enjoyed by whites. ... Very quickly there were black millionaires, black cabinet ministers, black talk show hosts, black professors, and so forth. Black people simply moved into the structures, which they inherited from the old white regime, most of which remained intact. It was no miracle that the transition was so largely peaceful. (Johnson 2015, 13–14)

Southall, on the other hand, contends that people have criticized the African middle class too harshly, seeming to ignore the exorbitant numbers of poor South Africans:

Despite its descriptive value, the black diamond approach tends to feed a popular notion of the black middle class as essentially shallow, showy and materialistic, when—notwithstanding some highly publicized cases of individual excess—it might be fairer to say that they are merely aspiring to and beginning to enjoy the sort of opportunities and benefits enjoyed by other “ordinary” middle-class people around the world. (2016, 47)

Southall does not take into account Ubuntu, the South African black philosophical system that centers on communitarianism. Its underlying principle is that Africans have a moral responsibility to provide support to their neighbors in need. Neither does he consider the broader sociopolitical environment as to how apartheid and its legacy have created a new paradigm of inferiority among the populace, one supported by the ruling government that keeps the African majority firmly in a state of despondency. This situation can only be demolished if the more politically powerful South Africans, the middle-class blacks, provide support to the poor African masses, or the politically weak.

The EFF's stance is that the ANC now supports white monopoly capital. After Malema and Shivambu attended the ANC's fifty-third national conference, they assessed that the ANC, “is committed to a right-wing, neo-liberal and capitalist agenda which has kept the majority of our people on the margins of South Africa's economy” (Shivambu 2017, 53). For instance, Ramaphosa had launched the *National Union of Mineworkers* in 1982, and he fought on behalf of mine workers; conversely, his former company, Shanduka Group, would accumulate a 9 percent share in Lonmin, the British platinum mining company that would become the site of the Marikana Massacre (Fairbanks 2013). Ramaphosa was a non-executive director of Lonmin, at that time.

The Legacy of Apartheid

South Africa is a relatively wealthy country, but the issues the country faces are those of a “developing” nation—and the situation is seemingly becoming worse rather than better for the bulk of the population. A state of emergency exists in South Africa concerning its treatment of its residents, and people are losing patience with the rampant injustice. Between 2008 and 2018, the percentage of South Africans describing their situation generally as bad, increased from 43 to 49 percent, and the portion who perceived their economic situation in particular as bad, rose from 57 to 66 percent (Afrobarometer 2016)—although, the black diamonds are encouraged to continue spending.

The racial hierarchy is ubiquitous in South Africa and the whites hold the highest-paid positions, even while living in an African country. Africans’ annual household income is lower than that of all other races in South Africa. Among those who are employed, one-third of South Africans make under \$2 USD per day (Fairbanks 2013; Serino 2016). As of 2011, Africans earned an average of 60,600 rand, or about \$8,800 USD annually; Coloureds made almost twice as much as Africans, at around 112,000 rand or \$16,000 USD; Asians/Indians earned over four times as much as Africans, at more than 250,000 rand or \$36,400 USD; and whites’ average income was six times that of Africans, at over 365,000 rand or \$52,800 USD (Desilver 2013; Fairbanks 2013; Serino 2016). Notably, the average income of white South Africans was higher than the U.S. median income, at that time, of \$50,054 (U.S. Census Bureau 2012).

Racial income disparity stretches beyond South Africa. The average net worth of whites in the United States in 2015 was \$110,500, compared to just \$12,780 for black people (U.S. Census Bureau 2015). In the United Kingdom, black and mixed-race households were the group most likely to have incomes of under 400 euros weekly (Gov.uk 2019).

Malema explained how bad the situation is for Africans in South Africa as he mimicked a conversation between him and a qualified person about a secretarial job opening; had the person been hired for this position, she too could have been a member of the underclass.

Malema: What’s wrong?

Mocked: Our volunteers are not being hired in the municipality.

Malema: You want to be hired for what?

Mocked: There was a post for a receptionist here. There’s a post. We wanted our secretary, original secretary, strategical [forces] to be deployed at the reception (laughter). (Mail & Guardian 2011)

Malema questioned the meaning of a “strategic board reception” position, clearly indicating that it was not the type of position that Africans have been fighting for (Mail & Guardian 2011).

Archbishop Emeritus Tutu, suggested in 2011, a statutory or voluntary income wealth tax from apartheid’s beneficiaries, the whites, to be allocated to Africans. Here is his persuasive argument, in support of the tax:

The value of the exercise extends way beyond the physical exchange of cash. It is a gesture in restoration and reconciliation; a vehicle to assuage pent-up guilt, to share, to show that we care; an opportunity to lay another brick on our road to a better society. We are generous people imbued with extraordinary magnanimity. We have basked in the glory of our 1990s achievements for too long. (Tutu 2011)

Tutu’s recommendation of an income wealth tax was never entertained.

Prior to the end of apartheid in 1985, Tutu said, “I am not interested in picking up crumbs of compassion thrown from the table of someone who considers himself my master. I want the full menu of rights” (Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation 2020)—South Africans know they deserve the “full menu of rights,” but have conflicting opinions as to how this should transpire.

Xenophobia and Poverty

While the whites enjoy the privileges that come with being on the top of the racial hierarchy, and while the black diamonds seek personal gratification from their advances in income, poor Africans are stuck in extreme poverty and are in desperate need of an outlet by which to express their frustrations. Since the ruling government has seemed unresponsive to their situation, some have turned on their peers, African immigrants (who are also trying to find a way out of poverty), through xenophobic attacks. A study conducted by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (2017), found that only 17 percent of South Africans totally trusted Africans from a foreign country and 40 percent wanted to stop foreign Africans from owning businesses in the country.

Malema believes South Africans are suffering from Afrophobia, especially since South Africans are only attacking African immigrants. He addressed this issue during his 2019 Election Manifesto speech, saying that the attacks on immigrants had to stop (SABC Digital News 2019a). Malema added that South Africans were hurting immigrants due to their own self-hate, because if Africans really loved themselves, they would not attack their brothers.

South Africa has become increasingly hostile towards its African immigrants, who represented 75 percent of all immigration into the country in 2016 (Africa

Check 2016). The top ten sending countries to South Africa in that year, were the following, in order: Zimbabwe (575k), Mozambique (300k), Lesotho (160k), Malawi (80k), United Kingdom (56k), Swaziland (40k), Democratic Republic of Congo (30k), Namibia (30k), Nigeria (30k), and India (25k; Statistics South Africa 2016).

According to a report from the African Centre for Migration and Society, since 1994 tens of thousands of people have been killed, attacked, and harassed in xenophobic incidents in South Africa (Mlilo and Misago 2019). The report stated that around 250 threats have been made to immigrants' personal property or safety, over 300 people have died, around 900 people have been assaulted physically, over 2,000 shops have been looted, and over 100,000 people have been displaced (Mlilo and Misago 2019).

It is unfortunate that during the 2019 election campaign, more animosity toward foreigners was stoked by some political parties. For instance, at one rally, President Cyril Ramaphosa said the government would adopt harsher measures toward undocumented foreigners, and the DA shared these sentiments (Fabricius 2019). On another occasion, Edward Zuma, son of former president Jacob Zuma, spoke out against immigrants. Malema expressed his dissatisfaction in Parliament by telling Jacob Zuma that he had lost control of his son:

You have lost control of the country, because you have lost control of your own family. Your own son continues to say these people [immigrants] must be killed. ... How can you rule the country when you cannot rule over your own son, and your son is a typical example of a family member you cannot whip into line. (News24 2015)

The EFF has widely criticized the xenophobic attacks. Malema often says that he does not care if it costs him votes, because the attacks must stop as soon as possible before they get worse. In an EFF press conference, Malema says if South Africans are not prevented from going after Nigerians, Mozambicans, Zimbabweans, and Zambians, they will soon be going after different South African ethnic groups:

When they're done, they are coming for you. They are going to say, "No, the reason we don't have jobs here is because of these Zulus. They must go back to Natal. We don't have jobs here, it is these Xhosas, they must go back to Eastern Cape. We don't have jobs here, is it these Vendas. Back." Because there will be no foreigner to fight, but poverty will remain, hunger will remain, the inequality will remain. (Charcoal Barbeque 2019)

Also, Malema said, "Some of us can't even talk your language. They are going to ask us to make certain pronouncements in their language and we can't pronounce, ah hah (laughter), whap (making a hand movement as if to hit someone), back to Limpopo (laughter)" (Charcoal Barbeque 2019).

The South African black middle class remains quite small, and some of its members display ambivalence regarding the ongoing, severe economic disparities in their country. Meanwhile, the vast majority of South Africans remain mired in the lower class, often unemployed, while the minority whites control the entire economy. These low-income Africans have become so demoralized and dehumanized as to attack other poor Africans who have immigrated into South Africa, instead of placing blame with the real culprits—the whites. This entire system of despair must be eradicated, but one must first grasp how this system began before one can understand how to remedy the problem.

Remembering Sankofa

Consistent with the Sankofa tradition of the Akan people of Ghana—represented by a bird facing backward with an egg in its mouth—we must return to the past to get to the root of a situation, which will enable us to move forward successfully into the future. The egg represents our past knowledge. The word *Sankofa* is a part of the Twi language and literally means, “to go back and get it.” The Ashante, one of the ethnolinguistic groups that make up the Akan ethnic group, have developed over one hundred Adinkra symbols, which form an elaborate system associated with concepts from Ghana’s cultural and historical traditions. Adinkra symbols can be found all throughout Ghana, on clothing, jewelry, furniture, pottery, and more. In the spirit of Sankofa, we must go back and investigate more of the history of apartheid so as to better understand South Africa’s current circumstances, in which the EFF has become a vocal participant.

The EFF stands in the tradition of fearless South Africans opposing white hegemony. *The Coming Revolution* (Shivambu 2017) described the people from which the EFF members derive, starting with King Hintsa and Shaka Zulu, and spanning two centuries. Hintsa was king of the amaXhosa nation (a subgroup of the Xhosa ethnic group), in the nineteenth century. The Xhosa’s Royal House is still seeking an apology from the British concerning their former king’s gruesome death (Feni 2017). Shaka Zulu was a great warrior as king of the Zulu empire, in the nineteenth century. The EFF continues in the tradition of the anti-apartheid activists Winnie and Nelson Mandela, Albertina and Walter Sisulu, and Oliver Tambo, around the 1950s (Shivambu 2017). Albertina Sisulu, is considered a “mother of the nation”; she was a member of the ANC Women’s League and the Federation of South African Women, and she helped to organize the anti-pass women’s march described later in this section. Her husband, Walter Sisulu had a leadership role in the ANCYL and eventually became the ANC’s deputy president

until 1994. He was a part of the Rivonia Trial and served over twenty-five years at Robben Island. Oliver (or O. R.) Tambo cofounded the ANCYL and was the ANC's president for over twenty years (1967–1991). He left South Africa as an ANC anti-apartheid international diplomat and returned thirty years later, dying just one year prior to Mandela's presidential election. The ANC designated 2017, as the year of Oliver Tambo.

The EFF is also operating in the tradition of Chris Hani, Steven Biko, Tsietsi Mashinini, Solomon Mahlangu and others of the 1970s, and Peter Mokaba and others of the 1980s (Shivambu 2017). Chris Hani was the general secretary of the South African Communist Party, an ANC leader, and a commissar and deputy commander of uMkhonto we Sizwe. He was assassinated at his home in 1993 at age fifty. Steven Biko spearheaded the Black Consciousness Movement, founded the South African Students' Association, and was the cofounder of the 1972 Black People's Convention; he died in police custody at age thirty. Teboho Mashinini known as Tsietsi was a member of the South African Students Movement. As chair of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC), he helped organize a peaceful march that would become known as the Soweto Uprising of 1976. He eventually fled the country to preserve his life and relocated to West Africa, addressing apartheid brutalities in the United States and in the United Kingdom. He died at age thirty-three after being brutally beaten under mysterious circumstances. Solomon Mahlangu was a member of uMkhonto we Sizwe; international outrage ensued after he was found guilty of the Terrorism Act and was hung by the government in 1978, at age twenty-two. Peter Mokaba was an ANCYL president, a member of uMkhonto we Sizwe, and an ANC member of Parliament. He was the first to utter "Kill the Boer, kill the farmer" at a memorial rally in honor of Chris Hani in 1993 (Brkic 2010). He died at age forty-three of acute pneumonia. The EFF consciously carries on the tradition of these brave anti-apartheid activists (Shivambu 2017).

The apartheid system began with the Afrikaner National Party members, who created racially discriminatory policies in 1948. Apartheid literally means "separation" in the Afrikaans language. At its core was the preferential treatment of whites and the oppression of others, especially Africans. The apartheid system allowed the expansion of white supremacy and domination over all societal sectors, and it placed restrictions on other people's access to property, jobs, and space. A critical underlying contributor was the Carnegie Corporation's 1932 report, *The Poor White Problem in South Africa*, which contained recommendations that facilitated South Africa's social engineering program based on racial differences (Durrheim 2011; Willoughby-Herard 2015).

The Afrikaner National Party ushered in the apartheid system through the following policies: the Population Registration Act of 1950, which assigned racial

classifications to everyone in a population; the Natives Act of 1952, which required all adult residents to carry a passbook; the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953, which enforced segregation in public amenities; the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956, which segmented positions in the workforce by race; and the Bantu Homeland's Citizen Act of 1970, which revoked the policy of granting citizenship to all South Africans and forced Africans to become citizens of self-governing homelands. The first measure was the most essential, as the Population Registration Act of 1950 divided South Africans by race into natives (i.e., Africans), Coloureds, and whites (Indians would be added as a separate category in 1959). Once these divisions were in place, all other policies could work against the advancement of the natives.

After separating the population according to race, the nationalist government established stringent laws that separated the races. For example, it was a crime for an African to have sexual relations with or to marry a white person. Races were separated according to the facilities they could use and the geographic locations where they could live. Signs were placed throughout the country to indicate separate facilities, which were not of equal quality; for example, in the state school system, sixteen times more subsidies were issued for a white student than for an African student (Clark and Worger 2011). In addition, Africans were not allowed to strike, join a union, or express dissent against the laws. South Africa had become a police state, since the police instead of the court system handled the enforcement and surveillance of these rules (Clark and Worger 2011), and its segregation laws are reminiscent of the segregated American South in the Jim Crow era—mainly because white hegemony is a worldwide system. Any opposition to these new rules was violently suppressed by the police (Seekings and Natrass 2005).

The oppression of Africans had been happening for centuries, even before apartheid officially began and throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Once Africans were registered by race, they were given identity cards specifying their race. Passes were implemented as early as 1872, but only after the Population Registration Act of 1950, were they implemented throughout the entire country. Passes restricted Africans from being in white areas beyond a limited time period; to stay longer than seventy-two hours in a white urban location, they had to obtain a permit. In 1913, Charlotte Maxeke led a group of women who burned their passes at a Bloemfontein municipal building.

On March 21, 1960, almost fifty years later, South Africans were still protesting against passes. Thousands gathered without their passes at the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania's (PAC) non-violent anti-pass protest, led by Robert Sobukwe, the PAC president and founder. The protesters were in a festive mood, singing and chanting phrases like "Down with passes," as they moved toward the Sharpeville

police station. Then the police started firing machine guns without warning, shooting into an unarmed crowd of around twenty thousand men, women, and children for about two minutes. When the shooting stopped, sixty-nine people were dead—their bodies lying haphazardly on the ground, and about 180 were wounded. Most of the victims were shot in the back while running away (Stanley and Bottaro 2015; South African History Online, n.d.). This event is remembered as the Sharpeville massacre, and the United Nations has recognized it by declaring March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Segregation. This was not the first massacre in South Africa and it would not be the last.

On June 16, 1976 in the African township of Soweto, in the wake of the Black Consciousness Movement spearheaded by Steven Biko, around twenty thousand students skipped school and joined a peaceful protest. They did not agree with Afrikaans being mandated as the compulsory language of instruction in high schools, since it was the oppressor's language, and they protested its integration into the curriculum, holding signs such as "Down with Afrikaans" and singing a banned liberation song, "Nkosi Sikelel" (Lord Bless Africa). The police fired randomly into the crowd of high school students.

Hector Pieterse, just thirteen-years old, was shot. Mbuyisa Makhubu, age eighteen, ran to the protests when he heard the police shooting at children, and he quickly picked up Pieterse's limp body and started running toward a medical clinic. Pieterse's sister, fifteen-year-old Antoinette, started running beside Makhubu and screaming. Sam Nzima, a forty-two-year-old photojournalist from *The World*, a black newspaper (Africans could not work at white papers and could not even interview white people at that time), took a photo of them running and stuck the film in his sock to prevent the police from disposing of it. Later, the picture was published in the newspaper and then distributed internationally.

In response, the police threatened Nzima, telling him that if they ever saw him taking pictures again, they would shoot him (Baker 2016). He knew the police were not bluffing, so he resigned from the newspaper, left Johannesburg, and officially ended his journalism career. He would be on house arrest for almost two years afterwards. *The World* was eventually shut down.

Gwendolyn Nontsikelelo, Makhubu's sister, said her brother was never the same after that day. He became depressed and "kind of mentally disturbed" (Baker 2016). Since the police were after him, he slipped away into exile, and his sister never saw him again. "My brother just disappeared off the face of the earth," said Nontsikelelo (Baker 2016). She wondered whether he was dead and, if so, how he died, and whether anyone was with him when he died.

Youth Day is celebrated each sixteenth of June in South Africa, to commemorate the student protesters of the Soweto Uprising of 1976.

The Black Diamond Rabbit Hole

South Africans have made many sacrifices in the past, too many to list here, and many more will be needed until the lingering spirit of apartheid is eradicated. But will the growing number of black diamonds continue their course from their unabashed, media-supported, capitalist-consumerist rabbit hole, or will they make a drastic change of course by continuing in the tradition of the South African freedom fighters who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the vulnerable black masses.

Malema experienced backlash from the media, as some journalists tried to discredit his message of African liberation by focusing on the basic, such as the clothing he wears or the watches he puts on his arm, so he has toned down his fashions since his ANCYL days. The EFF has instituted a miners and maid's red dress code, so they never forget those whom they are representing in Parliament. "Negative media coverage of him [Malema] was all part of a drive to undermine the agenda he represented," according to News24 (July 2011). Although, this may have been a necessary step in encouraging others to join him in the EFF's fight for African liberation.

While giving a speech to Student Representative Council members at the University of Limpopo in 2012, Malema urged the students to avoid a lavish lifestyle. He told them they should not purchase expensive clothes or plasma televisions, or move to a fancy residence, because such behavior could potentially create an impression of selling out (Mail & Guardian 2012). Malema was warning these student leaders against developing habits of conspicuous consumption, like those for which he himself had been criticized.

Essentially, it is not hard to recognize that Malema has chosen a path that comes with plenty more risks than an overdrawn bank account. His route is less glamorous, it comes with constant agitation and demands, it is one that simultaneously gains lifelong friendships and diehard enemies. It is the path that will not be supported by the mainstream media, the way conspicuous consumption has been widely celebrated. It is like motherhood—one of the hardest jobs on earth but at the same time the most fulfilling.

Malema has become a father of the nation, and just as fathers do, he too protects his family from harm and exploitation. When he yells at others in Parliament about corruption, just as a father would, he chastises those people who are trying to have their way with South Africans. No longer do black people politically have to feel like a motherless or a fatherless child because then there is Malema, then there are the EFF members, and then there are their supporters who can see beyond the dazzling yet blinding allure of the Mall of Africa.

As Steven Biko (South African History Archive 2011) so rightfully said, "It is better to die for an idea that will live, than to live for an idea that will die."

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PART IV

IT'S REAL TALK: JULIUS MALEMA AND HIS DIGITAL AUDIENCE

YouTube Rhetorical Analysis on Julius Malema

Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it.

—Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (In the EFF's
Founding Manifesto)

The rhetorical analysis of Malema's rhetoric encompassed fourteen videos of his speeches during the 2019 South African general election season. All the videos analyzed were agitational, with humorous moments. I used the census of top user-generated videos featuring Malema that lasted at least twenty minutes and had between 100,000 and 1 million views. The videos were all posted between January 1, 2018 and June 8, 2019, reaching a cumulative total of 4.5 million views. The time period included one month after the election, to capture post-election reactions.

Malema's speeches were persuasive, because he helped South Africans to visualize their ultimate win, not just in the upcoming election, but in their war against white monopoly capital. Like a superhero, a socialist leader, a black power activist, or a high-ranking colonel in wartime, Malema used everything in his rhetorical arsenal to inspire his audience in the fight for their liberation, including humor. His campaign rhetoric called on South Africans to not be scared, but to show bravery while on the frontlines of battle. Moreover, the EFF's visual display of the rhetoric of oppression, through its standard apparel of miners and maid's

uniforms, reinforced Malema's African orientation and his focus on the liberation of working-class people.

Malema also used an African communication style in his speeches to connect with his listeners. He encapsulated the master black rhetorical trope of Signifying, which includes the use of humorous and witty insults. Malema also used African cultural elements that made his speeches more enjoyable including proverbs, call and response, singing and dancing, and the overarching usage of a major principle within African folktales, of the weak using cleverness to outwit their more powerful contenders.

Malema's primary message was on gaining equality. Everything he mentioned was on behalf of ending the mistreatment of the suffering South Africans, and commenters from the thematic analysis (covered in Chapter Eight) viewed him as a savior. After conducting this research, I found that Malema's rhetoric focused on equality and encompassed two main overarching themes: (1) overcoming the legacy of apartheid and (2) showing superior logic (through a display of cleverness and an urging of African unity). Four subthemes were identified: (1) tackling corruption in South African politics, (2) crushing white monopoly capital and state capture, (3) calling out racism, and (4) fighting for land expropriation without compensation. Throughout this chapter, excerpts of Malema's quotes were used to provide supportive evidence of the existence of these themes, during the 2019 election season.

Conducting this rhetorical analysis meant that Malema's speeches had to first be dissected into codes. Saldaña (2016) defined a code as a phrase that has an essence-capturing portion of language. Each content code corresponded to one paragraph of text or less, which is the span of time that Malema usually took to make a distinguishable point. I created a codebook to assess the data. Each video was identified by the following information: YouTube video title, uniform resource locator link, publisher, subscriber number, date published, length, likes, dislikes, comments, and type (Parliament, rally, or other event). I also entered significant confrontational and humorous points from each video into an Excel spreadsheet, arranged by category. After arranging the codes by category, I reviewed them multiple times and condensed them further into main themes, and the findings are discussed in this chapter.

Malema's Discourse Is Black Rhetoric

Signifying

My framework for this section relied on Henry Louis Gates's ([1998] 2014) *the signifying monkey* theory, which is not indicative of any sort of offensive name-calling

rhetoric, but instead derives from African folk traditions. This monkey—considered the cousin or the rhetorical equivalent of Esu, the Yoruba figure for writing—is representative of the rhetorical traditions of Africa, which include folktales that have been passed on to the African Diaspora. The theory incorporates humor, hyperbole, indirection, irony, and the implementation of a logically unexpected response. As mentioned before, Signifying is an artistic, colorful, and humorous rhetoric that intermingles the following:

signifying: tossing out indirect insults
 sounding: hurling direct insults
 hyperbole: exaggerations
 repetition: repeating words
 rhyming: using identical endings of word sounds
 meaning reversal: what's good is bad
 loud talking: moving from soft to loud
 marking: mocking intimidation through gesturing
 testifying: sharing one's experience
 playing the dozens: insults to a person's mama
 rapping: use of the music type as a general rhetorical device
 standard English: often used ironically to sound like a white person
 tomming: irony (Gates [1998] 2014; Gates 1983).

As Smitherman (1986) said, the two dimensions of Black Rhetoric include language and style. Signifying is characterized by lashing out against an opponent through the use of painfully honest or insulting discourse, oftentimes relayed in a humorous manner.

Signifying is a humorous form of word play in which the speaker exhibits quick wit through creative speech. Malema excels in the art of oratory, using repartee, irony, metaphors, imagery, and allusions, all in a Signifying form of black vernacular, making his humor seem authentic and natural. He addressed very serious topics with humor and wit by crafting his message into amusing points. Malema's rhetoric was clearly decoded as humorous, as demonstrated by the frequent audience laughter in the videos, and based on the numerous laughter emojis and emoticons posted in the comments section. His speeches were not funny at every instance, like the performances of a stand-up comedian, but at some point in each video, Malema's remarks drew laughter in the form of giggles (foolish laughs), chuckles (soft laughs), snickers (disrespectful laughs), shrieks (indicating a sense of vulnerability), or sudden outbursts of uncontrollable laughter.

Malema skillfully turned his messages into a Signifying art form through his use of repartee and metaphors. For example, he tossed out signified improvisational

insults, just as a rapper does in freestyle, while directly addressing President Ramaphosa in Parliament:

We want you, Mr. President, when a mistake has been taken, to take full responsibility and announce which practical steps are you going to take in erasing those mistakes. We don't see anyone in your party, if you were to be removed tomorrow, who can replace you, otherwise we'll all be in a disaster (laughing). So, we are in a disaster now, we don't want to be in the worst disaster (laughing). (My Africa 2019)

Signifying is also a straightforward rhetorical form, in which the concept of beating around the bush, or finding the right or most diplomatic way to say something, is non-existent. In fact, since a quick-witted tongue is oftentimes black people's only way of defending themselves, Signifying commonly seeks to attack the powerful with verbal punches. In a 2013 comment that generated considerable media attention, Malema was Signifying when he said that if white people didn't think it was necessary to share the resources of South Africa, "They can just as well just go to the sea" (Eyewitness News 2013). In a 2019 campaign message filled with repartee, sarcasm, and metaphor, Malema clarified his point in a very direct, Signifying manner:

We don't want any white man driven to the sea here (laughter, yeah). South Africa would be ugly. ... It is like when a person says to you, we must wake up tomorrow without trees. No, trees are a natural thing (yes), we grow up with trees (yeah). So, we can't wake up tomorrow there are no trees here (laughter). We can't wake up tomorrow there are no white people (laughter). It would be a scary thing (laughing, yeah), children would start crying (laughing), like, "what happened to Abe-Abellu (laughing)?" "Uh-huh." These whites, they belong here with us (yes). ... but they must be prepared to share the land (clapping). (Live Updates 2019)

Whites are fearful they will be forced out of South Africa, but Malema said that the EFF had never threatened whites in this manner. Instead, he comically reassured whites that they were wanted in South Africa: "Anyway, we don't want them to go anywhere, they must be here (laughing), because if they leave, they will poison the land. So, they must not poison the land" (SABC Digital News 2018a). He assured the whites while simultaneously insulting them, with a quick wit endemic to Signifying.

Malema also used Signifying when he presented a horrifying situation in a humorous manner that whites sometimes mistook Africans for baboons. The scenario is plausible because some Africans in South Africa had indeed been murdered or injured after being mistaken for a monkey, baboon, or warthog (Chief Whip 2017; Citizen 2017; Shange 2017). Malema, in a Signifying manner, connected the idea of mistaking Africans for baboons to the killing of propertyless black people:

They could kill you at any time and say, “You looked like a baboon” (laughter) ... Why? You are propertyless. But I’ve never heard them saying we killed this farmer, we killed this owner of a shop, we killed this educated person who’s got his own property, and we have mistaken him for a baboon (laughter). All those who get confused with baboons, all those who are fed to lions are the people without property (yeah). They go around saying we want to kill them when they are the ones going around killing our people. ... Shoot them and say they look like monkeys. (Live Updates 2019)

This message embodies Signifying in its insults, truth telling, and humor.

Adopting Signifying’s sounding style of rhetoric in public requires some level of bravery, since the speaker typically expresses appalling direct insults toward those whom he views as opponents. Malema “sounded” when he spoke about the irony of President Ramaphosa’s election, during the State of the Nation Address (SONA) debate. Ramaphosa was seated directly in front of Malema, as Malema stood at the podium and told him very matter-of-factly that he is a failure:

We’ve been convened here for the whole week to debate what was supposed to be the State of the Nation Address, by the newly elected president. A man who held ambition to be president for almost three decades. ... Except in this case, we really have no SONA to debate. What we have is a misguided, incoherent, contradictory, and proven to be futile ideas, mixed in a bag of fantasies. For a man to be hyped up by the entire local and international media, only to pitch extremely low, is tragic. (My Africa 2019)

ANC leaders, including the former South African President Jacob Zuma, have been unable to escape Malema’s verbal wrath. The EFF and other political parties demanded that Parliament begin the process of impeaching Zuma after several corruption charges were made against him. The Constitutional Court ruled that the National Assembly had failed to properly hold Zuma accountable for his actions in the Nkandla scandal, in which he spent about 260 million rand or around \$20 million USD of public money on renovations to his mansion. Malema spoke about Zuma’s term in a very direct, repartee-laden, and ridiculing manner, comparing him to a con man:

The EFF patiently and relentlessly fought against Jacob Zuma’s leadership of South Africa because he was a disaster. A post-colonial disaster who almost brought South Africa to its total collapse. The EFF is not sympathetic to Zuma’s games of victimhood. He’s a con man and a trickster who was caught in the wrong place, victimhood, with an aim of leading the gullible into supporting him. ... South Africa, the whole nation has been a victim of a con man, an imposter for more than a decade, and no one should fall into the trap again. (From South Africa 2018)

During another session of Parliament, Malema tried to persuade the National Assembly members to vote to rename the *Cape Town International Airport* to the

Winnie Mandela Airport. Even while asking for the ANC's support of this motion, he did not tone down his Signifying, truth-seeking, insulting side:

And some of you sitting there, if you support Winnie Mandela, demonstrate that during the voting. If they expel you for that, die with your boots on. Don't sell Winnie out even in her grave, like you did when she was alive (interrupted, standing ovation). (My Africa 2019)

Although metaphors are used by people generally, Signifying encompasses metaphors or the artistic expression in Black Rhetoric. Among the most notable was Malema's constant use of war imagery. He invoked war imagery and allusion to encourage his supporters by referring to them as "fighters," explaining they were embroiled in a "battle," and that there would be "casualties" during the "revolution". Malema masterfully used violent terminology to bring across a message of non-violence, with a vivid disclaimer: the EFF will practice self-defense, so if someone pushes them, they will push back.

In one speech to EFF supporters, Malema said, "The war for economic freedom continues; all ground forces must remain vigilant. We salute all the ground forces of the EFF for their determination to fight corruption" (From South Africa 2018). Malema used a war metaphor to explain the EFF's heavy-duty task in fighting for policy changes. In another message, he urged his followers to, "Be there, guard the revolution. When the enemy raises their ugly head, don't hit the head, cut the head (laughter and clapping)" (SABC Digital News 2018b). Obviously, the laughter drawn from this statement shows that Malema was not literally suggesting to cut people's heads off like some do during wartime; instead, he has oftentimes indicated to his supporters that they must be willing to use superior logic in destroying their opponents, peacefully. Malema went on to warn others about the potential for casualties during this war:

We have now taken the decision to fight Pravin, and therefore you must know that Pravin is going to fight dirty. He's going to fight dirty. There will be casualties, there can even be a loss of life. If you are not ready for that, stand aside (yelling). (SABC Digital News 2018b)

When speaking about the consequences of war, Malema often either mentioned death or used a metaphor for death or killing. Due to the high risk associated with fighting the establishment, Malema told his supporters or fighters that they must be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. Here, Malema connected imagery with real life issues. The struggle for African liberation is a serious one, and Malema told the EFF supporters very directly that if they were not willing to

risk their life then they should leave the EFF (and by extension, join the ANC and become a sellout).

Malema drew an analogy between a three-year-old's enrollment in a school with pit toilets and facing "a death squad" (My Africa 2019b). Again, Malema superimposed imagery with reality as he created the connection between an innocent child and a death squad. The death squad metaphor provided a sense of fiction or hyperbole, because one does not typically see death squads killing children; while simultaneously it alluded to reality because enrolling a three-year-old in a school with pit toilets means the child was well on her way to receiving an overall substandard education. A low-quality education would likely lead to a declined opportunity structure, creating a lifetime of poverty and contributing to the following: continued residence in substandard townships, a decline in one's health, mistreatment from others, and dead-end employment. Each loss of opportunity could represent another shot from the death squad. Moreover, since children have actually drowned in their school's pit toilet, doing something as commonplace as going to the toilet could lead to a child's death (Kimon de Greef 2018), making Malema's death metaphor not so extreme.

Malema used the concept of killing to describe the collapse of the ANC, after Supra Mahumapelo and four more members sued its own party, in a case called ANC versus ANC.

We are happy when Supra takes the ANC to court. Why? He's fueling the confusion (native language, laughter). ... Anyone who's going to speed up with the killing of the ANC can be sponsored from the EFF, there's no problem (laughter, clapping). (SABC Digital News 2018b)

Mahumapelo later won in a High Court battle after the ANC unconstitutionally and unlawfully disbanded an ANC provincial executive committee (Mkhonza and Mahlali 2019).

Signifying makes use of irony, which is another widespread technique that's used by the general public (Gates [1998] 2014). Malema (My Africa 2019a) used irony to insult the president: "Mr. President, you have completely abandoned politics to impress white monopoly capital in particular, and the West and America (interrupted)." To say that a sitting president has abandoned politics is an ironic statement. Malema did not limit his irony to just the president but he addressed many other government officials in the same way, including Ellen Molekane, the deputy state security minister: "Honorable Molekane, the most defender of corruption in the Intelligence Committee. You make people sign a nonsensical oath that they must not tell us what is happening in that committee of intelligence. There is too much corruption there" (My Africa 2018). As mentioned previously, when

the Parliament's Deputy Speaker, Lechesa Tsenoli asked him to withdraw that statement, Malema wondered which rule he had violated—"the rules of stealing?" and repeated the phrase several times. He eventually withdrew his statement. It is ironic to say that the rules Parliament enforces are those of stealing, and Malema's quick and witty responses are a good example of his use of repartee.

Proverbs

Power lies in words in the African context, no matter how short or long the compilation of words. African proverbs, or short wisdom sayings, represent the knowledge of a people and give the living access to their ancestors' wisdom. Phrases functioning as proverbs must be useful, truthful, and easy to remember and apply (Hodari and Sobers 2009). Proverbs are usually ironic, witty, and metaphorical, and they aid in the communication process since they are based on everyday life moments.

Throughout Malema's speeches in the 2019 election season, he mentioned sayings that could be characterized as proverbs. For example, he used a familiar proverb (italicized below) when referring to Zuma:

When Zuma was fighting with Pravin, we said to Pravin, *the enemy of our enemies is our friend*. Come here let's fight Zuma, but you must know when we are done with Zuma, we are coming back to you (laughter), that's where we are. (SABC Digital News 2018b)

Ironically, this proverb did not originate in Africa, but fits nicely into the African proverbial tradition. "The enemy of our enemies is our friend" is a Sanskrit proverb, originally located in a military book called the *Arthashastra* from the third century BCE. Ultimately, this proverb advises two parties who have the same enemy to work together. On other occasions, Malema created his own sayings that could be classified as proverbs; for example, when he described his approach to confronting white hegemony:

Our attack on Pravin Gordhan is an attack on white monopoly capital because Pravin is a dog of white monopoly capital. ... *We must hit the dog until the owner comes out* (laughter and clapping), and once the owner comes out, we must deal decisively with the owner. (SABC Digital News 2018b)

Malema's use of "we must hit the dog until the owner comes out" expresses a strategy in a proverbial manner. It indicates when two people (in this case, Gordhan and Zuma) are collaborating, agitating the lesser one (Gordhan) would force the person in hiding, or the main culprit (Zuma), to surface.

When the EFF received insults from the ANC, Malema clarified the situation by making use of a proverbial statement: “*Your enemy will never praise you*. Even if you can say the color of the EFF is red, the enemy will find something to say, ‘It looks purple’ (laughter)” (SABC Digital News 2018b). Here, Malema was quoting a portion of a Hausa proverb, *Maqiyikosa ya yabonka ko da ka kama damisakosin shi*, which means, “Your enemy will never praise you, even if you capture a leopard and give it to him.” In other words, regardless of how well a person treats her enemy, the latter will never speak favorably of an opponent.

Malema used a proverb when referring to the South African President Ramaphosa, so as to question whether the ANC has the same agenda as before: “It’s up to Cyril and the country to judge *if this is the same wine in a different bottle (laughter), or are we drinking something new*, called Grand Tanzania (laughter)?” (eNCA 2018).

Call and Response

Call and response is a traditional African mode of communication and a product-oriented communal art (Sale 1992). It comprises of the interaction happening between the speaker and the listeners as the speaker’s words become the call and the listener’s expressions become the response, which can be either verbal or non-verbal. Call and response constitutes an interactive antiphony that includes audience improvisation, performance, and innovation. The communicative exchange makes the speaker’s art meaningful and purposeful to the community, imbuing the message with new meaning and power.

Malema’s speeches and audience interactions frequently entailed call and response. Malema’s oratorical style and the audience’s aptitude for this kind of expression allowed for the interactive experience to continue throughout his speech. Malema oftentimes sparked a series of call-and-response phrases. When Malema spoke at EFF rallies, he would often start by yelling, “Long live EFF, long live,” and the audience would respond by repeating these words. On another occasion, before the EFF members began speaking, members sang the song “*Awba ya foya*,” which has a melody based on call and response. During one meeting, when the EFF did not agree to the tabling of a discussion concerning land redistribution, eventually the EFF members began chanting, making a call to “occupy land,” as one EFF female member responded “without compensation” (My Africa 2018). This chant was repeated several times.

The more contentious an issue, the more likely the audience’s call-and-response patterns will heighten. This alteration in the fluidity of call and response was present as Malema was giving his speeches. He did not even have to purposefully initiate

a call-and-response moment for one to happen. A more basic form of response is often observed as listeners react to Malema's rhetoric with audible expressions of "yah," "yeah," or "right." The audience's use of call and response was apparent, while Malema spoke about the relationship between Gordhan and the retired judge Robert Nugent, who was serving on the South African Revenue Service (SARS) Commission of Inquiry. Malema responded to Nugent's admission of his meeting with Gordhan, prior to his testimony at the SARS's Commission of Inquiry.

When they [Gordhan and Ramaphosa] destroyed our democracy, when they closed down institutions that are fighting corruption, we oppose them, it's for principle (yeah). Principle is very expensive. They're going to say pay this cost, payback cost, they are going to chase us, they're going to victimize us, but we must die with our boots on (yeah). We are taking on the powerful. (SABC Digital News 2019b)

Main Theme 1: The Legacy of Apartheid

Malema's campaign rhetoric is rooted in the legacy of apartheid. Apartheid continues to exist through neo-apartheid, in various forms and is at the root of each of the subthemes identified in this rhetorical analysis. The modern problems facing South Africa stem from the declaration of a non-racial democracy in South Africa before democracy had actually become non-racial (Seekings and Natrass 2005). Malema asserted, when speaking at an EFF rally, that colonialism is really not over yet:

These people came here, colonized us, took our resources, took our gold, took our diamonds, and now they come and take the oil and gas under our own watch, yet we claim to have defeated colonialism. It is not correct that we should allow such things. (My Africa 2019a)

Apartheid eroded South Africans' way of life. Not only did they have to adhere to unjust policies, but they were also forced into low-wage industries; many of them having to work long hours in the mines, which contributed to the erosion of their family's structure. Africans were forcibly removed from their land to the city outskirts, into substandard areas that either lacked sufficient land or access to water that was needed for the cultivation of crops.

To successfully defeat apartheid, Malema and his allies elevated the EFF beyond that of an ordinary political party to the status of a movement. "The people of South Africa are beginning to acknowledge the reality that the EFF is not just an opposition party but a mass movement with ideological and political capacity,

and political and technical superiority to lead society,” he said (From South Africa 2018).

Main Theme 2: Showing Superior Logic through Cleverness and Urging African Unity

Malema consistently stood up for the poor, inspiring South Africans to overcome their powerful oppressors by unifying as Africans, regardless of their country of origin—that was one way Malema consistency displayed superior logic. Malema delivered a typically inspiring, African-centered message of unity to EFF supporters during the 2019 campaign season:

Let us love our continent. Let us fight for our continent. Let Africa one day realize its own freedom. Let Africa one day stand on its own feet and say, “I own my minerals, I own everything that belongs to this continent.” Let Africa only be able to say enough is enough: away with colonialism, away with imperialism. Let the unity of African people reign supreme in all of us. We are Africans and we are not going to apologize about that. We will defend the Zimbabweans. We will defend Africans in our townships because we are one thing. This is our continent. (SABC Digital News 2019a)

Malema envisioned Africans unifying by expressing a superior logic, in which one uses his intelligence to outwit the oppressor.

The concept of overcoming the oppressor is a part of an oral African tradition frequently expressed in fables. The Khoikhoi and San or Khoisan folklore of Southern Africa makes use of trickster animals. The Khoikhoi uses the jackal trickster character to display satire, ridicule, and mockery and it has enabled them to “resist colonial violence at a discursive level” (Wittenberg 2014). African American fables, which derived from Africa, speaks about the clever hare in face of the more powerful animals, in the Br’er Rabbit tales. West African tales alludes to the quick-witted spider called Anansi in a series of stories known as the Anansi Tales. Fables describe animals as if they have human qualities: the hare, spider, and tortoise are known for their cunning rascality; the hippopotamus and the elephant for their little brains and mighty strength; and the dog for his greed. The trickster tales show the value in being clever, even by being mischievous, which always trumps being the most physically powerful animal. These stories clearly relay that the humble and weak can overcome those in powerful positions by showing superior logic.

Malema confronted corruption by speaking to the EFF’s use of superior logic, stating that the EFF would use this logic to persuade their enemies. He also projected what would happen in the future, as they continued using superior logic:

This group which is running the ANC today, committed to white capital, said that nationalization of banks and mines will never happen, and we proved them wrong. We did that peacefully through a superior logic through winning over people by persuading them. We didn't have state power. We didn't have the power to dispense patronage. We didn't have power to give people money. We won the ANC branches through persuasion. (From South Africa 2018)

Just like the jackal in the Khoikhoi tales, Malema unflinchingly has taken on the powerful.

Malema inverted people's conception of the powerful as those who are well informed by challenging their intellect. One characteristic of Signifying includes having the ability to verbally perform meaning reversal, so what's bad becomes good and vice versa (Gates 1983). Africans hold respect for those in authoritative positions, and Malema skillfully inverted the conception of politicians as knowledgeable about and interested in resolving the problems happening within their community. During a parliamentary session, Malema challenged ANC members when he suspected that they had not even read an EFF proposal that members of Parliament were voting on. Malema insulted them by questioning their aptitude for learning new information:

You are lazy to read. You are depending on verbal information. You have never gone past three pages of any book. That's why people clap hands for things that are already articulated here (yelling). You must learn to read. Don't be a group of lazy thinkers and lazy readers (noise). (My Africa 2019a)

Malema often referred to the main political party, ANC members, as "lazy thinkers" (ZithiniVele SA 2018), an unusual description for people holding such esteemed positions; and for people called "honorable" with just the mention of their name.

Similar to how Signifying black pastors confront their congregants, Malema also confronted EFF supporters, telling them to not be so quick to listen to the opposition. Malema not only criticized the opposition, who are considered elders and powerful, but insulted them when addressing EFF supporters at a rally:

Don't allow the small brains to tell you that we are flip-flopping (whistle, laughing). It is a problem of non-thinkers (laughing). ... We tweet with fools, a lot of fools. Fools couldn't go pass even the simplest test (yes). (SABC Digital News 2019b)

In this comment, Malema refuted naysayers who claimed the EFF had turned its back on Pravin Gordhan, the minister of public enterprises, after previously being in alliance with him. Malema clarified the EFF's position, indicating that the EFF had supported Gordhan after Zuma fired him but was no longer backing him because of the findings of the public protector. Malema frequently stressed

that he was not scared of these powerful people (just as the clever hare is not scared of the dumb lion in the Br'er Rabbit tales):

The EFF is the only party in South Africa that is not scared of white people (yes), that is not scared of Indians (yes), that is not scared of powerful people. We take on the powerful and we are not scared of Pravin. (SABC Digital News 2019b)

Subtheme 1: Corruption in South African Politics

In his rhetorical discourse, Malema frequently stated that the corrupt ANC government had succumbed to the wishes of the ruling white elite. Corruption was a prominent theme in his videos. As mentioned previously, Zuma, the former president, had been accused of allowing one of South Africa's richest families to engage in state capture. Zuma's involvement with the Gupta family, who have a net worth of \$3.2 billion USD (Forbes 2020), was dubbed "Guptagate."

Malema was also vocal concerning Zuma's connection to the Oppenheimer and other wealthy families. Nicholas Oppenheimer is a billionaire businessman and the grandson of Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, known as the "king of diamonds" and the "prime minister of gold" (Time 1951). Sir Ernest started the Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, Ltd., which consisted of 200 companies and brought in revenue of 2.5 billion during his lifetime (Time 1951). It now has annual earnings of almost \$30 billion (Anglo American 2019). Sir Ernest was chairman of the De Beers Consolidated Mines, Ltd., which comprised of seven companies. He controlled 95 percent of the worldwide supply of diamonds. Johann Rupert, the head of Compagnie Financière Richemont, a firm that sells luxury goods and was founded by Johann's father Anton Rupert, is another South African billionaire with a net worth of almost \$8 billion (Forbes 2021). As Malema declared, "We said nationalization, we said land expropriation, they declared us enemies: Pravin, Trevor Manuel (the former minister of finance), Cyril Ramaphosa. All of them, they are puppets of Johann Rupert and the Oppenheimer family (clapping)" (SABC Digital News 2018b). Malema used confrontational imagery as he highlighted the EFF's involvement in this issue:

This is among other things demonstrated by the fact that we stopped the presidency of Jacob Zuma who fell on his sword before we could push him to it. The war for economic freedom continues; all ground forces must remain vigilant. We salute all the ground forces of the EFF for their determination to fight corruption. (From South Africa 2018)

Not only did Malema repeatedly return to the theme of corruption, for which he said Zuma had participated, but he also decried the corruption occurring among other government leaders. Malema expounded further by giving specifics concerning what he considered corruption in the intelligence department, which he linked directly to the ANC government:

The oath that our members are made to take—they are actually being asked to cover up corruption. They are leasing buildings. These people, they can't tell you how many square millimeters. They can't tell you where the building is. They just give you an amount—this is how much we are going to pay for a square meter. And when you try to investigate that, they say it is classified information. How can a square meter be classified information (laughing)? So we need to expose these types of shenanigans that are going on inside the intelligence. (My Africa 2018)

Subtheme 2: Crushing White Monopoly Capital and State Capture

White monopoly capital is closely related to the concept of state capture, and both derive from the legacy of apartheid in South Africa. White monopoly capital describes the South African entrepreneurial environment, which is predominantly white and had gained great economic advantage during the years preceding and proceeding apartheid in 1994. White monopoly capital interconnects with state capture as private business owners enter alliances with state officials or the South African political elite to direct public resources for their own enrichment. Private owners have also secured the protection of state institutions like the police, tax collection service, prosecution authorities, and Parliament (Gevisser 2019). This corruption has led to the formation of the *Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture*. "One of the most troubling dynamics of post-apartheid South Africa is: as some freedom fighters went into politics and others went into business, support networks morphed into patronage networks, which in turn became criminal syndicate," said Gevisser (2019).

Malema says he created the EFF "to crush white monopoly capital" (SABC Digital News 2018b). Speaking at a sports complex in Limpopo, Malema discussed corruption as it relates to white monopoly capital:

Who are their masters? White monopoly capital (yeah). That is the same capital that put money in Ramaphosa CR17 campaign (yeah). We want the list (yeah) of people who have put money (clapping) into that account (yes). We want to know who they are and what they do, and what do they stand to benefit. We want this white monopoly capital that behaves like it is holier than thou, that they are not corrupt, they are not

involved in politics. Yet they are financing politicians to take over power and ultimately take over our country. We have a problem, comrades; white capital is fighting. (Live Updates 2019)

The term “CR17” makes reference to Cyril Ramaphosa’s unwillingness to release documents to the public, showing where the 1 billion rand of his 2017 campaign funds were channeled (Mavuso 2020), but his e-mail exchanges with his campaign organizers were eventually leaked.

Malema used creative rhetoric in all his event speeches and press conferences. He used figurative language to speak about white monopoly capital. When Malema uttered the phrase, “white capital is fighting,” in the forementioned quote, he used a literary technique of personification to show the extent of white monopoly capital and its resistance to change. In another setting, Malema addressed President Ramaphosa directly about his suspected involvement in white monopoly capitalism:

Your refusal to acknowledge the existence and phenomenon of white monopoly capitalism is because you are a product of this greedy capitalist. If it was not because of the Oppenheims, you were not going to be where you are today. You would have not founded the NUM [National Union of Mineworkers] and you were not going to be the first general secretary of the NUM. (My Africa 2019a)

Malema returned to war imagery again to convey the EFF’s attack on white monopoly capital: “Let the battles be taken at every door of white monopoly capital, and all the puppets of white monopoly capital (clapping)” (SABC Digital News 2018b). Malema’s vow to confront white monopoly capital by fighting at its doors is used here as a metaphor for the EFF’s level of persistence.

Subtheme 3: Calling Out Racism

Malema connected with EFF members by calling out racism on several occasions, while trying to simultaneously boost black South Africans’ image of themselves and their attitudes toward one another. The term “calling out” is defined as, “The strongest way to issue a challenge towards a person” (Urban Dictionary 2017). The EFF has pledged to fight four evils in this world, including colonialism, imperialism, sexism, and racism. Racism is systematic and includes the racist practices, attitudes, and ideologies of individuals that preserve white privilege and its power relationship, and the racist institutions that have led to racial economic inequality—all of which sustains the economic and political power of whites over Africans (Trepagnier 2010). Therefore, it is impossible for anyone who is pro-black

to be considered racist, and that accusation is normally made by the racists themselves who wish to maintain white hegemony.

Malema spoke about the racism embedded in white monopoly capital and government corruption, without making use of the term. He also alluded to racism when making confrontational remarks about Pravin Gordhan, whom, as mentioned earlier, happens to be Indian:

Pravin has gone into all state-owned companies, and removed all black excellence, because he hates Africans; he doesn't like Africans. Any African who speaks back to Pravin, Pravin threatens those people. He has never tried that with me because no one will speak to me the way Pravin speaks to high executives in State-Owned Enterprises. Pravin is in a cabal that belongs to the UDF (United Democratic Front) and destroyed all good African comrades. (SABC Digital News 2018b)

Malema felt that Gordhan sought to destroy anyone who spoke the truth about apartheid, including Winnie Mandikizela-Mandela and Peter Mokaba, the former president of the ANCYL, former deputy minister, and the creator of the "Shoot the Boers" song. According to Malema, Gordhan had the support of the whites and Indians, but he would not have had their support had he been African (SABC Digital News 2018b).

Malema also addressed the vast income disparities between racial groups. The EFF has stated that the classification of Indians as disadvantaged and eligible to benefit from empowerment legislation and affirmative action should be reconsidered (Shivambu 2017).

Further, as noted previously, white people have an average income six times higher than Africans in South Africa (Fairbanks 2013; Serino 2016). Malema discussed this income disparity by describing how whites would be paid better salaries in Ramaphosa's initiative:

It [Ramaphosa's Youth Employment Services Initiative] is going to make young black people be stuck there for a mere 3,500 [rand] per month salary. And when you compare that with their own white counterparts, who are getting 20,000, it is not going to work. It has failed before; the treasury itself admitted that this this program will not be successful. (My Africa 2018)

The amount noted above, 3,500 rand is the equivalent of about \$230 USD monthly, and 20,000 rand is more than \$1300 USD monthly, a difference of 16,500 rand or \$1070 USD.

At times, Malema sought to uplift South Africans by tackling the self-hatred that stems from internalized racism. "Black people must love themselves. White people are not our enemies. We are our own enemies," he stated (SABC Digital News 2018a). In addition, Malema warned South Africans that discriminatory

treatment could even come from fellow Africans. Accordingly, he redefined what it meant to be black by connecting it to righteousness:

Beware of the black man who is doing the white man's job and pretending that he believes in the cause, because they are paid for doing it. Beware of rent-a-blacks who clap hands when one of our own goes down, wrongfully so. ... We are saying, when one of our own goes down, it must be justifiable. ... We don't need corrupt Africans. If you are an African and corrupt, you are not an African, you are just a non-white (laughing, yelling). (SABC Digital News 2019b)

Malema also referred to racial inequity in the educational sector, which is a form of institutionalized racism. In a parliamentary session, Malema suggested that South Africa's educational programs do not serve the interests of African students:

Comrade president, it must be made clear that a crisis in higher education will not be resolved, particularly under the new leadership of the Department of Higher Education. It has got no capacity. It has demonstrated before that it doesn't have the interest of the black child at heart. (My Africa 2019b)

Malema's remark of not having "the interest of the black child at heart," is a colossal statement to make on its own, much less in South Africa, an African country, comprised of 81 percent Africans, representing over 45 million of the country's 56 million people.

Even though Malema did not explicitly use the word "racism" in these examples, he made it clear, by denouncing whites, Indians, and Africans who opt to go along with the system of white monopoly capital, that South Africa has been pervaded by racism. He stated in another speech, "Many of you think Boers is white people. Boers is the system of oppression" (SABC Digital News 2018a).

Subtheme 4: Fighting for Land Expropriation

One of the EFF's top policy priorities is land expropriation without compensation. Weeks before the 2019 elections, Malema and the EFF made historic progress in this area when his motion for an amendment to the Constitution allowing for land expropriation without compensation was passed. As noted, Malema pointed out that this was a racially divisive issue since no white members voted in favor of the amendment (News24 2018).

In another instance, Malema mentioned that because the EFF had taken a stand for land expropriation without compensation, it was instantly declared an enemy by the "puppets of Johann Rupert and the Oppenheimer family," including

Gordhan and Trevor Manuel (former finance ministers), and President Ramaphosa (My Africa 2019b).

Malema believes land ownership is the only way to gain respect from the white people: "If we do not change the patterns of property ownership in South Africa, white people will continue to think that they are superior, because they own the means of production (clapping)" (My Africa 2019b). Because of this conviction, Malema and the EFF have been taking extreme measures to alter land ownership in South Africa, even conducting illegal land grabs for several years, which he addressed in Parliament:

It is clear you [the ANC] are not going to expropriate land without compensation, but I need to tell you that we've issued an instruction in the EFF for people to scale down the occupation of land, because we wanted to give you time. But since you are no longer clear, we have made a call and we make it even here, for our people to occupy the unoccupied land (yeah). It is their land (clapping), because the ANC is not going to give them land anytime soon. (My Africa 2018)

Some South Africans have opposed the EFF's proposal for land expropriation without compensation, and they believe the EFF is moving too fast. Malema addressed these dissenters in a public message:

If you don't want the land, it means you are settled, you are sorted. So leave us alone; we are not sorted. We want to sort ourselves out first (laughing, clapping). You cannot say there are jobs in South Africa because you are working. People are unemployed and when people say "we are unemployed," you can't say, "No, it is because you are lazy, no." We need the land to feed ourselves. (SABC Digital News 2018a)

Malema and the EFF have approached the land ownership issue aggressively, since the economical situation for South Africans is more dire today, twenty-five years after the end of apartheid, than it was in 1994, and people have become restless. Because of the EFF's emphasis on this issue, some have accused the ANC, which eventually supported the EFF's motion of simply going along with or being afraid of the EFF (Malala 2018). Malema addressed why many Africans are resistant to stand with him and the EFF in the battle to redistribute land without compensation:

Malema: That's why we are the only ones who stand up to white man.
Imitating White Man: "What is this now?" (laughter).
Malema: No one in South Africa can do that except the EFF (shouting). All of them have taken the monies of white people. All of them are scared to change the property relations in South Africa because they are compromised by their business interests, and their relationship with white monopoly capital. (ZithiniVele SA 2018)

Malema sternly warned members of Parliament, “If you do not expropriate land without compensation and return it to its rightful owners, the democratic process remains in a permanent threat. Our people are going to engage in an unled revolution” (My Africa 2019b).

Rhetorical Theory

Rhetorical criticism was utilized in order to assess Malema’s rhetoric during the 2019 South African general election season. A rhetorical analysis is defined in the Western tradition as a methodology for analyzing persuasive acts in discourse — either texts or oral performances. Rhetorical criticism is useful in several ways: (1) it helps the evaluator to understand the main communicative goal of the rhetorical event, (2) it facilitates effective interpretation of the cumulative elements of a rhetorical situation, adding to our understanding of the purpose of the event, and (3) it assesses the type of impact it has on the audience. To inform my rhetorical analysis, I drew on additional frameworks.

Aristotle

Aristotle is recognized as an important part of the rhetorical canon. Aristotle listed four reasons for the importance of speech: to relay the truth to others, to persuade others, to show alternate sides of an issue, and to be in a position to defend oneself (Duke 1990). Aristotle believed that persuasive speech must include *pathos*, the ability of emotionally arousing the audience; *ethos*, a level of credibility in the speaker; and *logos*, the logical reasoning of a speech in proving a certain truth (Demirdögen 2010; Mshvenieradze 2013).

Malema’s rhetoric embodied an African communication style, which incorporated *pathos* or the ability of emotionally arousing his listeners. He connected to his African audience since they were fired up through his Black Rhetoric, which sometimes included the use of humor. Malema’s extensive use of Signifying techniques in his discourse made his message even more poignant. Many examples of his ability to uplift his audience emotionally can be seen in the upcoming chapter, in which a bottom-up approach was applied to the research by conducting a textual analysis on comments from everyday people. Gordon (1998, 259) referenced African Americans as he spoke about humor as it relates to Aristotle’s three appeals:

Humor continues to be a relatively safe way to do violence to the oppressor in return for injustice. African American humor transcends ancient Greco-Roman perspectives. This humor, which is often not "good-natured," invokes fear, shame, and empathy, evidence of the predominance of emotional appeals, or pathos, over considerations of logical argument, or the appeal to the rhetor's character.

Since Malema's discourse stems from the African rhetorical tradition, it is not surprising that he and the EFF developed an entertaining or a highly emotionally appealing method of delivery for their political messages during the election season—one unlike that of their "colonial masters" (Finday 2015) who rely more so on reason. "Let's make Parliament into something that is fashionable, something that is enjoyable, something that will make people feel represented," said Malema, as he first thought about how the EFF should be positioned to the public (Finday 2015). This African way, ensures that an occurrence is enjoyable and emotionally meaningful for all those experiencing it. As Malema stated after being challenged on the EFF's attire, "We are not English-made" (News24 2020). Malema insinuated in the forementioned statement that Africans naturally behave differently from Europeans; so they should not be expected or forced to live in accordance with European standards, even as it relates to their communication style.

Consistent with Robert Thompson's (1974) concept of African art in motion, it is natural for Africans to conduct activities with style, dynamism, and vitality. This vital aliveness spans many activities including walking, weaving or producing cloth patterns, creating sculptural art, moving to various beats at once, or engaging in a holistic and multi-metered dancing (Thompson 1974). Malema has continued this vital aliveness via his Black Rhetoric.

Malema naturally showcased ethos in his speeches, as the leader of the EFF, since its start in 2013. His assured tone provided evidence of his authority, as he has always spoken with confidence and sternness. As the main speaker, he was the focal point of all the videos I analyzed, and he was usually positioned at a higher level than his audience at rallies and other events, or in the front of the room at press conferences, which served to reinforced his credibility as the EFF's president and commander in chief.

Malema's display of logos, helped his audience to become knowledgeable on a multitude of issues. He informed his audience of the dynamics of certain situations, through an elaborate description of the current happenings in South Africa, Africa, and in other parts of the world. Malema would call out racist people, racist policies, and its victims. When Malema relayed a message to his audience, he mentioned specific occurrences and the names of the affiliated people. He often mentioned the hidden relationships between politicians or reminded his audience of historical facts about the people he was discussing. For example, Malema made

the following extempore comments about the long-running relationship between Ramaphosa, the Menell family, and Mandela:

You know why they like Cyril Ramaphosa? He was adopted by a white family, called Menell family. A lot of people don't know where Cyril got the accent from. Because he went to school in Shawela, and went briefly into Venda, and went to Turfloop. ... He is an adopted child of the Menell family. ... He grew up worshipping whiteness. It is Cyril Ramaphosa who took Mandela right from prison into the Menell family. Mandela had a house in the Menell family. The Menell family is one of the richest families in South Africa. This b@stard called Cyril sold this country even before he became president by selling out a proper radical Nelson Mandela. (SABC News 2020)

Malema empowered his supporters with knowledge and encouraged them to be knowledgeable—greatly assisting them in their own display of superior logic through his natural use of Black Rhetoric. He used Black Rhetoric as he displayed logos by mentioning what whites would say, although he did not imitate the Afrikaans accent while doing so, and by making his points through signifying (direct insults), sounding (indirect insults), showing meaning reversal, testifying, and tomming (irony). Malema's unwillingness to speak in a vague manner, helped his supporters to become fully aware of why the EFF had a particular stance on certain issues. Further, Malema not only shared detailed information, but he also encouraged his fighters to become educated by attending institutions of higher learning. Hence, Malema, has oftentimes mentioned to his supporters with pride that the EFF Member Mbuyiseni Ndlozi earned his doctorate degree.

In sum, Malema's ability to exhibit pathos, logos, and ethos, made all of his speeches, during the 2019 South African general election season, persuasive. Although, his rhetoric could be misconstrued as overemphasizing pathos, when viewing his speech from a European perspective, but when viewing it from an African perspective, one realizes that an emotionally arousing context is simply part and parcel of African culture.

The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control

Security ejected Malema from Parliament after calling Cyril Ramaphosa a murderer when the Marikana miners were killed; EFF members were thrown out of the SONA 2016 event, while chanting Zupta (the words Zuma and Gupta combined) must fall; the EFF were kicked out of Parliament after chanting “occupy land, without compensation”; and riot police ejected the EFF as they chanted “pay back the money” during the Nkandla scandal—this is the rhetoric of agitation and control.

Malema has displayed the rhetoric of agitation and control, and has fulfilled all of its associated concepts, except *Gandhi and Guerrilla*. The rhetoric of agitation and control can be observed when an outside agitator tries to disrupt the status quo. Even though Malema and the EFF members are insiders, since they go against the establishment, their positions are one more aligned with that of an outside group. Bowers, Ochs, Jensen, and Schultz (2010), added the concept of "control" into agitation rhetoric to acknowledge how the rhetorical form is always trying to be controlled by the establishment. Common strategies or concepts exist among those engaged in agitation and control rhetoric, which will be briefly discussed.

Seven concepts define the rhetoric of agitation and control, including the following: petition, promulgation, solicitation, polarization, non-violent resistance, escalation/confrontation, and Gandhi and Guerrilla (Bowers, Ochs, Jensen, and Schultz 2010). *Petition* is usually the first step in making a change within a system, since it occurs when agitators present their proposals for social change to the establishment. Then *promulgation* begins when agitators seek public support from others, using communication mechanisms to spread their message. This often includes such actions as the use of mass media to spread one's message, canvassing an area with posters, and holding protest meetings. *Solidification* then promotes group consciousness raising as participants enhance their cohesiveness by singing songs together, using expressive symbols and slogans, wearing similar clothing, creating in-group publications, engaging in poetry, art, and drama, or other strategies that could encourage bonding and a sense of community among group members. *Polarization* happens among those who are not committed to agitation, because it is assumed that they support the establishment. Supporters may be flagged; derogatory jargon may be created to use toward the establishment or toward the sympathizers of the establishment. *Escalation* or confrontation happens when tactics are used to escalate tension until the establishment resorts to violence, ultimately showing the flaws in existing policy. Agitators could make non-negotiable demands and be non-verbally offensive by making offensive gestures. People like Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, and Gandhi have used tactics like non-violent resistance to allow their physical presence, which alone may violate customs or laws, to stimulate tension. These tactics of agitators, such as boycotts, sit-ins, fasts, rent strikes (i.e., organized refusal to pay landlords), blocking building entrances, and holding prayer meetings in public places, are designed to become a nuisance to the establishment. The hope is that those in power will become violent in their efforts to remove the protesters, thereby swaying popular opinion toward the dissidents. Finally, another tactic is *Gandhi and Guerrilla*, which includes a mixture of physical destruction and non-violent resistance to undermine the system. *Gandhi and Guerrilla* is the only concept that Malema has not used in the

rhetoric of agitation and control, but his militarized rhetoric and lingering threat of self-defense has made the capitalists jittery. As Malema (SABC Digital News 2018b) said, “We are fighting, and there are no roses in a war. There is blood in a war. We will never exchange the roses with the enemy. The enemy must be dealt with decisively.”

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Audience Reaction to Malema's Rhetoric

A strong black man is more refreshing than a million summer breezes and a million glasses of fresh water!

—Kameh Shaf, *My Africa* (comment)

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) received additional marketing coverage during the 2019 South African general election season, thanks to YouTube. Videos featuring its President and Commander in Chief Julius Malema, were uploaded by users with whom the EFF had no formal association. Those YouTube channel administrators were not recognized by the EFF as their political election strategists, yet fourteen videos amassed a total of over 4.5 million views. The videos attracted a total of 7,070 unfiltered comments, with the number of comments on each video ranging from 143 to 1,744.

The creation of an interactive web (widely referred to as Web 2.0) has drastically expanded the potential uses of the internet for politicians, especially during their election campaigns. YouTube allows independent users to upload videos, which can become available within an instant to approximately 2 billion YouTube visitors from around the world. Users can create their own channel, subscribe to other user channels, make comments on videos, like or dislike videos, and share content via e-mail, onto a website, or on any other social networking service (SNS). Users can also create a sense of community in the comments section as an

uploaded video generates robust discussion. Malema has told EFF supporters that social media can be a valuable tool in advancing the revolution:

Let's attack, fighters. Let's occupy every street, every house; every space in society. Let us not leave the enemy to chance. Where we meet the enemy, we must crush the enemy. On Facebook, Twitter, social media, be there, guard the revolution. When the enemy raises its ugly head, don't hit the head, cut the head. No time to entertain enemies of the revolution. We must protect the revolution at all costs. (Haffajee 2019)

About one-third of the videos utilized for this study originated with South Africa's public broadcaster, SABC Digital News. Their YouTube channel had over 1 million subscribers and had amassed almost 550 million views since it began in 2012. The others were mainly independent entities, including the *My Africa* and *Make Africa Great* YouTube channels, both based in South Africa, among others. *My Africa* had nearly 315,000 subscribers and had amassed about 115 million views since it started in 2012. *Make Africa Great* had accumulated 40 million views since 2015, although its subscriber base was unknown. Since the sample of videos received thousands of comments, it made these posts an ideal way to examine how the grassroots social media users under investigation perceived Malema's rhetoric.

This is a bottom-up approach to research, since there was not a reliance on information from journalists or other gatekeepers who help to formulate public opinion, but instead on a community of users who shared their thoughts on Malema's rhetoric directly.

A textual analysis was conducted for this research. Bauer, Biquelet, and Suerdem (2014) noted that the ultimate aim of a textual analysis is discovery through observations, including taking a close look at the behaviors, concerns, motivations, culture, and attitudes of the producer of the text, in order to provide an expert perspective:

To analyze a particular text is also to produce it, a self-reflexive activity providing readers with insight about the life-worlds of others, a phenomenological exercise for comparing one's lived experiences with those of others, modifying one's perception of the world and coming to a common, inter-subjective construction of social reality by fusing horizons that were hitherto separate. (Bauer et al. 2014, 3)

A textual analysis is connotative and interpretive, focusing on the understanding of an author's intentions, the text's meaning, and the perspective of the reader or audience. The text can be interpreted as indicators of hidden processes, such as the impact of one's social structure or culture on the text.

The YouTube commenters overwhelmingly viewed Malema and the EFF in a positive light. Most notably, Malema was praised as a charismatic speaker, the likes of who comes just once in a generation, and as a savior who would take Africa and

Africans out of their agony. Overall, I identified these comment themes, as part of the thematic analysis: (1) Malema, our black savior; (2) Malema is Africa's president; (3) Malema's charismatic leadership (great oratory, the comedian, and the inspirational one); (4) I'm voting for the EFF; (5) the ANC is a corrupt sellout party; (6) land expropriation; and (7) white-on-black antagonism. Comments expressed and encouraged support for Malema and the EFF during the election season, with one commenter stating that he had shifted his support from the ANC to the EFF. "I am voting in EFF, ANC is just a tale and a legend which my grandma keeps telling but I am bored of the narration," said Jik Jalifa (2019).

Negative comments were relatively rare, but one specific video, on land expropriation without compensation, generated back-and-forth dialogue that turned into heated exchanges on the topic. Sometimes, an effort toward constructive dialogue was observed, as users took the time to prepare thoughtful responses to an opposing view. But if the negative commenter's words were repugnant or indecent, a feud erupted, usually between a black user and one assumed to be white. In most cases, the allegedly white users either did not have a profile photo on their YouTube channel, or they had one but it was not a head and shoulders photo of themselves, but respondents frequently assumed the user to be white based on the content of the remarks. "Malema is the biggest racist I know," said Rum Luk (2019). A commenter, *Keeping up with the Achis* (2019) responded, "Because he wants a good life for blacks? You are ok as you see blacks suffer and most cooling and cleaning for you? Pls loving ur own more isn't racist. He wants a better life for blacks. *Na wa ooo.*" (*Nawa oo* is a Nigerian slang term used to emphasize one's anger.)

Black people came together from all around the world to praise Malema in these comment threads. Comments came from the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom; the Caribbean islands such as Jamaica, the Bahamas, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago; Southern African countries including Zimbabwe, Namibia, Mozambique, and Botswana; the West African nations of Nigeria, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone; Central African countries of Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and the island of Sao Tome and Principe; and East African countries including Kenya, Burundi, Tanzania, Somaliland, Uganda, South Sudan, and the island of Madagascar. In this way, Malema's videos sparked a digital Pan-Africanism as blacks united internationally on social media to express an underlying message of African liberation.

YouTube commenters tend to write informally without concern for formal grammar, as the exchange quoted above demonstrates. They made their writing appear different from standardized writing by engaging in the following practices: ignoring necessary capitalization, avoiding the use of punctuation or

using it in an alternative way, using shortened spellings such as “ur” instead of “your,” using abbreviated terms like “lol” to imply “laugh out loud,” or lengthening terms such as writing the word “cool” as “cooooooolllll.” Occasionally, these informal aspects made the user comments more difficult to decipher than text in another medium.

Social media users also expressed themselves with digital symbols known as emojis and emoticons. Emojis are digital images representing an emotion or idea. Some examples include the praying folded hands, clapping hands, and raised fist. A fire emoji indicates excellence or someone being hot or attractive; common holiday or love images are also used. Emoticons, or emotional icon symbols, indicate the digital equivalent of one’s verbal tone and body language, adding aspects of communication that would otherwise be difficult to access at a text-based platform. Some of the more commonly used emoticons are the “grinning face with smiling eyes,” “rolling on the floor laughing,” “smiling face with open mouth and smiling eyes,” the “winking face,” and the “face with tears of joy” (Emojipedia n.d.). I have reproduced emojis and emoticons where appropriate, since I consider them a valuable part of the online communication process.

Special considerations were made for the population of users. The anonymity of all users quoted in this thematic analysis was protected as much as possible through the modification of their YouTube usernames. Although, the authenticity of user remarks was preserved, and even if words were misspelled, the word “sic” in brackets was not utilized for this chapter. User comments were only altered in three ways: phrases or sentences that were typed in all capitalized letters were modified to sentence case; all single, lowercase “i’s” were capitalized; and some punctuation was modified to make sentences easier to read. These adjustments were made to accomplish a more consistent, less distracting writing style within this chapter.

Comment Theme 1: Malema, Our Black Savior

According to *Review Five* (2019), “Africans will continue to live in their hell until Malema is President!” Many of the YouTube commenters viewed Malema as a savior and as the only person who could help South Africans, or Africans generally, overcome oppression. These users placed Malema in an incomparable position normally reserved for people of the highest stature, or those who have gained boundless respect and love from the people. People of the Christian faith traditionally use the term “savior” only in reference to Jesus Christ. This usage dates back to the prophecy recorded in the Bible (Matthew 1:21): “She will bear a son,

and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." To save someone means to rescue that person from harm, to liberate, and to heal her from slavery, sickness, drowning, sin, or an evil power (Placher 2001). Jesus Christ offered hope to the people, helping them to go beyond their own personal failures or fears, leading them toward salvation.

Commenters frequently made religious allusions or direct references when praising Malema. One commenter compared Malema's plight to Moses's struggles: "Moses saw the promised land but never stepped his foot on it, u have started a great journey and Africans will step on it and enjoy its fruits," said Dane Mwal (2019). "Thank you Mr Malema you are an Angel sent from God," said Sal Zwind (2019). Another commenter, Tam Grace, incorporated several religious sentiments in her reverence for Malema:

Malema speaking gives me a lot of inner peace ... him speaking is like a lullaby thats keeps you in utmost peace ... he is the chosen one by God in Africa to bring his pple to great times ... he speaks the language of God to his pple ... he has been chosen to liberate his pple ... he is the chosen one of Africa and no one will stand before him or stop him because the Lord his God is with him, he goes before him ... who can stand against the chosen one of the Lord ... no one absolutely no one ... the Lord is going to go before him and God will make him President of Africa ... the Lord has spoken ... we love love love this our leader ... God go before him and protect him. (Tam Grace 2019)

Commenters saw Malema as a distinguished person, showering him with such attributes as a hero, legendary, the son of Africa, a lion, brave, and a truth teller. "People like him come ones in a lifetime. All the spirits of our fallen black heroes all over the world never died but it all came together and formed this young and brave black brother. Much love from USA," said Sunshineblack (2019). "The black peoples of south Africa have suffered for so long, thank the heavens and our ancestors for a true son like JM and the EFF. It's the time of truth and justice must be served," wrote Nefertari (2019).

Alluding to Jesus' death on the cross, many commenters said Malema needed to be protected, while others said they would die for the cause of the EFF. "Jamaicans are ready to die to help our brothers and sisters!!!!!!," said Lake Israel (2019). Joel Okum projected an early death as a distinct possibility:

Only once in a blue moon is a leader born. Lets thank God for him. He has shown African children the promised land. He might not be the one to lead there but he has played his part. Don't look for him to last long. The good ones never does (Jesus Christ 34years???, Martin Luther King 38, Patrice Lumumba!?! Still in his prime). The youth must (will) take over from Malema too. (Joel Okum 2019)

But the concept most often conveyed was the hope for a long life for Malema. Many echoed the chant "long live EFF, long live," or its Spanish-language version, "viva EFF."

Comment Theme 2: Malema Is Africa's President

YouTube users from throughout the Black Diaspora and elsewhere came together in the comments section to laud Malema, affectionately referred to as "son of the soil," making this online platform a Pan-African gathering of like-minded people. Malema's Pan-African stance attracted followers from all throughout Africa, many who mimicked his message of African unity online. Commenters such as Mub Gik felt Africans must come together, based on their shared blackness:

It's time to face the ugly truth, there is no one world, there is skin colour worlds. Everyone looks out for themselves and it's time Afrikans unite and start doing the same. Our skin colour is our uniform. Even if we don't love everyone who looks like us we should know they are not our worst enemy. ... That alone is reason enough to unite and fight off the real enemy. (Mub Gik 2019)

Commenters mostly suggested high-ranking positions for Malema. Many referred to him as "Africa's President" or said that he should become the future president of South Africa, the president of the commenter's own country, or the head of a major African organization such as the African Union. "Malema for president of the USOA (United States of Africa)," said Eli Life (2019). "Julius should be the head of OAU The lion of South Africa," stated Godchild (2019). One string of comments included Africans from more than ten different countries, all praising Malema. "I want to leave America and go to South Africa," said Zook FuFo (2019). "I'm from Tanzania ... all members of opposition could be sacked out immediately for interest of the government. Malema is among the great leaders in Africa," noted Jaime Robae (2019). "Namibia is asleep from leaders to citizens," remarked Yaya Korad (2019). Kago Joel (2019), on another comment chain, imagined what would happen if Malema was the head of his country: "Can you imagine Mr malema been the prim minister of Jamaica? Jamaican need sensible men like this Brother who love his people and fight for then also who won't sell out to white supremacy. This is the type of leadership Jamaican and the Caribbean island need."

In the comments section of these top YouTube videos, Malema was compared to mainly African activists or those with a revolutionary spirit, who are generally respected by those living on the continent. For example, he was compared to one of the most popular Africans on the continent, Patrick Loch Otieno (PLO) Lumumba, the director of the Kenya School of Laws, and to other noteworthy

activists who have established worldwide prominence, such as Chris Hani and Steven Biko, anti-apartheid activists; Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa; Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican activist and founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association; Fidel Castro, the former leader of Cuba; Thomas Sankara, the former president of Burkina Faso; and Bob Marley, the legendary reggae singer. The following comment from Edi Kwela typified the perceived desperate need for Malema to be more than just South Africa's president:

Forget him being President to SA that is nothing but a title, it can be worthy or not. At the end do you believe in the vision of the man, do you believe in his leadership. He is the savior of South Africa and Africa in general. The so called presidents of today are shifting in their seats because he leads from the side lines right now. He is about transforming this privilege and white supremacy culture. He is the necessary leadership for Africa in completeness. He is beyond SA President. He is Africa Savior, South Africa must protect this man by everything they have for if he loses his voice, the grip of oppression across Africa will tighten even further. (Edi Kwela 2019)

The EFF was often seen as an organization for Africans generally, as opposed to just a political party for South Africans. "Honorable Sello [Malema's middle name] Julius Malema is the New Nelson, Im proud to have him lead us may God continue to bless EFF in S.A. EFF in Namibia EFF in Congo EFF in Angola EFF in Africa, Africa Unite," declared Moem Dibud (2019). Similarly, IAmGreat urged global support for the EFF:

All melanated people around the world should support The EFF (not just with words but Donations, resources and expertise) so that we can rebuild and restore our home and mother (Africa) because we are not welcome no where else in the world Sincerely without Hate, Racism Bigotry or prejudice. They accommodate us but will never accept us. (IAmGreat 2019)

Comment Theme 3: Malema's Charismatic Leadership (Great Oratory, the Comedian, and the Inspirational One)

Great Oratory

In the runup to the 2019 South African general election, YouTube commenters cited Malema's extraordinary oratory, comical, and inspirational skills, all of which can be characterized as components of charismatic leadership. The word "charisma" derives from the Greek term for divine favor, a gift, or supernatural power (Conger 2011). The concept of charismatic leadership was originally used to describe

religious leaders, healers, and prophets who had been allocated God-given gifts to help those on earth (Conger 2011). Kompah Mkhat (2019) said, "We have treasure in this guy! He has his mistakes but God can he speak!!! I find myself clapping hands after most of his speech. ... We need a movement to push Malema forward, doesn't have to be our president but something that makes his word heard!"

In the previous chapter, I explained how Malema embodied elements of Signifying. Many commenters resonated with Malema's use of Signifying, though without making use of the term. Commenters themselves used slang and Black Rhetoric to compliment Malema's rhetorical abilities. For example, Muda Biza (2019) was so impressed by his speech that he wrote, "preach Malema preach," thereby engaging in a written form of call and response. Commenters also spoke of Malema as being "on fire" or posted the fire or the smoking hot image . In response to a video of Malema addressing President Ramaphosa, Ton Mitch (2019) said, "The President just got served ." Mavesa (2019) wrote, "Juju giving ANC a run for its money ... damn Sello was on fire, I mean he was firing from all 6 cylinders, damn!!!!" Next, others creatively complimented Malema's lyrical ability, such as Rac05 (2019), who said, "Talk about undressing Ramaphosa in one sweep." Many expressed admiration for Malema's jaw-dropping capacity for truth telling or his aptitude for "real talk." Sealy Moy (2019) wrote that Malema was "calling a spade a spade ... parliament is no longer a sleeping area." Ron Tyl (2019) remarked about how "juju punches in the face!" verbally. Wale Lengi (2019) said, "If Julius Malema was a Rapper ... he would be dissing everyone ."

Malema's rhetoric is widely considered "flawless," "the best," or "on point." As Alie Medyn (2018) said, "One of the best speech I have heard since I've been living in this planet. Damn, would love to have is reach JuJu education level and fight along is side agains those devils!"

The Comedian

The humor embedded in Malema's rhetoric adds to its positive evaluations. Malema, through this social media platform, has enthralled others with his comedic ability, earning comparisons to South African Trevor Noah and other famous comedians. Malema used humor alongside repartee, irony, ridicule, metaphor, analogy, and imagery; among these, he most consistently displayed repartee, in alignment with signifying and sounding, and commenters responded positively. "A message to Mr. Malius Malema! You really have to set up a go, fun me south Africa account, please Sir?" said Mertz Jodi (2019). Commenters posted messages with the "face with tears of joy" emoji, which shows a yellow laughing face with a big tear bursting sideways from each eye. Many others used the acronym "LOL"

(for laugh out loud) or some variant of “hahaha.” “Lol, we cannot be adressed by a hairdresser lol, this just killed me lol!!!!” wrote Bafaw Lesi (2019). When Malema made a funny remark in his speech, often commenters would repeat the remark in their comment to draw attention to it. “We are not going to be disturbed by hairdressers . . . Next stage is the African Union . . . we badly need you hear,” stated Bafaw Lesi (2019). “Frozen chicken . . . good speech by cic [Commander in Chief],” noted Jake Daallas (2019). Some documented the times in the video when memorable moments occurred; “At 8:08, we can’t be disturbed by hair dressers, lol,” remarked Kime Lesa (2019). When the deputy chairperson of Parliament challenged Malema to abide by the rules, Malema asked sarcastically if he was referring to the “rules of stealing”; those words were often repeated in the comments. “Comedy gold! rules of stealing, great speech Malema,” said Bay Robin (2020). Julius malema. Rules of stealing. Hahaha Hahaha I’m dead ,” said Lom Johns (2019).

Many found humor in another speech when Malema challenged Ramaphosa, in a session of Parliament, to figuratively “wake up.” “I like the last part when Julius says ‘wake up’ with a step and I couldn’t stop laughing ,” said Ome Ga (2019). “Wake up Ahh Malema killed me,” wrote Mope Mo (2019).

The Inspirational One

Many were inspired by Malema’s speeches. Inspiration happens when a stimulus is evoked that causes a person to feel motivated and energized to do something in particular, or when one thinks about transcending the limits of their normal experience. *Essenseh Ooil* (2019) referred to Malema’s ability to inspire: “South Africa is lucky to have this guy. If he doesn’t become the next president, it would be such a shame.” Other people shared their own personal stories of how Malema had inspired them. “I have been a restaurant manager for 9 years but I decided to go back to school and study politics, this guy gave me hope and I dont regret that I voted for EFF on its first elections and I will die EFF, If you dont see that EFF is aparty to vote for, you are blind,” said Sap Mya (2019).

Malema’s oratory, comedy, and inspirational nature all reinforced his widespread perception as a charismatic leader.

Comment Theme 4: I’m Voting for the EFF

Not surprisingly, voting was mentioned regularly, since this time period was part of the EFF’s campaign season. Commenters said they had moved from the ANC

to the EFF, or were reconsidering their votes after listening to Malema. Others mentioned voting for Malema in conjunction with making a point about what they deemed an impressive speech. "Wooow ... Juju ... Moving speech ... Come 8th May, Im voting EFF," said Nabi Nozini (2019).

Some commenters wondered why South Africans had not already voted Malema into the presidency, while others wished they could vote for him. "Make me a temporary citizen of South Africa so I can vote for someone I like for once in my life," said TecTecInc (2019). "South Africans if you don't elect this man president you will be denying yourselves an opportunity to reclaim your country," noted Kago Joel (2019).

Comment Theme 5: The ANC Is a Corrupt Sellout Party

People wanted Malema in office primarily because they associated him and the EFF with the end of corruption. Commenters referred to the ruling African National Congress (ANC) or other political groups as consisting of sellouts who had essentially been co-opted by the elite whites of the country. Marowa (2009), who conducted research on Zimbabwean sellouts, defined the term as referring to a person who has decided to disclose strategies, plans, and ideas to the opposition or the enemy. Marowa focused on the Dandawa community during the Zimbabwean liberation war, and particularly on the African citizens who supported the white government of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe's former name) during the African independence struggle.

This talk of sellouts loomed throughout the comment sections, as the state capture trials in South Africa were ongoing. The "ANC are predecessors of the white original oppressors. It's like the eff is dealing with stepnfetchits or uncle toms like in the usa," said Artscrapping (2019).

Stay Woke Blacks (2019) said, "These anc sellouts act like the black politicians in the movie *Birth of a Nation* literally." *The Birth of a Nation*, released in 1915, was a controversial American silent film, based on the novel called *The Clansman*. The movie was known for its use of advanced experimental film techniques, but it simultaneously created enduring racial stereotypes that have lasted for more than a century. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) tried to boycott and later to censor the film. Mary Childs Nerney, the NAACP's secretary at the time, described her experiences as part of the attempt to block the film's distribution:

It has been to me a most liberal education and I purposely am through. The harm it is doing the colored [black] people cannot be estimated. I hear echoes of it wherever I go and have no doubt that this was in the mind of the people who are producing it. Their profits here are something like \$14,000 a day and their expenses about \$400. I have ceased to worry about it, and if I seem disinterested, kindly remember that we have put six weeks of constant effort of this thing and have gotten nowhere. (Nerney 1915)

Comparing the value of money in 1915 with that in 2020, \$400 is the equivalent of over \$10,000, and \$14,000 is the equivalent of over \$350,000 today, so the profit margin indicates that this racist film was widely embraced by the American public.

In contrast with the commenters' perceptions of the ANC and its members as mentioned, Malema was perceived as a savior, truthful, and brave. Nefertari (2019) said, "The black peoples of south Africa have suffered for so long, thank the heavens and our ancestors for a true son like JM and the EFF. It's the time of truth and justice must be served." Malema was viewed as the true opposition to the norm in South African politics, especially as he spoke about land expropriation without compensation.

Comment Theme 6: Land Expropriation

The EFF's first of its seven economic emancipation pillars, land expropriation without compensation, has become a contentious issue, especially between white and black people in South Africa. Land expropriation was a heated topic in the comments section and usually led to white and black people arguing back and forth on this issue, with neither side seeing the other side's viewpoint. When Malema did not think the members of the National Assembly, particularly the ANC, were acting fast enough on land expropriation, he told the EFF supporters to conduct land grabs, making the issue even more controversial. Vusu Moso felt it was necessary for Africans to get access to land in South Africa:

I feel that the issue of land is being undermined and grossly misunderstood. When we talk about Land, were referring to our country as a whole not just agriculture. Minerals underground, animals, the rivers and seas, the whole economy. Today Oligopolies in South Africa are owned by whites (W.M.C.) [i.e., white monopoly capital] whether be Supermarkets, or Banks or Mines, while the blacks languish in poverty. South Africa has one of the highest inequities in the world with African Natives getting poorer and poorer and Land thieves getting riches of our Land. Enough is Enough, we've had it. We can't be servants in the land of our ancestors. (Vusu Moso 2019)

The land debate in South Africa has been especially volatile, and threats were made to other users online concerning this issue. Plus, Malema and the EFF's

historic motion had recently passed, which was presented as a proposed amendment to the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa to allow for land expropriation without compensation (as explained in Chapter Five). Two commenters mentioned the expropriation of land in a typical thread. The first, Maceoop De Beer, said that Africans would not get the land so easily:

The day your people decide to take our land with force will be the day you learn, what we as whites has been preparing since 1994. Your people think it will be that easy just to take OUR land because you think Julius M stands with you, on that day he will be protected by his guards and the rest will be crying because of what happens after. (Maceoop De Beer 2019)

Another user, Soem Mogoha, responded to the above comment by indicating if the whites opposed the measure, then it must be good for Africans:

For as long as a white man is pained by something a black person does, we Know is good for us. because white man never had the best interest of a black person. so we are happy with the discomfort Juju is giving you guys. thank you. (Soem Mogoha 2019)

Comment Theme 7: White-on-Black Antagonism

The YouTube comments section highlighted divisions and antagonisms between white and black people. A restlessness fed by the ongoing legacy of apartheid continues to pervade South Africa, creating palpable levels of tension, and this racial hostility seeped online. At the core of the antagonism were the main issues dividing white and black people in South Africa—land ownership and access to economic opportunities. The stakes are high for whites, who at 8 percent of the population control 72 percent of the land, and also for the Africans, who represent 81 percent of the population but own just 4 percent of the land. Many future generations of Africans are likely to be landless, continuing to exist in a perpetual state of poverty, unless conditions in South Africa change radically—making economic issues contentious. According to Donn Nad (2019), “If a white man comes to your house he will own your house, the best way to prevent this is to cut out the cancer infecting the body.” Gottie Mema (2019) said, “We are working for whites companies or business, earning small wages on top of that we have to pay transport to go to work. No this is absolutely not right take land close to the town/place u are working in so that u can go to work without using transport we tired.” Vel Rael (2019) noted, “Khulanathi nkosinathi [Grow with us, king]; one day they’ll come to themselves; and wake-up, and realize that the “white man and woman” are not talking about “us,” “we,” “everyone” are one; they have all the lands, gold and

diamonds; but our people are talking about; "one South Africa," when actually it's two different South Africa."

Many commenters tried to engage in constructive dialogue by stating historical facts to explain why land ownership is such a crucial issue, whereas other comments could be attributed to sheer racism. For instance, a commenter named Mapin Gode brazenly asserted that racism was admissible because whites were more competent than Africans:

It is better if Whites control most of the land and most of the economy because they create jobs, they take care of the land, they are farmers. Almost all countries that have reverted to black rule have been economic disasters. The white man, even if you say is a racist brings jobs. If blacks think they can manage the economy, they will be mistaken. It will be mismanaged like Democratic Republic of Congo or Nigeria. Is this what you want? It's better to have racism and jobs, than control, poverty, death and destruction. (Mapin Gode 2019)

The aforementioned comment represents a common pattern of the use of scare tactics in the online dialogue. Skeptical users expressed the belief that Africans were inherently inferior and unable to manage a country successfully if they did not come under the leadership of whites. Furthermore, they claimed that Africans did not have sufficient expertise in particular areas as whites did. Some users contended that whites were responsible for bringing civilization to Africans. These blatantly racist remarks would be rationally challenged by other commenters, often supported by historical facts that contested the racist claims. For instance, Poj Basa stated that whites learned much from the ancient Egyptian civilization and have never given anything of comparable value to Africans:

White give us nothing that we cannot provide for ourselves. Africans gave you written language. African gave you mathematics. African gave you medicine. African gave you knowledge to bury your dead. African gave you music. African gave you art. So why did whites need to steal property from us? (Poj Basa 2019)

Sometimes these attempts at insightful comments provoked critical replies. For instance, one commenter, Chake Deden (2019), responded to Poi Basa, "He [Malema] says you can steal as long as its whites you are stealing from. Without whites you wouldn't have anything; not even the wheel." Other antagonistic comments, harshly criticizing Africans, quickly led to a deterioration in communication. None of these types of comments ever produced any sort of meaningful resolution. If commenters disagreed as they came into the online conversation, they exited with the same perspective. As an example of such deterioration of discourse, two comments, the first by Mapin Gode and the second by Goza Bakan, are listed below from one particular comment chain:

Blacks are dirty, they spit, are unclean. You want those type of people in charge of this country. Seriously. You will make rich, prosperous South Africa drought stricken and poor like Zimbabwe. It's best the white man rule and have control over a majority of the land. (Mapin Gode 2019)

Why are u so damn negative? You are an epitome of failure & foolishness. Why talk dirt about blacks, jeez. Stop dividing the world, blacks n whites are all humans, no one is better than the other. (Goza Bakan 2019)

Restating negative stereotypes about black people was not enough for some commenters, who steeped even lower and began making threats. "The only land they will be occupying will be their graves," said Martin Zee (2019). "I wish there was some way to bring back apartheid whenever I hear Malema," said Mapin Gode (2019).

The mention of apartheid rubs salt into Africans' wounds. Apartheid was a brutal system of segregation, at the hands of which many people died. It was so barbaric that the United Nations declared that "apartheid is a crime against humanity and that inhuman acts resulting from policies and practices of apartheid ... are crimes violating the principles of international law" (United Nations 1976, 1). In addition to the execution of freedom fighters and even the murder of children peacefully protesting (the Soweto Uprising of 1976), "We know that the State used its considerable resources to wage a war against some of its citizens. We know that torture, deception and murder and death squads came to be the order of the day," wrote the then Chairperson of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Archbishop Emeritus Tutu (1998, 18). In addition to physical abuse, apartheid's victims also suffered mental abuse via the implementation of humiliating and legally enforced unjust laws. As previously mentioned, Africans were pushed into black settlements, and they had to carry passes, could not operate a business in a white area, had to use separate facilities including hospitals and even beaches, endured miscegenation laws, and had to find a job immediately if they entered an urban area (Blakemore 2019). So making a comment about bringing back apartheid could be used as a desperate attempt to arouse the emotions of the African commenters.

Not only was an agreement never reached in these online discussions, but even mutual understanding seemed elusive. As Freddy Ren (2019) said, "This is very complicated but there is a deep hatred of anyone of European ancestry by those of African ancestry. Isn't this racist/genocidal thinking?" Cavey Dak spoke about all the horrors that would happen in South Africa because of black people's assertion that the land should be shared:

Of course Malema will be thoroughly successful. White's will be slaughtered and the black majority will rise and claim a spectacular victory. At last they will have their country back. South Africa will then descend into a catastrophic economic disaster. Naturally, the very people who these Marxists claim to be helping will be hit the hardest. As the entire African continent is now a human disaster zone, millions will attempt to flee, but by this time the borders of Europe will be firmly closed and the world will watch in horror as the entire continent is drenched in blood and poverty. The world will at last categorize Marxism, socialism and identity politics with Fascism. But it will take who knows how millions to suffer and die before this point is reached. (Cavey Dak 2019)

A very small number of commenters called Malema and the EFF child-like or a derivation of that term, expressing repulsion toward what they allude to as Malema's bad manners. "The world would be a better place without Julius Malema," indicated Sarah Neil (2019). For each of his critics, however, he had a plethora of supporters. Users constantly mentioned in the comments section that they were disenchanted with oppression. Often, their comments were rational and articulate, as in this one by Medi Sian:

Juju is fighting against white racism, for every black person to live in dignity and have total control of its country and economy. If whites love blacks as equal human beings then they won't be landless, living in squalor to be just servants, farm workers and at the bottom of social class of their own country. Why can't a black person have farm lands with white workers or is there anything wrong with blacks having white servants? (Medi Sian 2018)

Finally, a few tried to inject a more lighthearted spirit into the conversation by joking about the serious topic of land expropriation. In one video, the EFF was chanting in a call-and-response fashion to try to force the president to listen to their concerns, which users commented on. "The song towards the end ... can I find it on iTunes?" asked Dawe Fishah (2019). Lund Maq (2019) voiced her own chant: "Remix occupy land, without compensation. Occupy land, without compensation . EFF is [the] future." Ray Rae (2019) stated, "Julius and his crew are such a trouble makers and I love it."

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“We Are Not Scared of Anything”

The younger generation was moving too fast for the old generation.

The older generation was torn between clandestine politics on the one side and old allegiances, which were not progressive allegiances, to groups like the ANC, PAC (Pan Africanist Congress of Azania), without any regard to action, and those who were simply too scared to move.

—Steven Biko, *Steven Biko Speaks!*

My similar phenotype to other Africans, as an African American, becomes important in a globalized salad-bowl society that authorizes and encourages people to judge others based solely on their appearance. My physical characteristics include high cheek bones and a round face, chestnut brown skin color, and long black locks (the decolonized term for dreadlocks) that fall down my back are of a similar thick texture to those sported by South African women. Since Africa is the origin of humanity, I am like the red leaf lettuce that goes into the salad bowl first. Often, I find myself investigating other kinds of lettuce around the world, like Julius Malema and the EFF. Malema’s message becomes savory as I listen to it, since as fellow lettuce we are oftentimes pushed down to the bottom of the bowl instead of thriving as the necessary foundation for all the toppings—like the grape tomatoes, red onions, cucumbers, and beets. Since salads are a beloved global meal,

lettuce endures the same treatment from South Africa to America and all around the globe, regardless of its type.

I am of the seventh generation born in America on the paternal African Thames' side of my family. I am also part of the first generation of my direct family line to be born outside the American South, as my mother gave birth to me in the North, specifically the Chicago metropolitan area. Our family has somehow persevered for generations, silently suffering without public complaints at the hand of racism that tightly grips the golden salad fork, constantly shaking up the beautiful display of natural vegetables in the bowl. Our family song, "How I Got Over," by Mahalia Jackson was most suitable for our circumstances. Jackson had performed this song as the lead-in to the Civil Rights Activist Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech at the *March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom*, held in 1963 in Washington, DC, where I currently reside. She sang:

How we got over.
How did we make it over?
You know my soul looks back and wonder,
How we made it over. (Collectif 2017)

This racism we have faced for centuries has become akin to squirting out spoiled balsamic vinaigrette dressing into the salad bowl, in such a way that all the vegetables become negatively impacted by this salad topping—but especially the lettuce, since most of the dressing sits and marinates at the bottom of the bowl. But there is more to my story than salad conversations.

My roots also stem from the twelfth-generation white Thames' side of my family. My family history of African and European relatives begins with Jack Thames, an enslaved mulatto (mixed black and white). Jack was born in 1822 in Mississippi. He married a fellow enslaved African named Rachel (born in 1837)—they are my great-great-grandparents. Jack's mother was an unknown enslaved African woman and his father was his white slave owner, James Thames (born in 1800). My family suspects this union was the result of a rape, since during slavery rape was not a criminal act; rather, it was commonplace for a white man to rape an enslaved African woman (Pokorak 2006).

James' great-great-grandfather Amos Thames (born in 1684) had migrated from Northamptonshire, England to Virginia in around 1720. After migrating to Mississippi, James had six enslaved Africans and more than 225 acres of land. His white son William (born in 1822) was the main heir of his estate, raising the number of slaves to over forty Africans residing in ten slave shacks—Jack and Rachel were among them. Accordingly, while my family members were mainly the enslaved, they were also the slaveholders. This white and black dichotomy

of masterhood and servitude relations continues today between our brothers and sisters of the human race, in the form of neo-slavery, neo-colonialism, neo-apartheid, and neo-imperialism, causing a resounding psychosis among the world population.

African Americans have endured pervasive struggles stemming from many generations of racism, much like the lingering oppression Africans continue to endure today in South Africa and all over the world. Our plight compels our people from every generation, including the youth in Malema's generation, to pursue their liberation. To be an African American fighting for one's liberation is to understand the plight of the South African, and to be a South African fighting for one's liberation is to understand the plight of the African American—we are all, in fact, lettuce.

My grandfather William (a.k.a. Willie) Thames (born in 1900), was a sharecropper who sought his own liberation, along with that of his family, from a small town called Little Rock, Mississippi. Sharecropping had become America's new system for the hidden enslavement of Africans: no matter how hard a family might toil on a designated part of their former owner's land (given the new title, landlord) they could never work hard enough to make a profit. My illiterate grandfather, well into his thirties but totally restricted by the United States government of owning any assets, would learn year after year that he and his young family had not made a profit and were in debt all over again, based solely on their landlord's calculations.

One day in 1936, my grandfather Willie and grandmother Hattie Mae (born in 1909) bravely devised an escape plan, at a time when the South was racially segregated, called *de jure* segregation, and the substandard treatment of black people was legally enforced. My grandparents loosened themselves from their landlord's grip by escaping in the middle of the night on their horse and makeshift wagon, risking possible death because breaking a contractual sharecropping arrangement with one's landlord could result in being murdered. My grandparents took their four little boys with them, including Alexander (age ten), Frank (seven), Robert (five), and William Jr. (six months). Their daughter, Katherine, was staying with her grandmother at the time, and their four other siblings, including my father Jerry, were not yet born.

The numerous potholes on the road, as they tried to quickly escape in the darkness of the night, violently rocked their makeshift transportation, causing them much dismay. Even though they successfully arrived at their destination in Meridian, Mississippi, one of the biggest cities in the state at the time, their risky escape scarred some of their children for life—just as living under racist conditions typically spawns multitudes of auxiliary effects.

My uncles faced the lingering and pervasive effects of being black in a structurally racist country. Their stories of perseverance or resiliency in the face of a painful oppression are typical of African American life. William Jr., just a baby at the time, fell out of the wagon during the trip; he was later diagnosed with permanent brain damage and lived with uncontrollable seizures, one of which killed him at age thirty-nine in 1975, while he was living in Meridian. Frank also fell out, and his shoulder bone instantly popped out of place. He was later diagnosed as disabled, due to paralysis in his left arm. Eventually, he moved to Brooklyn, New York, and the circumstances surrounding his untimely death are unclear. Alexander, was murdered in 1957 in Meridian, at age thirty-one, in a brutal fight with another young man over a woman. Robert traveled the world and became a Master Sergeant in the military and was one of the first black medics during the Korean War. He earned a Master of Science degree and taught at a university in Florida, but he mainly resided in Denver, Colorado until his death of old age at eighty-eight, in 2020.

My Uncles' lives were substantially impacted just because of their skin color, and most moved to different parts of the United States in search for a better life. I am just one generation removed from my uncles, and I too have lived with the impact of structural racism in the United States, on a daily basis. I have had to cope with a steady dousing of spoiled salad dressing that has allowed racial discrimination to flourish in the form of stereotyping, racial profiling, overt racial bias, and microaggressions. Since racism is institutionalized, even though African Americans no longer have to carry passes (just as they did in South Africa) there is no escaping its wrath wherever one goes in America, especially since skin color is an easy determiner of who will be treated in a subhuman or inferior way—making spoiled salads common to the American experience.

I was raised in a predominately white community called New Lenox, and grew up having numerous white friends. I viewed them as my counterparts and equals, only to make the devastating discovery as an adult that I would be treated vastly different from them. I saw my parents—successful black entrepreneurs in the Chicago area who owned a hundred apartment units, a convenience grocery and liquor store, two restaurants, a laundromat and a dry-cleaning service—have to fend off racism their entire lives, especially because of their ambitious spirit. In contrast, my white friends were free to be oblivious of this enormous burden of racism. Their young minds were at liberty to soar while I became more bombarded and consumed by racism—something that I could not articulate as a teenager or even a young adult, but the sense of which would become ubiquitous as I grew older. In fact, it is my white friends who would have been able to reap the most

benefits from the spoiled salad dressing, making them susceptible to developing a taste for it even more so than its fresh counterpart.

I gravitated toward people who were the most radical among the lettuce, such as Malcolm X, who expressed my feelings in a Signifying manner, before I even knew I was feeling that way. His speeches poured a fresh serving of balsamic vinaigrette into the bowl. One day in high school, I read an excerpt from a fiery 1964 speech of his called "The Ballet or the Bullet," leaving many of my white classmates in shock, with their jaws dropped:

Why does it look like it might be the year of the ballot or the bullet? Because Negroes have listened to the trickery, and the lies, and the false promises of the white man now for too long. And they're fed up. They've become disenchanted. They've become disillusioned. They've become dissatisfied, and all of this has built up frustrations in the black community that makes the black community throughout America today more explosive than all of the atomic bombs the Russians can ever invent. (Smith and Ellis 2010)

Throughout my grade school and high school years, I innocently held my hand on my heart daily to recite the *Pledge of Allegiance* to the United States alongside my white classmates. In contrast, reading that speech by Malcolm X felt much more powerful, as he seemed to have answered the call on behalf of those who felt that American society had refused to treat all of its citizens, as the pledge boasts, with "liberty and justice for all."

Two decades later, I heard another person whose fearless and fiery rhetoric of urgency reminded me of Malcolm X: Julius Malema, leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters. The EFF seemed to have the resounding alternative message of my generation, on how to finally gain economic freedom in our lifetime—a route that could lead toward the eradication of racism. This message was more meaningful than hearing politicians mention that nothing would happen in our lifetime and generations thereafter, but to still remain hopeful. In the United States, neither the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, a law which ended segregation; nor the amendments, including the *Thirteenth Amendment* of 1865 that abolished slavery, the *Fourteenth Amendment* of 1868 that granted citizenship to all people born or naturalized in the United States, the *Fifteenth Amendment* of 1870 that allowed all male citizens the right to vote, and the *Nineteen Amendment* of 1920, which granted women with voting rights, has ended the traumatizing persistence of institutionalized racism. It has been about 150 years since these first few amendments to the United States Constitution passed, and over fifty years since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 passed, but to no avail, because racism is still rampant in America.

Based on this historical reality, it is quite reasonable for Malema and his followers to conclude that the extremely inequitable situation still prevailing in

South Africa will not be transformed unless something radical occurs. President Rhamaphosa has admitted that South Africa needs to change: "[W]e need a radical program of action that is restorative, that rebuilds, and that is transformative" (iReport South Africa News 2021).

Malema's Ideological Break from Mandela (and ANC Policies)

Malema's involvement in politics since 1990 (when he was just nine years old) has afforded him time, approximately three decades to date, to observe the outcomes of the ANC's floundering policies, such as the Black Economic Empowerment program or the willing-seller, willing-buyer land reform model (Krüger 2016; Koot et al. 2019). Malema has had time to ponder how to best manage the pending state of emergency in South Africa, referred to as a racial time bomb. As a result of his reflections, Malema made a complete ideological shift from the prevailing norms currently guiding South African politics. As the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) President, Malema distanced himself from the post-colonial ideologies of the ruling ANC, including Nelson Mandela's widely praised post-apartheid approach of reconciliation—a more moderate approach, for which its effectiveness is now being questioned.

Some have compared Malema's views to the ideals Mandela espoused at an earlier age. "For some, Malema is like a young Mandela who, in his thirties, was also an insubordinate firebrand who took the ANCYL in a more radical direction, eventually founding uMkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the armed division of the liberation movement," said Finday (2015). Malema, however, has rejected the comparison, since Mandela's approach eventually became one of reconciliation, which he feels has not held people accountable for their atrocities committed during apartheid, and since the whites continue to control the South African economy. Malema has not shown an interest in the political framework of the "shallow nonracialist" (a non-transformative, color-blind approach to ending racism) stance of nation building, partially because of the "perceived failure" of the ANC to transform South Africa (Satgar 2019, 595). He has instead taken a vastly different approach, orienting the EFF toward attaining the goals of economic freedom in their lifetime through African unity and socialism. According to Malema, "They must know I am not Nelson Mandela (roaring 'yeah', clapping), neither am I Zuma. You push me, I push back (roars of 'yeah'). I don't play games" (eNCA 2018).

Malema has not catered to white people or to the African supporters of white monopoly capitalism by politely accommodating to their political wishes; this is easily apparent in the EFF’s description, as it calls itself a “radical and militant economic emancipation movement” (EFF n.d.). In fact, the party has taken in other young and disgruntled former ANC members who have also grown tired of the gradualist reforms and consensus-building methods associated with neoliberal governance (Satgar 2019). Malema has not cared to negotiate with whites or meet racists in the middle; as he has said, “The time for reconciliation is over. Now is the time for justice” (Goba 2018). Malema has not embraced the public debate over post-apartheid etiquette (Posel 2014, 44). In fact, polite measures have been implemented since apartheid’s end, but Africans are still in a state of emergency, and as Satgar pointed out, corruption remains rampant.

South Africa has a history of corruption from the apartheid era, but under the ANC it has become systemic and a norm. Under the presidency of Jacob Zuma (2009 till February 2018), South Africa went through a period of brazen looting that has contributed to the fiscal crisis in many parastatals, the destruction of competencies in the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and has undermined the ability of numerous local governments to deliver effective services. The South African state and politics in general have been criminalized. This has seriously weakened the state and created a crisis of legitimacy for ANC rule. (Satgar 2019, 585)

Posel (2014, 39) used stereotypical language through her use of the phrase “angry black man” as she drew a comparison between Malema and Mandela: “If Mandela was the national archetype of adult wisdom, the Black man willing to reconcile and embrace fellow white citizens, Malema styled himself as the quintessentially angry Black man: youthful militant refusing to cow-tow to his political elders, masculinist ‘revolutionary,’ avowedly confrontational on racial issues, disinclined to compromise.”

People have used all the weapons in their verbal arsenal to discredit Malema, but the EFF has provided a refuge for the discontented. As mentioned in Chapter Eight, my analysis showed that commenters viewed Malema’s rhetoric positively, considering him to be a charismatic savior or even “Africa’s president,” due to his political messaging. Further, almost 2 million South Africans, based on data from the 2019 general election, have embraced his radical plan to stop the exorbitant suffering of South Africans.

As the World Bank report indicated, “South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world” (2018, xv). The report documented, “The top percentile of households had 70.9 percent of the wealth and the bottom 60 percent had 7 percent—richer households are almost ten times wealthier than poor households” (World Bank 2018, xvi). In fact, 47 percent of African households and less than

1 percent of white households were classified as poor. Wage inequality has been so extreme that the report stated, "While part of the population enjoys wages roughly equivalent to those living in developed economies, the lower-end wages are comparable to those in the poorest countries" (World Bank 2018, 49).

Malema's rhetoric is considered "radical" because he has focused on ending any semblance of economic disparities between black and white people, as opposed to allowing the impoverished condition of South Africans to remain intact. In fact, in South Africa, "race has become the main factor determining inequality of opportunity" (Statista 2020)—so to be African is to be marginalized, in South Africa.

Similar discrepancies exist in other countries. African Americans are faring much worse than their white counterparts. According to *The New York Times* Journalist Nicholas Kristof (2014), "Whites in America on average own almost 18 times as much as blacks; in South Africa in 1970, the ratio was about 15 times," basing his comment on data derived from the 2011 United States Census. Therefore, if some African politicians seem angry (as Malema's critics have suggested) about the conditions facing South Africans, they have every reason to be vexed.

Racism is still embedded in the structure of the formerly colonized African countries. Arikana Chihombori-Quao, the former *African Union Ambassador to the United States*, said the colonizers remain in Africa:

There are various factors really if you were to talk about why Africa is the way Africa is today. The reality is the colonizers have never left. They are still very much involved in everything we do, and until we realize that when we got our independence in the '50s and '60s, we only got political independence Even that is limited because they still dictate and control who becomes the next president in the country. (Arinde 2020)

Another predicament the so-called decolonized countries face is how to remove the colonialist mindset from the populace. Memmi (1992) says that the mythical portrait of the colonized as lazy and the colonizer as people of action has been used to justify unreasonably low wages and other bad treatment (Memmi 1992). These problems, all of which occur under a system of institutionalized racism, facilitate the continuation of unjust living conditions (Memmi 1992). The Martinique-born psychologist Frantz Fanon, whom the EFF upholds as instrumental to their Marxist-Leninist-Fanonist ideological stance, elaborated on the colonial mentality. Fanon discussed his research on the psychological impact of colonization on the Africans from Martinique, and he drew connections to occurrences among the blacks in South Africa:

In South Africa, there are two million whites against almost thirteen million native people, and it has never occurred to a single black to consider himself superior to a

member of the white minority. ... The feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European feeling of superiority. (Fanon [1952] 2008, 93)

Visiting South Africa

My husband Kennard and I had decided to travel to South Africa, the land of the lettuce, representing a whopping 90 percent of the population when one combines the Africans and the Coloureds, which are the descendants of Africans (Khoikhoi and San), Europeans (Dutch), and Malay (Southeast Asian). White Americans had also given the name "Colored" to mulattos, but eventually the term was applied to all Africans regardless of the shade of their brown skin tone or their diverse genetic makeup (Davis n.d.), because no longer did America need the mulattos politically to exist as a buffer between them and the rest of the African people. However, when Africans of light and dark complexion became divided, it made it easier for whites to discriminate against all of them—this is the old but faithful "divide and conquer" strategy of the West, and is vividly conveyed through the Willie Lynch Syndrome. The tactics of white hegemony have been globalized; although, according to the Ethiopian proverb, "When spiderwebs unite, they can tie up a lion" (Hodari and Sobers 2009).

My South African experience was both new and familiar. As a visitor, I enjoyed my luxurious stay in the wealthy Johannesburg suburb of Sandton, along with the black diamonds, and I made several visits to Nelson Mandela Square. I also experienced both the Ndebele and Zulu ethnic groups at cultural villages. I traveled to the southern part of the country to enjoy the picturesque Cape Town landscape, with the Table Mountain in the distance. It was entertaining to see the brightly lit Ferris wheel next to the V&A (Victoria and Alfred) Waterfront, situated along the Atlantic shoreline; it was named after Prince Alfred, who helped to construct the harbor, and his mother, Queen Victoria. The waterfront was only a ferry ride away from Robben Island, and for a reasonably affordable price, one could wander through the prison and see the place where so many Africans were tortured and beaten while serving life sentences—we declined.

Unforgettable memories still remain on my mind of walking through the shanty town, Khayelitsha, and being overwhelmed by the sight of corrugated metal housing and broken-down cardboard boxes used as a drywall substitute. Smiling and energetic children had assembled around a communal fire with sparks shooting towards them. The smells of human waste penetrated the atmosphere from the community-based port-a-potties, since residents mainly did not have their own toilets. We asked a teenage dweller of a tin home how it felt to live there and she casually said, "It's just the way it is,"—a chilling reminder of what

some African Americans say about the inhumane conditions that they too endure in America. Afterwards, we visited our driver's girlfriend at her matchbox home in Khayelitsha. At some point, I needed to use the bathroom, but she told me she didn't have a bathroom. She walked me over to her neighbor's home. First, I noticed that the bathroom had a curtain instead of a door. I went inside and closed the curtain, painstakingly sliding it to both ends of the rod, and yet it could never fully cover the opening and one could still peep in around the edges. After I situated myself, within a few seconds a child of about five years abruptly yanked open the curtain and smiled widely, laughing, as if we were playing a game of hide and seek. I yelled, "Oh, nooooo!" She ran away giggling and I quickly returned the curtains to the somewhat-closed position. I rushed out of there humiliated and embarrassed, as if hundreds of adults had just peeked into the bathroom and started laughing at me. I asked myself in anguish, "Is this what it feels like to live in a home without a toilet?"

The lack of toilets in one's home and other unsavory conditions were visible throughout South Africa, and from my experience of being black in America, I sympathized with South Africans' demoralizing experiences. In Johannesburg, we saw men walking in droves on their way to work, some along the expressway. We eventually arrived at the Nelson Mandela Museum, right outside Soweto. This museum had nooses hung from the ceiling of the entrance—which mentally conjured up the executions of South African freedom fighters, and more vividly reminded me of the approximately 100 years of brutal lynchings of black men in America. These black American victims were attacked by white mobs: some were burned alive at faggots or tortured in other gruesome ways; they were hanged and in some cases, the whites dismembered their bodies and took their parts home, as souvenirs (Ginzburg [1962] 1988). These tragic events would be made into postcards, displaying a party-like atmosphere, while the strange fruit hung from the tree in the distance.

There are even more horrendous photos existing today and with the advent of video technology, videos clearly show the evil outcomes stemming from racism. The graphic black-and-white, life-sized photo taken during the Soweto Uprising of the lifeless thirteen-year-old, Hector Pieterse, left an imprint in my mind. Pieterse's death was much like the brutal death of a fourteen-year-old boy from Chicago, named Emmett Till that happened twenty-one years earlier—but both boys died in systems where structural racism was allowed to proliferate. While visiting Mississippi, white men accused Till of whistling at a white woman; they subsequently abducted him from his home at night, and tortured him so badly that his screams became like sirens and the world became traumatized after seeing his mutilated face at his open-casket funeral. Till became the sacrificial lamb of

the Civil Rights Movement. George Floyd is another person, one of many, whose life was involuntarily sacrificed due to the proliferation of racism. Floyd was an African American who died after a white police officer murdered him by placing a knee on his neck for an agonizing 9 minutes and 29 seconds, as he beseeched for his life. These three males were from different generations; yet, time and time again, people would repeatedly become shocked and traumatized. As yet, more than 70 years after Till's horrendous death, the root of this trauma—racism—has not been eradicated and is instead going strong.

My husband and I stayed in a hotel in Cape Town, and we could see the beauty of the flat-topped Table Mountain in the distance against a golden skyline, right outside our hotel window; and in contrast, we were also forced to see the ugliness of racism, right inside the hotel. In one watershed moment, a Coloured hotel staff member refused to wait on us, because of our blackness. Instead, the Coloured guests behind us were waited on first. The African hotel manager later informed us that the employee refused to serve Africans and would only wait on Coloureds. Later, we spoke to the white hotel manager and explained that as African Americans we would not tolerate racist behavior, and told him that we would not return. He profusely apologized for the inconvenience, but the act was already committed and had obviously been condoned by the management. My mind could only wonder about whom else would have a similar experience, decades later.

As visitors, we could pack up and leave that hotel, the city of Cape Town, and South Africa altogether. But where would we really venture to since America also operates according to institutionalized racism—so where is the refuge for Africans, if not in Africa?

As I learned more about Malema while in South Africa, and his opposition to gradualist reforms, I became curious about his initial interest in politics. His earliest appreciation for politics was sparked after living with his grandmother in the town of Seshego, nicknamed Masakaneng (which in the Pedi African language means sacks) because of the residents' use of hemp sacks as curtains (Finday 2015). Malema was raised in the system of apartheid, and at night the police would go into homes and arrest boys seen as a potential threat to the establishment, but the residents had used superior logic to outthink the police. According to Malema (Finday 2015), "Our parents actually used to force us to wear dresses and we slept in dresses to avoid a possible arrest." Malema added that the adults said politics could bring a halt to such nonsense and, "we were told that solution was having a first black president."

Such haunting incidents provide insight into the South African experience, even more haunting was how much it reminded me of the injustices African

Americans face. The beloved poet and activist Maya Angelou ([1969] 2015), in her autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, spoke about how she and her brother Bailey had to hide their crippled Uncle Willie, into the bottom of a bin that they filled with potatoes and onions. Angelou had heard him moaning for the entire night, out of sheer terror that he could be lynched at any instance. Momma (Angelou's grandmother) had been warned that a Ku Klux Klan mob searching for scapegoats would be coming around. Most times, these humiliating experiences are buried deep within the subconscious of those who suffer the trauma. But that does not make them any less traumatic, nor does it hide the apparent evidence that the Republic of South Africa is in a state of emergency, like the United States, and many other countries that are undergoing their own race-related emergencies. Racism has spread all around the world much like the persistent and lethal COVID-19 virus that has killed millions. When you think you have the vaccine for racism, or that it has been eradicated, it just evolves into a new variant.

Malema's Rhetorical Style Pops, but His Message Isn't Populist

In line with South Africa's current conditions, Malema's theme for the 2019 South African general election season was "our land and jobs now," and this rhetoric provided supporters with more information on just how that would be accomplished. As described in Chapter Seven, the top themes emerging from the rhetorical analysis of Malema's speeches included gaining equality for Africans by overcoming apartheid, showing superior logic and urging for African unity, tackling corruption, crushing white monopoly capital and state capture, calling out racism, and acquiring land expropriation without compensation.

Malema spoke about issues in an entertaining Africanized rhetorical manner. His rhetoric was so enjoyable that one of the themes from his virtual audience or the video commenters was concerning his charismatic leadership style—commenters referenced their appreciation for his great oratory, comedy, and inspirational message.

Some claim the EFF is practicing populism or its subset, a political style of populism (Mbetse 2015, 597) by incorporating a performance or a "disruptive performance" approach to discourse (Sorensen 2018, 2). Moffitt and Tormey introduced the concept of "political style" into the definition of populism, defining it as "the repertoires of performance that are used to create political relations" (2014, 387). Although, when critics suggest that the EFF is practicing a "political style" of populism, it is because they lack the necessary grounding in African

culture to make an accurate assessment of the discourse; essentially, by doing so they not only place EFF members outside of their cultural context, but they ignore the significance of their mode of operation.

Populism has a negative connotation. It is seen as disruptive due to the politician's focus on a crisis, whether or not one exists (Conversation 2019). Gumede (2019) defined populism as, "Leaders and parties tailoring their policies to what people want, to get elected, often with very little regard for whether the policies are evidence-based, rational or practical." Populist discourse centers on anti-status quo ideologies and/or the political strategies of personality-driven leaders. It is generally used to describe politicians who have an emotive approach and who explain concepts by using simplistic terminology, essentially deceiving the poor, since the information may or may not be true. It is a "thin-centered ideology" describing the phenomena of two opposing groups, including the corrupt elite verses the ordinary people or the underdogs (Moffitt and Tormey 2014, 383; Conversation 2019). Moffitt and Tormey (2014) have admitted that even though there might be agreement as to who is populist, the concept has its limitations:

Current ideological, discursive and organizational conceptions of populism leave us in the strange position of arguing that some of the "usual suspects" or archetypal cases of contemporary populism are not actually "populist" at all. (Moffitt and Tormey 2014, 381–82)

According to Moffitt and Tormey (2014, 382), the two ways one can view populism are the following: "The first is to argue that the concept of populism has become so widely used – and usually in a derogatory manner to denigrate any political personality we do not like – that it has lost its analytical value and has become meaningless." He continues, "By contrast, there are those who see the debate over populism as indicating that there is something important and promising about the concept." However, these researchers admit that populism's approaches—the ideological, discourse, logical, and organizational—are inundated with problems (Moffitt and Tormey 2014). Even so, some journalists have still referred to Malema as a populist leader and the EFF as a populist party; and since Malema's ideas are imbedded into the EFF, as well as his style of communication, whatever has been used to describe Malema has simultaneously been used to describe the EFF, and vice-versa. Therefore, Malema's style of communication will be used as the barometer for comments about the EFF.

Mbete (2015) used Moffitt and Tormey's framework to determine that the EFF generally exhibited the political style model of populism during the 2014 South African general election. Moffitt and Tormey's "political style" concept encompassed three areas: (1) having an "appeal to the people," (2) displaying "crisis,

breakdown, threat," and (3) having "bad manners" (2014, 382). Mbete (2015) said the EFF has met the "appeal to the people" criterion because of its representation of the poor who are taken advantage of by the politically powerful. Mbete (2015) said the "crisis, breakdown, threat" criterion was also met because of the EFF's protests at Marikana and elsewhere, which she described as unconventional campaign methods. Another example she cited was the EFF's handling of the "controversy over the development of the president's residence at Nkandla" (Mbete 2015, 38). Concerning "bad manners," she used examples referring to the EFF's revolutionary uniforms, military language, "disdain for parliamentary rules," and efforts in "challenging of the legitimacy of parliamentary conventions," such as how the EFF had unsuccessfully challenged the Electoral Commission of South Africa on the high cost of contesting the national elections (Mbete 2015, 39).

The findings of the two studies presented (refer to Chapters Seven and Eight) show that Malema is actually practicing a black rhetorical style. Malema's Signifying includes the use of sounding, wordplay, singing and dancing, metaphors, irony, hyperbole, proverbs, and call and response. Malema's discourse also invokes the value system imbedded in African tales and the Ubuntu philosophical system, which fits nicely within the African context of communalism. Although, Malema's rhetorical style is being misconstrued for a Eurocentric political style that's posing as generic political theory, applicable to all.

The populist concept of having an "appeal to the people," as it is outlined in the political style of populism, is actually the aim of Black Rhetoric. In fact, African speakers rely on African cultural techniques like call and response to gauge how well they are emotionally connecting to their audience. "In black speech interactions, the audience responds almost constantly, with set responses, encouragement, suggestions, and non-verbal signals. Indeed, Black discourse encourages such participation," said Gates (1983, 41).

Being able to defend oneself rhetorically by insulting others is an aspect of Black rhetoric (see Chapter Three), but this phenomenon is being refashioned as an example of populism's "bad manners." Signifying could be reduced to the show of "bad manners," since the rhetorical style makes full use of mocking others and throwing out direct or indirect insults at its target, which are oftentimes witty and humorous. However, when a cultural context is considered, it becomes apparent that these elements are a part of a verbal art form grounded in African rhetorical traditions.

Gordon (1998, 274) references black people's humor as he mentioned it is neither innocent nor anger free, and "more pointedly, this humor challenges white oppression and promotes black emancipation as part of its effort to bring justice to the scene in which both groups have to coexist." For instance, Malema didn't mince his words when speaking to EFF supporters at the *Commission of Inquiry*

into *Allegations of State Capture* hearings: "This place is rotten, so don't waste time trying to think why Ramaphosa is rotting. Don't waste time trying to think why is Pravin is rotting. They come from a rotten tree called the ANC" (SABC Digital News 2018). Furthermore, Malema often humorously, like in the forementioned quote, calls out the opposition.

The remaining point in Moffitt and Tormey's description of the political style model is the strategy of "crisis, breakdown, threat." Mbete (2015) claims the EFF used political protest as an unconventional form of campaigning, which is another reductionist approach to understanding the EFF. The EFF is a protest movement and the findings of this research makes it clear that Malema and the political party are aiming for African equality. Activists fighting on behalf of African equality have never proclaimed to have used protest as a campaign strategy, instead the goal of protesting is to transform an unjust system. The issues activists advocate are far larger than that of winning an election. For example, Black Lives Matter's (n.d.) mission is "to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on black communities by the state and vigilantes." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. ([1963] 1986), a major figure in the Civil Rights Movement mentioned activists were protesting because of marginalization: "Never in American history had a group seized the streets, the squares, the sacrosanct business thoroughfares and the marbled halls of government to protest and proclaim the unendurability of their oppression." The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania organized protests and mentioned their efforts were on behalf of ending colonialism: "The struggle is about the dispossessed and means to seize all which belongs to him from the dispossessor. The struggle have always been to castrate colonialism and replace it with the self-determination of African descendants which have not been obtained until this day" (PAC n.d.). Therefore, to align protest with campaigning is simply an oversimplification of the EFF's strategy and an undermining of their overall goals. Furthermore, any organization that is not a part of the establishment, like the EFF, must agitate the system to be heard—making an argument emphasizing the EFF's "bad manners" is not only redundant but futile and misleading.

Social Media, Youth, and the New Movement for African Liberation

The EFF and Malema have become firmly situated as part of a grander protest movement, especially among youth internationally, that has integrated social media as an auxillary platform for activism. In South Africa, many of these African youth were frustrated with the ANC government, so when the EFF participated in its first general election in 2014, almost 1.2 million people voted for the EFF

and by the 2019 elections that number reached almost 1.9 million. During the 2019 election campaign season, Malema's speeches calling for African liberation and the end of apartheid were watched by disenchanted Black people throughout the world, giving them a venue to engage with one another on various issues of liberation. Social media has permitted Malema to reach far more people than could attend his live speeches—specifically, the fourteen top videos uploaded of Malema during the election season gained 4.5 million views.

Social media has allowed Malema and the EFF to broadcast events not covered by mainstream media. "These political networks are not chat rooms, they are not just expressive: they are instrumental. They are geared toward accomplishing political goals," said Sey and Castells (2004, 377). Sorensen (2018) mentioned how during the 2015 SONA, about 350,000 tweets, an unprecedented number for a political event, were posted on Twitter using the hashtags #SONA2015 and #SONA. The EFF had actually overridden the SABC news outlet's attempt to mediate reality by not showing the EFF being expelled from Parliament:

In this medium, the EFF take up the fight over mediated reality. ... The EFF proceed to usurp the role of the public broadcaster. ... They live-tweet reports of events every few minutes and convey in graphic and visual detail all the to-do [commotion] not shown by the SABC to a rapt national audience. The EFF succeed in performatively constructing a reality where they are the conveyors of truth, the government the unsuccessful authoritarian censors. (Sorensen 2018, 6)

The youth, throughout Southern and West Africa, have been able to get first-account information as to the occurrences happening on the South African political scene via social media. Supporters have even created ideological offsprings of the EFF in their own respective countries. Thus, EFF political parties exist in Botswana, Ghana, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, largely because many other African countries are also dealing with the legacy of oppression, via neocolonialism. Even more impressive, in the 2019 Namibian general election, the Namibian EFF secured two seats in Parliament.

As we saw in Chapter Eight, responses to Malema's messages came in from around the world, making him an inspiration to many. The endlessly expansive capacity of the internet has allowed people to restructure politics, and to enable citizens, politicians, and grassroots organizations to escape top-down approaches and build large, multidirectional networks (Sey and Castells 2004). Therefore, people residing in approximately thirty countries were engaging with one another on YouTube, including those from the following areas: the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom; the Caribbean islands; and in the West, Central, East, and Southern African Countries—making digital Pan-Africanism a new movement for African liberation.

The Gigantic One Is In All of Us

Here is a modern-day African story. Once there was a gigantic African woman who wept every day for twenty-five years onto her pillow, because her people had been forced from their ancestral lands. Those were the years when all of South Africa faced severe flooding, and boats were the only means of transportation. One day, she headed onto her bed to cry again, but instead she shouted loudly, “enough is enough!” Her voice created such an enormous tremor that the earth shook.

The gigantic African woman anxiously searched the world over, gathering all the cotton from every field, making a blanket big enough and sturdy enough to hold all of her people, the dark ones of the nation. She carefully put all of them into the blanket and tied it up. She then picked a limb from the tallest tree in the world to hook the tie and she walked with the blanket over her shoulder. With each step she covered nearly 100 miles.

She asked each family where they wanted to live in the country. After each person received ancestral guidance as to the whereabouts of their ancestral homeland, they explained to her exactly where they wanted to reside. She eventually dropped off every person, one by one, to every nook and cranny of the land—and she declared it their land.

Ever since that day the flooding dried up, and the dark people of South Africa vowed to never again lose their precious land. Now, she only comes to South Africans in dreams, and every time someone starts crying too much, the gigantic African woman anxiously awakens him from total despair. That’s how South Africans recovered their ancestral lands, and they have resided on those same plots ever since.

African folklore can inspire, enthuse, and activate people into a new existence. It can explain phenomena or occurrences that are hard to describe, yet are amusing to hear as a folktale. Africans are also known for their fables that show the relationships between animals. As previously mentioned, these animals use their mental prowess to overcome the more physically powerful.

Malema used the values embedded in African folklore, particularly fables, as a guiding principle for the EFF, during the 2019 South African general election season. Malema applied superior logic throughout the election season as he spoke about overcoming the powerful beast of white monopoly capital. Malema has rhetorically embodied the courageous spirit of the seemingly weaker but more clever personified animals. The EFF captured this theme by having the audacity to try to overcome a firmly established state of marginalization, even though the odds have been against them. The weaker animal’s actions correspond with Signifying’s characteristics of “disruption and then reconciliation,” because disruption becomes a viable option as long as it could lead to the betterment of the whole (Gates [1988])

2014). Therefore, disruption, in the African rhetorical sense, may be necessary at times. This holds true for Malema and the EFF members' behavior at the 2020 SONA, which was described as a disruption, but was essential for creating reconciliation in the future. Malema speaks about the importance of speaking out:

Anyone who doesn't want to hold ministers accountable, who doesn't want to be held accountable, will never receive respect from the EFF. This Parliament is an activist Parliament. It's a Parliament where all kinds of issues, including uncomfortable issues, must be raised irrespective of what's the occasion. If you want the proper occasion, normalize South Africa. (Eyewitness News 2020)

The EFF—a new movement for African liberation—is not slowing down; it is spreading across the continent via social media and comparably on the ground. This new era of digital Pan-Africanism and this new movement for African liberation spearheaded by the South African youth are blossoming on YouTube. Njubi explained how new technology is significant to people's liberation:

Just as the anti-racists of the past used the pen, typewriter, printing press, microphone and camera ... anti-racism activists of the 21st century must wield the computer, website and e-mail discussion list against the guns, bombs and prisons of oppressors and their corporate and government sponsors in the West. (2001, 117)

Malema has been called many names because his rhetoric is viewed as dangerous. He possesses the potential of unraveling the power relationships between black and white people internationally. This has empowered restless African youth, female and male, all around the world to stand up and proclaim, "enough is enough." His rhetoric is defiantly against the colonial mentality. His rhetoric inspired his audience during the 2019 South African general election season, because it envisions a future where African youth from every proceeding generation would no longer have to utter the words, "that's just the way it is," to cope with substandard living conditions, like the teen whom I met in Khayelitsha. His rhetoric envisions a new future: when a black mother will no longer have to helplessly watch her child suffer at the hands of racism; and in turn, a black child no longer has to watch his mother suffer from the acknowledgement of her precarious position—while the capitalists violently shake up the salad bowl of diversity with their golden folks. For instance, an African American teenager in Texas, because of the snow build up on the sidewalk, was walking in the street while coming home from work. The police stopped and arrested him seemingly for #WalkingWhileBlack; but said their goal was to protect him (WFAA 2021). His shaken and teary-eyed mother said, "It [RJ's arrest] messed me up on the inside. I'm always telling him good choices R.J., good choices, good choices. I didn't prepare him enough for good choices ... [because] you're still going to end up in jail" (WFAA 2021).

Although, the veil of racism is unraveling. And for as long as white monopoly capital continues to exist, Africans will unapologetically continue to use race, a concept that was invented by white people, to galvanize fellow Africans across the globe toward meeting their unifying goals of freedom and equality. Malema explained that white people were not scared of him but were instead, terrified of equality; however, he declared, Africans won't give up:

We are going to fight for transformation, everywhere. We are going to fight against white supremacy (yes). We are going to fight against white dominance of our economy. We are going to fight against whiteness everywhere else, where it raises its ugly head (clapping), because their refusal to support the expropriation of land without compensation has got everything to do with whiteness and white supremacy. Because white people are scared of black people who are equal to them. ... I don't hate white people. I don't have to explain myself to anyone. I just love black people (clapping and whistling). (ZithiniVele SA 2018)

During the 2019 general election season Malema functioned under the auspices of a modern interpretation of the South African philosophy of Ubuntu. This philosophy derives from "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu," which means "a person is a person through other persons" (Biney 2014), and is the traditional worldview of South Africans. Malema has reinterpreted Ubuntu to suit the modern-day obstacles that he and other Africans face while living in a hostile environment. However, he has not just shown concern for the well-being of his neighbors; rather, he wants to ensure that all South Africans live in equitable conditions. Further, his Pan-African rhetoric has traveled all throughout the world and has gained significant appeal. And the EFF's message will continue spreading around the world, because to be African American fighting for one's liberation is to understand the plight of the South African, and to be a South African fighting for one's liberation is to understand the plight of the African American, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-European, Zimbabwean, Nigerian, Rwandan, Ugandan, Ghanaian, and all other African people wherever they reside around the world.

Some people, especially conservatives, believe Malema is moving too fast, but Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. saw the situation of black liberation differently. King ([1963] 1986) spoke about why there was no reason to move slowly with the pace of black liberation: "We need a powerful sense of determination to banish the ugly blemish of racism We can, of course, try to temporize, negotiate small, inadequate changes and prolong the timetable of freedom in the hope that the narcotics of delay will dull the pain of progress." He continued, "We can try, but we shall certainly fail. It will not work because Negroes know they have the right to be free." King, nearly twenty years prior to Malema's birth, also explained why black people have a right to be loud, and perhaps angry:

Undeniably, the Negro had been an object of sympathy and wore the scars of deep grievances, but the nation had come to count on him as a creature who could quietly endure, silently suffer and patiently wait ... Just as lightning makes no sound until it strikes, the Negro revolution generated quietly. But when it struck the revealing flash of its power and the impact of its sincerity and fervor displayed a force of frightening intensity. Three hundred years of humiliation, abuse, and deprivation cannot be expected to find voice in a whisper. (King [1963] 1986)

The EFF believes that “the wind for political liberation in Africa blew from North to South, and the wind for economic emancipation should now blow from the South to the North” (Shivambu 2017, 74). Ultimately, this political party envisions “a coming revolution,” and it is one that will sprout from the new movement for African liberation. And EFF members will continue to pursue this goal without concern for the “bad manners” label, since living under a state of emergency for centuries does not call for niceties or as King said, a “whisper.”

African equality has been the underlying goal for our African activists, some of which include Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Mary McLeod Bethune, Marcus Garvey; as well as Marley, Makeba, and Masekela; Madikizela-Mandela, Mandela, Mashinini, Mahlangu, Mokaba, and now Malema. He has come onto the South African political scene like a bolt of lightning in the seemingly calm of the night; and the fresh salad dressing is now pouring out endlessly, as he has encouraged us all to become the gigantic ones, with our boots on and without fear. As Malema said, “We are not scared to die. How can we be scared of prison? How can we be scared of SARS [the South African Revenue Service]? How can we be scared of Pravin? We are not scared of anything. When we see injustice, we go after it” (Majiet 2019).

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Index

A

Abramjee, Yusuf 58

Activism and politics 3

Ad Hoc Committee 108

Africa

ageism 44

neo-colonialism 2

origin of humanity 201

tradition of respect 92–94

African Americans 3, 37, 63, 171, 201, 208

African Centre for Migration and
Society 140

African Christian Democratic Party 16

African context

of communalism 214

proverbs 160

African culture 92

black rhetorical humor 67

African currency 62

African dignity 39

African Independence Movements 3

African liberation

digital Pan-Africanism 3, 181

EFF 26, 38

fearlessness 38

Malema's rhetorical strategies and
themes 7, 145

new movement for 215–220

African middle class 132

African miners 35

African mistress 70

African mode of communication

call and response 161

African National Congress (ANC) 1

anti-apartheid organizations 17

decision appeal 89

democratic alliance (DA) 19–20

freedom fighters 17

history 17

liberation movement 82

Malema is the undisputed thorn

EFF and land redistribution 106–110

powerful generation 123

- rejection of apartheid
 - symbols 122–123
- silent coup in South Africa 101–106
- spear of the nation 110–113
- state capture under an ANC
 - government 113–122
- multiracial nature 17
- national liberation movement 16
- ruling party 16
- South Africa
 - political history 16
 - ruling party 2
- African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL) 79, 111, 141
- African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) 17, 41, 56–57, 105, 206
 - economic equality 19
 - South African youth 19
- African politicians 136
- African supporters
 - of white monopoly capitalism 207
- African Union
 - Pan-African Parliament* 43
- African women 41
- African youth 215
 - See also* Young Africans
 - hybrid identities 42
 - Youth Day* 144
- Africans
 - annual household income 138
 - black, defined 136
 - concept of Nommo 5
 - cultural context 89
 - economic situation 135
 - equality 215, 220
 - equitable access to the country's
 - resources 27
 - ethnic groups 68, 140
 - folktales 68, 155
 - liberation 3, 7, 17, 23, 26, 38, 216, 218, 220
 - new movement for 215–220
 - lifestyle 134
 - light and dark complexion 209
 - oral traditions, Nommo 75
 - philosophical tradition, Nommo 75
 - rent-a-blacks 1
 - rhetorical traditions 68, 75, 172
 - sellouts 1
 - sexual relations with a white person 143
- AfriForum 89
- Afrikaner National Party 19, 142
- Afro-Caribbean community 59
- Ageism 44–45
- America
 - black people 35
 - social justice movement 34
- Amnesty International (2017) 34
- ANC *See* African National Congress (ANC)
- ANC government
 - state capture under 113–114
 - arms deal corruption case 116–117
 - Gupta scandal 114–116
 - Jonas scandal 119
 - Nkandla scandal 117–119
 - VBS scandal 119–121
 - Zuma's resignation 121–122
- ANC members
 - lazy thinkers 164
- Angelou, Maya 212
- Angry black man 207
- Anne, Kansiime
 - Africa's Queen of Comedy 64
- Anti-Apartheid Movement 3
- Anti-colonialism 22
- Anti-corruption 102
- Anti-pass Campaign protest 18
- Apartheid 79
 - legacy of 138–139, 162–163
 - rejection of symbols 122–123
- Apartheid-celebrating anthem 122
- Aristotle 171–173
- Arm movements 14
- Artscrapping (2019) 188
- Audience reaction to Malema's rhetoric
 - ANC, corrupt sellout party 188–189
 - black savior 182–184
 - charismatic leadership 185–187
 - land expropriation 189–190

Malema, Africa's president 184–185
 negative comments 181
 voting for the EFF 187–188
 white-on-black antagonism 190–193

B

Back burner
 land redistribution 137
 Bauer, Martin 180
 Berlin Conference of 1884
Scramble for Africa 17
 Bethune, Mary McLeod 220
*Bicentennial N*gger* 65
 Biquelet, Aude 180
 Biko, Steven 26, 129, 146, 201
 Black Americans 37
 Black ANC government 136
 Black audience 68
 Black comedy scene 64
 Black communities 36, 64
 Black Consciousness Movement 17, 142
 Black diamonds
 cognitive dissonance 132–137
 defined 129
 legacy of apartheid 138–139
 rabbit hole 145–146
 remembering Sankofa 141–144
 xenophobia and poverty 139–141
 Black Economic Empowerment
 (BEE) 106, 206
 affirmative action programs 136
 Black imagination and innovation 36
 Black joy 4, 36, 62
 Black leaders 2, 132
 Black liberation 3
 Black Lives Matter (BLM) 3, 34, 35
 white supremacy 36
 Black Lives Matter Global Network
 Foundation, Inc., 35
 #BlackLivesMatter protest 4
 Black man 70
 Black middle class 129–130, 132
 Black nation 15

Black newspaper 144
Black Panther 37, 38, 79
 Black people 2, 168
 black rhetorical humor 66
 sense of humor 62
 as subhuman 86
 Black Power Movement 3
 Black Rhetoric 4, 155, 171, 173, 214
 Black rhetorical comedy
 racial tension 65
 Black rhetorical humor 62–67, 64
the dozens 70
Black Skin 22
 Blackson, Michael
 African King of Comedy 65–66
 power of imagination 66
 Black South Africans 16, 19, 129, 137
 Black-white income gap 63
 Blacks, Stay Woke 188
 BLM *See* Black Lives Matter (BLM)
 #BLM10, 36
BLM Grassroots 36
BLM Political Action Committee 36
 BLM protestors 38
Bloomberg News 129
 Bois, Du
 double consciousness concept 5
 Bolt, Usain 14
 Borgen, Magazine
 nonprofit organization 20
 Bosch, Tanja 42
 Boseman, Chadwick 37
 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)
 journalist tries on Malema 56–59
 Broadcasting Complaints Commission of
 South Africa (BCCSA) 67
 Brown, Tera 37
 Buhari, Muhammadu 45
 Burghardt, William Edward 5

C

Calling out, defined 167
 Campbell, J. 77

Capitalism 38, 82
 Carrim, Yunus 45
 Cavey Dak 192
 Chappelle, Dave 63–64
 #CharlestonShooting 35
 Chihombori-Quao, Arikana 208
 Chronic poverty 2
Citizen Surveys (2018) 22, 60
Civil Rights Act of 1964 205
 Civil Rights Movement 3, 211
 Classic African trickster narratives 68
 Clicks Group Limited
 advertisement 39
 Africans' natural hair texture 39
 hand sanitizer & sanitary pads for
 women 41–42
 pharmaceutical university
 scholarships 41
 #ClicksMustFall 4, 42
 Colonialism 21, 22, 64, 162
 Colonial masters 172
 Colonized African countries
 racism 208
 Coloureds 17, 136, 138
 Comedians
 race relations 63
 Comedy
 disciplining by laughter 61
 Commenters
 high-ranking positions for Malema 184
 ruling ANC 188
Communication, Culture, and Media Studies 3
 Companies
 blacks in high positions 136
 Congress of South African Students
 (COSAS) 81
 Con man 1
 Constitutional democracy 87
 Constitutional *vs.* shadow states 102
 Constitution of the Republic of South
 Africa 5
 Corruption
 in South African politics 165–166
 COVID-19
 impacts 212

 infection rates worldwide 37
 lockdown restrictions 39
 Crawford III, John 64
 Critical race humor 65
 Cullors, Patrisse 35

D

DA *See* Democratic Alliance (DA)
Daily Maverick 14
 Deden, Chake 191
 de Klerk, F. W. (Frederik Willem) 83
 apartheid, not a crime against
 humanity 86
 complaint against Malema 88
 EFF's attack on 85
 Nobel Peace Prize 86
 2020 SONA 84
 Democracy 83, 85
 Democratic Alliance (DA) 4, 15, 19–20, 41,
 90, 107
Democratic Party 19
 Democratic Republic of Congo 26
 Die Stem Anthem 122
 Digital Pan-Africanism 3, 6, 7, 216
 Disruptive performance approach 212
 Dlamini, Marshall 36
Dolemite 67
 Domestic political party 33
 Dubula iBhunu 15, 88

E

Ebonics/black vernacular 67
 Economic and racial inequality 136
 Economic disparities
 between black and white people 208
 Economic empowerment 3
 Economic freedom fighters (EFF) 43–44
 activism, politics, social media 3
 anti-corruption 102
 Black Joy 24
 black liberation 3

#BlackLivesMatter protest 4
 calling out racism 167
 central command team 21
 #ClicksMustFall Protests 4
 protested against the H&M 42
 South African retailer 39
 deplorable and disgusting 84
 economic freedom 21
 election campaign 14
 ethos 24–26
 favorability score 14
 Founding Manifesto 21
 international movement of young
 people 34
 intimidation of innocent bystanders 87
 land expropriation 169–171, 189–190
 Malema, Julius 26–27
 marketing coverage 179
 Marxist-Leninist-Fanonian
 objective 21–22
 #MustFall protests 4
 “Our land and jobs now” 106
 people’s Bae, member of Parliament 56
 political style of populism 212
 politics with protest 33
Power and Privileges of Parliament
 committee 86
 protest movement 4, 34
 protest orientation 4
 quality and free education to students 43
 radicalism 21
 role in ANC’s side 5
 social media 46
 South African youth 3
 South Africa’s leading political
 parties 15–16, 20–23
 ANC 16–19
 democratic alliance 19–20
 state employees and private sector 104
 Swearing-In Ceremony 24–26
 2019 South African general election
 season 14, 179
 visual display of the rhetoric of
 oppression 153
 xenophobic attacks 140

YouTube 55
 Educated black people
 BEE affirmative action programs 136
 Educational sector
 racial inequity 169
 EFF *See* Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)
 #EFFBLM Protest in South Africa
 anti-racism campaign 36
 black imagination and innovation 36
 black lives matter (BLM) 35–36, 38
 international movement 36
 racial disparities and life expectancy 37
 struggle for black rights 36
 turmoil 36
 EFF Students Command (EFFSC) 24
 EFF supporters 38, 80
 Electoral Commission of South Africa
 (2019) 16, 214
*Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in
 Africa* (EISA) 92
 El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz 69
 Eli Life (2019) 184
Embassy of the United States of America 36
 Emoticons/emotional icon symbols 182
 eNCA *See* eNews Channel Africa (eNCA)
 eNews Channel Africa (eNCA) 25
 Equality 71
 Escalation/confrontation 174
Essenseb Oil (2019) 187
 European
 hegemony 3
 invaders 16
 treatment of Africans 88
 Eyewitness News 2015 77
 Eyewitness News 2020 86

F

Fairbanks, Eve 136
 Fakir, Ebrahim 92
 Fanon, Frantz 22, 33, 59, 208
Federal Alliance 19
 Federation of South African Women 141
 #FeesMustFall activists 4, 24

#FeesMustFall movement 42
Fifteenth Amendment of 1870 205
 Fishah, Dawe 193
 Fisher, Jonah 57
 psychological assessments 59
 writing and introspection 59
 Floyd, George 36–37, 63–64, 211
Focal Points and Newsclip 110
 Food security or agricultural
 production 107
Forbes 26, 132
Foreign Policy 76
 Foreign policy thinks tanks 76
Fourteenth Amendment of 1868 205
 Frazier, Darnella 37
 Freedom and democracy 83
 Freedom fighters 112
 See also Economic Freedom
 Fighters (EFF)
 Freedom Front Plus (FF+) 16, 19, 88

G

Gandbi and Guerrilla 173–174
 Garner, Eric 37, 64
 Garvey, Marcus 62, 220
 Garza, Alicia 35
 Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. 4, 67, 154
 Gates theory 68
 Geopolitics 43
 Georgiadis, Elita 83
 Global North 2
 Godchild 184
 Gode, Mapin 192
 Gola, Loyiso 64–65
 Golden, Jack 39
 Gordhan, Pravin 164, 168
 Gordon, Dexter B. 214
 Government corruption 168
 Gregory, Dick 64
 #GrowSA 82
 Gumede, William 213
 Gupta-Zuma family network 114

H

Hanes, Stephanie 78–79
 Hashtag #LAmVotingEFF
 economic freedom fighters
 Malema, Julius 26–27
 South Africa's leading political
 parties 15–23
 swearing-in ceremony 24–26
 social media, protests, and the EFF
 movement
 #EFFBLM protest in South
 Africa 35–39
 EFF's #ClicksMustFall
 Protests 39–42
 #MustFall Movement 42–45
 politics and social media in South
 Africa 45–47
 Herskovitz, Jon 116
 Human race 202
 Humanity, crime against 83, 86
 Humor 61
 black people
 rich culture 67
 unique social experiences 67
 black rhetorical humor 62–67
 critical race humor 65
 racism 63
 Hybrid youth
 disempowerment and local exclusion 42
 global discussions on democracy and
 development 42

I

#ICantBreathe 37
 Illegal rent seeking 102
 Imperialism 21, 22, 82
 Indians 17, 136
 hate speech about 90
 Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 143
 Inkatha Freedom Party 16
Institute for Global Dialogue 76

Institutionalized racism 169, 211
 Intelligence Committee 159
 Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016 45
 Israel, Lake 183
 Iwilade, Akin 42

J

Janheinz, Jahn
Muntu: African Culture and the Western World 75
 Joel, Kago 184, 188
 Johannesburg Metro Police Department 39
 Joint Constitutional Review Committee
 (Joint CRC) 108
 Jonas, Mcebisi 102, 119
 Jordan, Michael B. 38
 Joubert, Jan-Jan 14
*Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations
 of State Capture* 5
 #JusticeForMarikana 35

K

Kabila, Joseph 26
Keeping up with the Achis (2019) 181
 Khan IV, Aga 58
 Khawula, Makoti Sibongile 25
 Khosa, Collins 38
 Killmonger, Erik 38
 King, Dr. Martin Luther, Jr. 69, 202, 219
 Korad, Yaya 184
 Kreutzer, Tino 46
 Kristof, Nicholas 63

L

Land expropriation 154, 169–171, 181,
 189–190
 Land redistribution
 EFF and ANC 106–110

Legacy of apartheid 138–139, 162–163
 Lenin, Vladimir 13
 imperialism theory 22
 Liberation 3, 7, 17, 23, 26, 38, 216, 218, 220
 new movement for 215–220
 of working-class people 154
 Lockdown restrictions during
 COVID-19 39
 Lonmin company 34
 Low-income Africans 141
 Low-wage industries 162

M

Mabuza, David 23
 Madikizela-Mandela, Winnie 23, 78–82
 Madlingozi, Brian Sindile 25
 Madonsela, Thuli 102
 Maimane, Mmusi 19
 Majola, Bongani 89
 “Make Afrika Great” channel 61
 Makhubu, Mbuyisa 144
 Malcolm X 69–70
 fiery rhetoric of urgency 205
 Malema, Florah Mahlodi 26
 Malema, Julius Sello 1–2
 African communication style 154, 171
 African folklore 217
 African liberation 216
 African rhetorical tradition 7, 172
 Africans and humor 71
The Africa Report 26
 ageism 44
 ANC 19
 anti-racism campaign 36
 BBC journalist 56–59
 black diamonds 130
 black people’s praise to 181
 black rhetorical humor 62–67
 black rhetoric’s master trope 67–71
 Boers 26
 Boipatong Massacre of 1992 83
 champion of the poor 26

- charismatic leadership
 - the comedian 186–187
 - great oratory 185–186
 - inspirer 187
- codes and themes 154
- colonial legacies 76
- commenters
 - religious allusions or direct references 183
- criminal charges and prison time 89
- digital audience
 - reaction *See* Audience reaction
 - YouTube rhetoric *See* YouTube
 - rhetorical analysis
- Dubula iBhunu 88
- educational portfolio 26–27
- equality 154
 - for Africans 212
- fueling tension
 - ANC and ANCYL 20
- hate speech about Indians 90
- “hate speech” complaints 87
- humorous disposition 4–5
- ideological break from Mandela (and ANC policies) 206–209
- income disparities between racial groups 168
- inspiring, African-centered message of unity 163
- international movement of young people 34
- land ownership
 - respect from the white people 170
- leadership 116, 212
- National Assembly 157
- new movement for African liberation 215–220
- no scare of anyone or anything 26
- Noah, Trevor (features) 59–61
- personality politics 13
- political provocateur 14
- politico-tainment/poli-tainment 55
- politics & superior logic 59
- power of imagination 66
- power relationships
 - between black and white people 218
- press conference 60
- proverbs 160–161
- questions blond wigs 61–62
- racial categorization 76
- racial inequity
 - educational sector 169
- racism 168
- rhetorical style 5, 212–215
- rhetoric in the South African sociopolitical context 4
- rhetoric of agitation and control 173–174
- rhetoric stings
 - Africa’s tradition of respect 92–94
 - EFF and State of the Nation Address 82–87
 - hate speech or freedom of speech 87–92
 - Mandela, Winnie (funeral service) 77–82
- rhetoric with audible expressions 162
- social media 216
 - and youth 215–220
- South African’s dignity 27
- South African economy 13–14
- speeches and audience interactions 161
- strategic board reception position 139
- thematic analysis 6
- Twitter 46
- 2016 Election Manifesto 15
- 2019 Election Manifesto speech 27
- 2019 SONA State of the Nation Address Debate 55
- 2019 South African general election 3–4, 6
- undisputed thorn in the ANC’s side
 - EFF and land redistribution 106–110
 - powerful generation 123
 - rejection of apartheid symbols 122–123
 - silent coup in South Africa 101–106
 - spear of the nation 110–113
 - state capture under an ANC government 113–122

verbal wrath 157
 vocal concerning the injustice 35
 war for economic freedom 158
 youth involvement in politics 43
 YouTube rhetoric 3–4, 6, 25, 55–56
 reaction with Fisher 58
 Malema, Koko Sarah 26
 #MalemaReturnsToANC 23
 Mama Wetu/Mother of the Nation/
 Mama Winnie *See* Madikizela-
 Mandela, Winnie
 Mandela, Nelson 1, 17, 26, 43, 77–78
 post-apartheid approach of
 reconciliation 206
 Tutu's concept 77
 Mandela United Football Club (TRC
 1998) 79
 Mandela, Winnie 77, 101
 funeral service 77–82
 Mandela, Zindzi 85
 Mandikizela-Mandela, Winnie 26
 Manuel, Trevor 105
 Maq, Lund 193
 Marikana Massacre 34, 35, 43, 137
 Marowa, Ivan 188
 Martin, Trayvon 36
 Marxism-Leninism political movement 22
 Mashaba, Herman 19
 Matlala, Mantwa 26
 Mbete, Sithembile 213, 214–215
 Mbombo, Zukiswa 35
 Mdyogolo, Joonji 14
 Mema, Gottie 190
 Members of Parliament (MPs) 4
 Memmi, Albert 208
 Mente, Veronica 41
 Miners
 black and white headshots 35
 Minister of Public Enterprises 84
 Moffitt, Benjamin
 political style concept 213
 Mogoeng 25
 Mokaba, Peter 88

Montsha, Nomsa 38
 Moore, Rudy Ray
 signifying monkey 67–68
 Morake, Tumi 66
 Motsepe, Patrice 71
 Mugabe, Robert 87
 #MustFall Movement 42–45
 #MustFall protests 4

N

Nad, Donn 190
 National Assembly 16, 24, 56, 83, 85,
 90, 189
 National Association for the Advancement
 of Colored People (NAACP) 188
 National Freedom Party 107
 National liberation movement 16
 National Prosecution Authority
 (NPA) 102–103
 National Union of Mineworkers
 (NUM) 34–35, 137
 Natives Act of 1952 143
 Ndlozi, Mbuyiseni 24, 43, 56, 80
 Negritude Movement 3
 Neil, Sarah 193
 Neo-apartheid 59, 203
 Neo-colonialism 59, 203, 216
 Neo-imperialism 59, 203
 Neo-slavery 59, 203
 Nerney, Mary Childs 188
New National Party 19
 News organizations 76
 Newton, Huey P. 79
Nick Cannon Presents: Wild'n Out 70
Nineteen Amendment of 1920 205
 Nobel Peace Prize 69
 Nommo 75
 Non-racial democracy 162
 Nontsikelelo, Gwendolyn 144
 Non-violent resistance 174
 Nyhontso, Mzwanele 18

O

- Okum, Joel 183
- 1913 Native Lands Act 110
- 1929 Fats Waller 33
- Oppenheimer, Nicholas 165
- Oppenheimer, Sir Ernest
 - king of diamonds/prime minister of gold 165

P

- Pan-Africanism 3, 6, 7, 216
- Pan Africanist Congress of Azania 17, 143
 - freedom fighters 17–18
 - Poqo 18
 - protests and boycotts 18
- Pan South African Language Board* 110
- Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2020 83
- Patrick Loch Otieno (PLO) 184
- #PayBackTheMoney 118
- Petition 174
- Pew Research Center 14
- Phuti Peter Keetse 24
- Pieterse, Hector 144, 210
- Polarization 174
- Police killings 34
- Political liberation 220
- Political magazines 76
- Political prisoners 18
- Political style of populism 212
- Political thuggery 41
- Poplak, Richard 15
- Population Registration Act of 1950 142, 143
- Populism
 - bad manners 214
 - defined 212–213
- Poqo freedom fighters 18
- Postcolonial disaster 1
- Poverty
 - xenophobia and 139–141

- Progressive Party* 19
- Promulgation 174
- Prosecution authorities 166
- Protesters
 - union organization 34
- Protesting miners 34
- Pryor, Richard 65
 - parrhesia* 65
- #PutSouthAfricaFirst 38

R

- Race gap on wealth
 - median white and black family 63
- Racial inequity
 - educational sector 169
- Racial injustice 64
- Racial outbursts 87
- Racism 21, 38, 169, 202, 204
 - and discrimination 6
- Racist advertisement 40
- Radical/ultra-left politics 71
- Rael, Vel 190
- Rainbow nation concept 93
- Ramaphosa, Cyril 1, 19, 23, 76, 83, 105, 121, 140, 156, 157, 206
 - CR17 167
- Ramsunder, Vikesh 41
- #RememberMarikana 35
- Ren, Freddy 192
- Republic of South Africa 13
- Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 143
- Review Five* (2019) 182
- Rhetorical analysis, defined 171
- Rhetorical criticism 171
- Rhetorical theory 171
- Rhetoric of agitation and control 173–174
 - concepts of 174
- #RhodesMustFall movement 42
- Robae, Jaime 184
- Rossing, Jonathan 65
 - critical race humor theory 4

Rupert, Johann 92, 165, 169
 Rural guerilla warfare 18

S

SABC Digital News 180
 Sankofa 141–144
 Scannell, Jan 122
 Seale, Bobby 79
 Sesanti, Simphiwe 92
 702 blacks 5, 135, 136
 Sexism 21
 Shaf, Kameh 179
 Sharecropping 203
 Shivambu, Floyd 13, 19, 40
 Sian, Medi 193
 Simpson, John 135
 Sisulu, Albertina 141
 Smitherman, Geneva 69, 155
 Sobukwe, Robert 17, 143
 Social and economic revolution 21
 Social inequality 136
 Social media 215–220
 #ClicksMustFall 39
 digital symbols, emojis and
 emoticons 182
 miners 35
 #ThankYouEFF 42
 Social networking service (SNS) 179
 Solicitation 174
 #SONA2020 82
 South Africa
 African Rainbow Minerals 71
 black diamonds 5–6
 black middle class 129–130, 132
 *Broad-Based Black Economic
 Empowerment Act of 2003* 76
 Citizen Surveys (2018) 22
 constitutional democracy 87
 controversial politicians 2
 democracy 83
 Department of Rural Development and
 Land Reform (2017) 109

economic and natural resources 20
 economy 2
 educational programs 169
 #EFFBLM Protest
 anti-racism campaign 36
 Black imagination and innovation 36
 black lives matter (BLM) 35–36, 38
 international movement 36
 racial disparities and life
 expectancy 37
 struggle for black rights 36
 turmoil 36
Eyewitness News 25
 Freedom Charter 17
 inequity 2
 leading political parties 15–16, 20–23
 ANC 16–19
 democratic alliance 19–20
 liberation 19
 National Anthem 122
 non-racial democracy 162
 police killings, deadliest incident 34
 political scene 1
 population of 138
 racial hierarchy 138
 racial income disparity 138
 rejection of apartheid symbols 122–123
 social engineering program
 racial differences 142
 State Capacity Research Project
 (SCRIP) 101–102
 Truth and Reconciliation
 Commission 93
 white and black people 77
Youth Day 90, 144
 South African Comedian Coconut Kelz 5
 South African Constitution 109
 South African Council of Churches
 (SACC) 86
 South African democratic election 131
 South African democratic government 76
 South African economy 13–14
 South African Human Rights Commission
 (SAHRC) 87

“hate speech” complaints 87
 proceedings in Equality Court 87
 South African leaders
 social harmony 93
South African National Anthem 83
 South African National Defense Force (SANDF) 39
 South African Native National Congress 110
South African Party 19
 South African political organization 4
 South African politics 4, 154, 206
 corruption in 165–166
 South African protests 4
 South African Revenue Service (SARS) 207
 Commission of Inquiry 162
 South African Students Movement 142
 South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission 77
 South African youth
 #MustFall movement 42
 voting 34
 South Africans
 black middle class 141
 black philosophical system
 communitarianism 137
 deaths of African men 38
 full menu of rights 139
 legacy of apartheid 138–139
 protest against passes 143
 unabashed, media-supported, capitalist-consumerist rabbit hole 145
South Africa’s State Capacity Research Project 5
 Southern African Development Community (SADC) 23
 Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) 142
State Capacity Research Project report (2017) 102, 106
 State capture 101
 under an ANC government 113–114
 arms deal corruption case 116–117
 Gupta scandal 114–116

 Jonas scandal 119
 Nkandla scandal 117–119
 VBS scandal 119–121
 Zuma’s resignation 121–122
 white monopoly capital and 166–167
 State of the Nation Address (SONA) 82, 114, 157
 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) 102, 114
 Statistics South Africa 19, 27, 135
 Steinberg, J. 2
 Suerdem, Ahmet K. 180
 Suzman, Helen
 white anti-apartheid activist 19

T

Tambo, Oliver 26
 Tax collection service 166
 TecTecInc (2019) 188
 Textual analysis 180
 Thames, Amos 202
 Thames, Jack 202
The Africa Report 13
The Clansman 188
The Coming Revolution 105, 141
The Guardian 2
The New York Times 63, 131, 208
 The End of the Rainbow Nation
 Myth 76
 The Rainbow Myth: Dreaming of a Post-Racial South African Society 76
The Rainbow People of God 77
 The signifying monkey theory 4, 154
The South African 14
The World 144
The Wretched of the Earth 22
Thirteenth Amendment of 1865 205
 Thompson, Robert 172
 Tlhabi, Lesego 135
 Tormey, Simon
 political style concept 213
 Transatlantic Slave Trade 70
 Trickster 1

TRT World 88
 Truth and Reconciliation Commission
 (TRC) 18, 77, 79, 82, 93, 136
 Tsenoli, Lechesa 160
 #TulsaRaceMassacre 35
 Tutu, Desmond 77
 income wealth tax 139
 2014 South African general election 213
 2019 Election Manifesto 139
 2019 South African general election 3–6,
 14, 26, 71, 76, 82, 87, 94, 171, 212,
 216, 218
 National Assembly 18
 political parties 15

U

Ubuntu
 humanitarian concepts 93
 Unilever
 hand sanitizer and sanitary towels 42
 Union of South Africa 17
 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
 (USSR) 21–22
 United Democratic Front (UDF) 81
 United Democratic Movement 16
 United Nations (UN)
 Africa Renewal 129
 *International Convention on the
 Suppression and Punishment of the
 Crime of Apartheid* (1976) 84
 United Party 19
 United South African National Party 19
 U.S. Congress
 first black woman 36
 U.S. Consulate General 36

V

VBS (Venda Building Society) 119–121
 Venda Building Society (VBS) 119–121
 Verwoerd, Wilhelm 66

W

White Americans 63, 209
 White and black dichotomy 202
 White capital 132
 White community
 New Lenox 204
 White hegemony
 black liberation struggle 5
White Masks 22
 White men 70
 White monopoly capitalism 4, 26, 94,
 166–167
 and state capture 154
 South African entrepreneurial
 environment 166
 White-on-black antagonism 6, 181,
 190–193
 White people 13, 40, 65
 apartheid and bullying 67
 highest paid positions 138
 White police officers 35, 37
 White rights political party 19
 White supremacists 71
 White woman 5, 91
 “Willing-seller, willing-buyer” program 109
 #WilmingtonCoup 35
 Women
 communal toilets 135
 Working-class Africans 132
 World Bank 2, 207

X

Xenophobia and poverty 139–141

Y

Young Africans
 activists 3
 participation in politics 43
 Young people 215–220

global protest movement 34
 international protest movement 4
 social media 3
Youth Day 144
 YouTube
 antagonisms between white and black
 people 190
 Black Diaspora 184
 commenters 181
 rhetorical analysis on Malema, Julius
 Aristotle 171–173
 black rhetoric 154–162
 calling out racism 167–169
 cleverness and African unity 163–165
 corruption in South African
 politics 165–166
 crushing white monopoly capital and
 state capture 166–167

fighting for land
 expropriation 169–171
 legacy of apartheid 162–163
 rhetorical theory 171
 rhetoric of agitation and
 control 173–174

Z

Zee, Martin 192
 Zizek, Slavoj 136
 Zulu, Shaka 141
 Zuma, Edward 140
 Zuma, Jacob 1, 5, 15, 80, 91, 113, 157
 arms deal corruption charges 116–117
 resignation 121–122
 #ZumaMustFall movement 42