

Governance of the party, state and society triad in a democratic South Africa

J P Tsheola

University of Limpopo
South Africa

ABSTRACT

This article asserts that the concept of governance is inherently complex, and its practice elusive, for both developing and developed countries alike. Whereas democratisation experiments enforced a shift from government to governance due to recognition of the multiplicity of actors, the move was simultaneously undergirded by configuration of power relations and authority that legitimised informalisation. The latter meant that formal constitutional and statutory institutional frameworks of governance would be overcompensated by complex informal networks that shaped the party-state-society interactionism in favour of distributive regimes and patronage. For former colonies that experienced extended periods of liberation struggles, democratisation and liberationist-democratic experimentation were exploited to legitimise infusion of informal governance for the governing party, state and society triad in favour of the elite and private commercial interests. A democratic South Africa involves a society that is dominated by self-entitlement psychology wherein actors have astronomically secured exponential regulatory, decisional and discursive powers over the state itself, with the result that the claims of state capture have come to dominate headlines over twenty years after democratisation. This article concludes that the current public contestations in a democratic South Africa about President Zuma, Constitutional Court Ruling on the Public Protector's Nkandla findings, the recklessness of the resources-squandering State-owned Enterprises, the executive's encroachment into and abuse of apparatus of state for political ends, ill-discipline in the governing party and so on, are symptomatic of a steeply informalised governance that operates through complex networks, largely beyond the reproach of formal constitutional and statutory institutional frameworks.

INTRODUCTION

Decolonisation of Africa has historically been afflicted by destructive agitations and



formations. With the global shift from government to governance mode, decolonising Africa through the demand for democratic dispensation meant that regimes embarked on *liberal-democratic experiments* that would ultimately be besieged by disguises of political aspersions coupled by governance challenges. The latter apparently condemned Africa to external extraversion and subjugation to capital, largely due to the complexity of governance that straddles formal and informal processes (Buscher & Dietz 2005; Thondhlana, Shackleton & Blynnaut 2015; Tsheola & Nembambula 2015). However, Kaufmann, Kraay & Mastruzzi (2009, 2010) have shown that governance virtues are not a preserve of developed countries and that some developing nations have outperformed the former. Given the predominance of patrimonialism in post-colonial Africa, though, constructions of governance of the party-state-society interactionism could assume a deliberate preference for informality that serves distributive regimes and patronage on behalf of the elite and private commercial interests.

Governance, especially interactions of the party-state-society triad, has bedevilled South Africa's democratisation and development in a variety of specific ways. This article demonstrates that South Africa's current and ongoing development challenges, inclusive of economic, social, political and physical infrastructure, are vested in the dearth of formal governance that could give pragmatic effect to the myriad of planning. Hence, in recent times the state moved to remodel the 2012 *National Development Plan Vision 2030*, which is yet to be fully implemented, in order to situate it in ways that do not derail the informalisation of governance for state and party patronage and distributive regimes.

GOVERNANCE COMPLEXITIES: FORMALITY VERSUS INFORMALITY

The concept and practice of governance are deeply complex, especially in their contexts of power relations, interactions of actors, access to decision-making, planning and control over public institutions. To this extent, it should be evident that there are diverse definitions of the concept of governance. According to Rosenau (2001:1 cited in Buscher & Dietz 2005:4), governance "consists of rule systems, of steering mechanisms through which authority is exercised in order to enable the governed to preserve their coherence and move towards desired goals". Defined as the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised, governance should include political, economic and institutional dimensions (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). To be precise, governance should refer to how governments are selected, monitored and replaced, as well as their capacity to effectively formulate and implement sound policies and provide public services, and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that control economic and social interactions among them (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). In this context, governance of the party, state and society interactionism is of primate significance in gaining insight into the linkages with planning, modernisation, development and inequality of actors in a nation-state such as South Africa.

Therefore, rigorous analyses of governance should reveal that this concept and practice need to "reflect and be understood within the broader background of complex local realities" and global dynamics (Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:121). According to Givens (2013:1029), "governance capacities as typically envisioned are inherently latent—one cannot

observe them directly". Additionally, Givens (2013) further stated that governance capacities involve intangibles such as *social infrastructure, protection against expropriation and institutions*. Givens (2013:1029) notes that "To measure such concepts, one needs to infer the general from the particular—to translate observable attributes like the frequency with which contracts are enforced or the speed at which one can obtain a building permit into more fundamental qualities, like market infrastructure". However, the informality of governance would remain unattended in such measurements, rendering analyses incomplete. Whereas specificity is crucial, the complexity of governance entails "synthesising multiple related concepts and multiple points of view", especially as individual variables tend to have "a lot in common" (Givens 2013:1029). The Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGIs) itself provides latent variables (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). For over a decade, the WGIs have enabled proliferation of evidence and empirical measures of institutional quality, governance and investment climate, which has fostered debate and discussion, helped monitoring of performance, and raised awareness about power relations in interactionism and societal development (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). However, the concept and practice of governance is complex and clouded with multiple dimensions, aspects, categories, principles, modes and indicators, among other things (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013).

Principles of Governance

One of the fundamental principles of governance is *common prosperity* which entails that the society must share the "fruits of development in a fair way" (Jinping 2014: 14); and the South African society is deeply unequal. The latter leads to the other important attributes of governance that invoke social harmony, whose preconditions are common prosperity and societal perception thereof. To this extent, governance integrates the "national and local democratic systems" (Jinping 2014:10) with the party leadership, societal activism in public affairs and the law-based government and state apparatus. Therefore, the overall plan of governance should enforce the pursuit of "coordinated development in all areas of ... modernisation drive, and promote harmony between the relationships of production and the productive forces, and between the superstructure and the economic base" (Jinping 2014:12).

South Africa is a deeply divided society, hence violence and crime are unleashed among the populace itself. Governance entails interplay of institutions and actors in decision-making; and, local institutions are designed to provide for "more effective decision-making in the management of and access" (Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:121) to infrastructure resources and services. That is, governance equally involves mediation of "participation in decision-making, information dissemination, transparency, trust and accountability, power relations, divergent interests and unequal access" to resources (Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:121). In crafting governance institutions, it is important to ensure inclusivity of multiple actors and local institutions that allow for public participation in decision-making as well as access to infrastructure and resources. Local institutions need to be effective in encouraging participatory public discourses that ensure "transparency, legitimacy, social justice, building trust and distributing costs and risks more equitably among actors" for democratic governance (Coe 2013; Cundill *et al.* 2013; Mwakaje *et al.* 2013 cited in Thondhlana *et al.* 2015: 121).



Collectively, common prosperity and social harmony constitute another fundamental attribute of governance, which is peaceful development. The latter is an *inevitable prerequisite* (Jinping 2014:14) of progressive governance itself because it infuses activism among the citizenry on civic affairs through, among other things, openness, transparency, cooperation, commonality of interest and shared progress. In leadership, therefore, a governing party has to create these conditions in order that society may experience happiness, stability, legality, order and peaceful life. An environment that consists of these prerequisites is decisive in providing enablers for performance of “productive forces and relations of production, the economic base and superstructure” (Jinping 2014:15) as well as peaceable party, state and society triad interactionism. A society in such conditions would be characterised by innovation and creation of knowledge, rather than inaccurate emulation and corruption. Such a society would have ensured that the modernisation project and state capitalism are steeply characterised by (South) Africanism and *Ubuntu* philosophy. Watson (2009:151) stresses the “dangers of ... inappropriate ‘borrowing’ of ideas across contexts”. Linked to inaccurate emulation is the observation that “Capacity to deliver is also dependent on a reasonably functioning economy and a sufficient flow of resources to implementing bodies” (Watson 2009:189). As a result, the subtext that public-private partnership presents a panacea for resources mobilisation and implementation of infrastructure plans has gained currency.

Dimensions of Governance and the Worldwide Governance Indicators

Whereas there is a variety of dimensions of governance, corresponding to the definition adopted in the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGIs), six are basic: voice and accountability; political stability and absence of violence; government effectiveness; regulatory quality; rule of law; and, control of corruption (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). The WGIs constitutes one of the largest compilations of cross-country data on governance (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). Voice and accountability refers to the extent to which a country’s citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, association, and the press (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). Political stability and absence of violence deal with the likelihood that the government will be de-stabilised by unconstitutional or violent means, including terrorism (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009). On its part, regulatory quality indicates the ability of government to provide sound policies and regulations that enable and promote private sector development (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). Kaufmann (2009) further suggests that the rule of law addresses the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, including the quality of property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the risk of crime (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). The significance of good governance for “investment, innovation and growth” has been stressed over centuries (Givens 2013:1026). Governance proxies have been used to forecast a country’s long-term economic performance; however, “a country’s governance is typically represented unidimensionally” (Givens 2013:1026). Therefore, Givens (2013:1026-1027) “constructs a multi-dimensional assessment of governance quality and estimates each dimension’s importance to long-run economic performance”. Governance has numerous dimensions; and, “Relying on a single, catch-all measure of governance quality makes it impossible to estimate the marginal economic contributions of different categories of

governance and may obscure a country's underlying strengths and weaknesses" (Givens 2013:1027). Indeed, countries can "excel in some governance areas (like regulation) even as they lag in others (like civil liberties)" (Givens 2013:1027). Hence, China may appear to be a paradoxical model of governance of the party-state-society triad (Jinping 2014). Givens (2013:1027) suggests that one solution "is to replace the catch-all measure with a vector of measures that each captures a different aspect of governance". Indeed, "many governance measures tend to be very highly correlated" (Givens 2013:1027). This observation is in accord with the decade-long works of the WGI (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010).

Governance, Power Relations and Multiplicity of Actors

Thondhlana *et al.* (2015:128) conclude that whereas institutional landscapes for governance are themselves complex with unequal power relations, the degree of their complexity is exacerbated by "the diversity of actors" with different and, sometimes, divergent and contradictory, interests. In case of settlements that promote the "principles of inclusivity, fairness and participation decisions, local institutions are more often than not restrictive and do not promote participation of all actors" (Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:128). It is in this context that the subject of governance is so topical during 2016 when South Africa conducts its local government elections. Whereas notions of elections may give an appearance of equality and credence to democratic constitutionalism, the party that controls the state continues to command "more power than the local community actors" (Davies & White 2012 cited in Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:128) because governance is value-laden. To this extent, the multiple actors in governance access power through their relationship with the governing party and state, both formally and informally.

Power relations are themselves multifaceted because there is no singularity of power (Buscher & Dietz 2005; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). According to Arts (2003 cited in Buscher & Dietz 2005:5), there are at least three faces of power in global governance: Decisional Power; Discursive Power; and, Regulatory Power (Buscher & Dietz 2005:5). Decisional Power involves "policy making and political influence"; Discursive Power refers "to the framing of discourses"; and, Regulatory Power relates "to rule-making and institution building" (Arts 2003:13 cited in Buscher & Dietz 2005:5). Whereas decisional power "relates to the ability to influence decisions that determine actions and outcomes in the public sphere", regulatory power involves "standard setting, whereby a standard is defined as an expertise-based voluntary rule on organizational regulations, structures and/or procedures" (Arts 2003:27 cited in Buscher & Dietz 2005:5). In the recent era, some wealthy non-state actors have used their human, financial and technical resources to establish "direct political access" to policy and decision-making. However, regulatory power of non-state actors is non-enforcing (Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). In fact, when non-state actors impose standards, non-compliance becomes virtually difficult even in the absence of state regulation (Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015).

Governance, rather than government, accommodates the multiplicity of actors with diversity of interests and inequities in power relations. Governance differ from government largely due to the former's placement of premium on collectivism, formal and informal as well as private and public, that steers "mechanisms to make demands, frame goals, issue directives, pursue policies and generate compliance" (Rosenau 2001:1 cited in Buscher &



Dietz 2005:4). Government, consisting of “formal systems of rule or steering mechanisms”, places the state as the central actor with paramount power and authority whereas governance involves a central stage that is occupied by a *plethora of actors* with diversity of alliances and varied degrees of power and authority (Buscher & Dietz 2005:4). Whereas the shift from government to governance implied consideration of multiple actors beyond the state, that transformation did not necessarily impose equitable power nor authority for all actors (Buscher & Dietz 2005; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). Instead, the shift meant that the role of state and its relations to party and society were altered.

Apparently, the ascendancy of forces of globalism, regionalism and localism precipitated the shift from government to governance, without necessarily obliterating the state. But the latter has tended to be increasingly unable to exercise strong unilateral governance due to the pressures exerted by both global and local actors, who are themselves intrinsically contradictory. As globalisation and localisation accelerated, political, economic, cultural and, in some cases, religious, boundaries became increasingly *virtual and permeable* with the result that multiple actors gained the “reach and capability ... to intervene in and to influence a wide range of processes all over the globe” (Buscher & Dietz 2005:5). In the past twenty years or so, coincident with South Africa’s democratisation, a multiplicity of global and local actors emerged and colluded, sometimes with the state, to paradoxically “rival the state’s centrality in governance” (Rosenau 1997 cited in Buscher & Dietz 2005:5). But the state has continued to be relevant in governance; and, a diversity of power, mediated formally and informally by the governing party through the state, has become diffusely spread among a range of actors (Buscher & Dietz 2005; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015).

Categories, Indices and Key Ingredients of Governance

There are categories and indices of governance; and, Givens (2013: 1026) identifies four such indices: market infrastructure; downside governance risk; order; and, civil liberties. Thus, aggregated governance measures tend to treat governance as a latent variable “reflected noisily through the observable data” (Givens 2013:1027). Thondhlana *et al.* (2015:121-122) identify five key ingredients of successful governance as inclusiveness, fairness, participation and legitimacy, transparency and accountability. Governance arrangements should, therefore, create the opportunity for all interested actors to participate and influence decision-making (Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:121). Violent protests in the context of having elected local government democratically could mean that there are limitations on the opportunities to influence decision-making. Also, governance has to ensure that “a bias-free decision-making process exists” in order that views of all actors may be respected and addressed (Thondhlana *et al.* 2015:121). That is, governance entails authentic participation of all actors, whose views are considered. Also, decision-making process should be *visible* with information being fully disseminated to all actors. Finally, governance arrangements should clearly show the responsibilities of different actors and demonstrate how decision makers would be held responsible to all actors.

Owing to the complexity of governance, the WGIs organised and synthesised data, reflecting on the reports and views of tens of thousands of stakeholders worldwide, including respondents to household and firm surveys and experts from nongovernmental organisations, public sector agencies, and providers of commercial business information (Kaufmann *et al.*

2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). One of the latest WGI is based on 35 different data sources from 33 organisations around the world, aggregating the data from hundreds of disaggregated questions, to cover 212 countries around the world (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens, 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). While the WGI indicates that many countries have made progress in governance and anti-corruption over the past decade, it also reveals that many states have failed to make such improvements, highlighting serious challenges that remain for rich and poor countries alike (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). In fact, not only did many countries exhibit negligible progress on governance over the past decade, some have regressed in some key dimensions (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). The WGI shows that current governance standards have plenty of room for improvement in many industrialised countries and emerging economies. (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). A democratic South Africa, notwithstanding the internationally acclaimed Constitution, Bill of Rights and Chapter 9 institutions, is not an exception to the norm. In the current environment, South Africa has appeared to drift from one governance abyss to another, as evidenced in the reality and/or perceptions of state capture, neo-patrimonialism, corruption of the elite, factionalism in the governing party, reverence for patronage and the convergence of private and public domains.

The WGI has produced invaluable findings and insights on governance across the spectrum of developed and developing nations, in a few domains. First, the WGI shows that good governance is a necessary fight against poverty and improvement of living standards (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013). There are multiple mechanisms through which capable public sector institutions, as well as an independent judiciary, property rights protection, civil liberties and press freedoms, and effective regulatory and anticorruption institutions result in sustained long-run development and poverty reduction (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). Advances in governance are readily achievable where there is political will to implement reform. Second, the results suggest that good governance is not the exclusive preserve of developed countries; indeed, some developing countries such as Botswana score better than most industrialised nations (Pitcher, Moran & Johnston 2009; Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). The largest and most powerful economies in the world, as represented in the G-20 for instance, do not tend to exhibit the best standards of governance around the world (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015). Third, the findings demonstrate that commitment to reforms is strongly and directly correlated with prospects for improvements in governance (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013). The WGI notes that countries that embark on reforms have equally made significant improvements in *Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Rule of Law*; and, *Control of Corruption* (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). Fourth, the WGI proves that significant improvements in governance are always a realistic possibility for any nation (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010). Finally, the WGI concedes that measuring governance is difficult, and that all measures thereof are necessarily imprecise, requiring interpretative caution (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Kaufmann *et al.* 2009, 2010; Givens 2013). A unique feature of the WGI is its transparent recognition of this imprecision, in the form of explicitly reported margins of error for all country scores that need to be considered when comparisons are made (Kaufmann



et al. 2009, 2010). The latter finding of the WGs is significant in the subject of this article because planning, which serves as a governance tool, is designed to mediate this imprecision in measurement. Yet, planning has itself remained deeply slippery for developing countries with the result that western designs are inaccurately emulated to the extent that failure of infrastructure implementation and resources wastage have become rife. Equally, the currency of public-private partnerships has not helped. To this extent, this article asserts that the key to success is in the formal governance of the governing party, state and society interactionism.

Party-State-Society Triad Governance

Notwithstanding potential for ideological paradoxes, there are invaluable lessons that South Africa's governing party could learn from the Chinese lessons about governance of the party, state and society triad. In a November 15, 2012 speech, Xi Jinping, at the 18th National Congress of the CPC Communist Party of China, advised that the party has to be dedicated to "serving the people" (Jinping 2014: 4). The primate principle is that the party should "supervise its own conduct and run itself with strict discipline, effectively solve major problems within the Party, improve its work style and maintain close ties with the people" (Jinping 2014:5). That is what the party has to do to "remain at the core of the leadership" (Jinping 2014:5) of advancing the national development agenda, as well as fighting poverty and corruption. If, as Jinping (2014:5) states, "the people's wish for good life" is the party's goal, people would become the real heroes and source of party strength in the persistent search for diligent collaboration and for the "public good and for the expectation of history and of the people". This advisory is pertinent to South African governing party's, ANC, search for answers in relation to the modes of relationships and interactionism of the party, state and society triad.

One of the multiple dimensions of governance is collective leadership because this phenomenon does consist of "path, theory and system" (Jinping 2014:9). The path provides the "the will to reach the goal, the theory offers a guide to action, and the system provides fundamental guarantees" (Jinping 2014:9). Governance has to synthesise "successful experience in practice into theories", use them "to guide new practices" whilst simultaneously incorporating "effective principles and policies" into party, state and national societal systems (Jinping 2014:9). As interactionism theory would posit, the specialness of governance is "in the intrinsic interaction between the way of realising the goal, guide to action and fundamental guarantee" (Jinping 2014:9). Modernisation project that delivers "a better life for all" would remain a pipedream if the governance path does not situate the central task of human development in the nexus of the multiplicity of actors for multifaceted progress and power relations, which involves the economic, political, cultural, social, ecological and such other forms. To draw from the Chinese model, a democratic South Africa's governing party should have asked what is the "banner of unity, endeavour and victory" that would ensure that there is full societal "confidence in the path, theory and system" (Jinping 2014:8, 9) of South Africa's state capitalism that creams public resources on behalf of the private financial interests largely through public-private partnerships, neopatrimonialism and state capture (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Tshombe & Molokwane 2016). Perhaps, the question is whether there is any South African state capitalism, neopatrimonialism or state capture? What makes state capitalism governance special to a democratic South Africa? The

framing of these governance questioning could easily be characterised as Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong; however, South Africa cannot merely hope for progressive outcomes of any sort of governance, especially those devoid of local geopolitical content. South Africa, notwithstanding its constitutional democracy and international acclaim, does not feature in the analyses of the WGI based on the six dimensions discussed in this article.

In a democratic South Africa, there appears to be an acute sense that *good governance* would potentially be destructive of the *systemic patronage* as well as the party and state encroachment, with the result that formal processes are consciously designed to enhance the power vested in informal interactionism. Hence, the ruling party instituted the *National Development Plan 2030* in order to, wittingly and/or unwittingly; craft a bias away from the formal to informal processes that safeguard systemic party and state patronage (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Givens 2013; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015, Tshombe & Molokwane 2016).

PARTY-STATE-SOCIETY TRIAD GOVERNANCE: WHITHER A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA?

A democratic South Africa has been characterised by a range of ideological concepts that have been instigated in the hope of capturing and stimulating national development. One of the ideological and philosophical bases that a democratic South Africa drove was African Renaissance. Apparently championed in South Africa by former President Thabo Mbeki, African Renaissance was “promoted as an ideological umbrella, an overarching response to the wide array of problems plaguing the continent that stimulates Africans to come up with ‘African solutions for African problems’” (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:2). Broadly, African Renaissance has been understood in a democratic South Africa as “re-birth or resurrection of the African continent” (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:2). Using such an elusive philosophical and ideological concept to craft development policies was always destined to make for a protracted implementation process. However, it served to mediate the party, state and society interactionism, only delaying the inevitable. Indeed, African Renaissance is a deeply abstract idea, which is associated with the “ideals of regional cooperation, cultural reaffirmation, emancipation, sustainable development and democracy” (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:3), which are applicable across the spectrum of the international and national scales.

But the African Renaissance discourse itself has not helped in any substantive manner (Mavimbela 1998; Vale & Maseko 1998; Tsheola & Segage 2015; Tsheola, Ramoroka & Muzondi 2015). Whereas the concept of African Renaissance has its roots in the African continent, its practice has paradoxically been steeped in Western economic philosophy (Mavimbela 1998; Vale & Maseko 1998; Tsheola & Segage 2015; Tsheola *et al.* 2015). In some cases, its roots are located in the history of slavery and rebellion of African slaves that bred pan-Africanism (Mzamane 2001 cited in Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:3). The pan-Africanism vision is associated with imagination of a *United States of Africa* which inspired Africanist perspectives on development (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:3). Among other philosophical and ideological concepts, African Renaissance would domestically be drawn for inspiring the *fight* against political instability, poverty, *predatory elites* and so on. However, the concept has since at least the 1990s been used opportunistically by private and public



actors in South Africa (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:4) to legitimise distributive regimes for party and state patronage (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Givens 2013; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015, Tshombe & Molokwane 2016). Hence, the concept has remained vague and unclear with the result that it could “create space for mobilising people for a wide variety of issues important to the elites” (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:4). Increasingly, African Renaissance became “a container-concept” that could virtually fit every meaning (Van Amerom & Buscher 2005:4). None of the themes underlying the notion of African Renaissance have taken root in the party, state and society interactionism in South Africa, which is conclusively demonstrated through violent xenophobic attacks (Tsheola *et al.* 2015). Apparently, the party and state in their desperation to explain the absence of experiences of democratic benefits used exclusionary citizenship and rhetoric that fuelled xenophobic societal attitudes out of control (Tsheola & Segage 2015; Tsheola *et al.* 2015). That is, in essence, a vivid demonstration of the informalisation of governance through complex networks that grow beyond regulation of the constitutional and statutory institutional frameworks.

The plight of party governing the state relies heavily on “popular support” (Jinping 2014:17), which is mediated and shaped through governance. With the latter, party has to organise society, communicate and act effectively, serve as well as educate and learn, and subject itself to people oversight (Buscher & Dietz 2005; Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Givens 2013; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015, Tshombe & Molokwane 2016). To use Jinping’s (2014:17) phraseology, a vexed question to be asked is whether the African National Congress (ANC) delivered concrete and sustainable services to society to meet the needs, relieve burdens, benefit lives as well as alleviate all acts that prejudice public interests? In spite of the growing consensus among policy analysts, civil society groups, aid donors and scholars, that good governance matters for sustained growth and development, implementing concerted reforms for improvements and fight against corruption often do not get priority in both industrialised and emerging economies (Kaufmann *et al.* 2009 2010; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015; Tshombe & Molokwane 2016). To be sure, violations of state laws are a direct reflection of the dearth of party discipline, especially that of self-discipline among the elite (Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Jinping 2014). The inherent inequities of governance, especially through informalisation, among actors is consonant with the abuses of power for personal privileges, or perceptions thereof, which has increasingly become a norm in a democratic South Africa under the ANC rule (Emirullah & Ezam 2014).

In an advisory that would have been specifically pertinent to South Africa’s governing party, Jinping (2014) on 17 November 2012 notes that modernisation is crucial in the new historic circumstances. Nations do not stand still; therefore, emulation cannot deliver the *Grand Blueprint* for societal prosperity (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Tsheola & Segage 2015). For this reason, the party has to have vigour as a societal leader and driving force for development; and, this character does not materialise under an unending cloud of corruption, ineptitude, abuse of state agencies, state capture, plunder of public resource and/or mere perceptions thereof (Pitcher *et al.* 2009) That is, party and state can provide adequate societal leadership in circumstances that are devoid of distributive patronage regime nor informalisation of governance. Effectively, the party, state and society interactionism has been crafted, wittingly and/or unwittingly, to be deeply informal at the expense of formal constitutional and statutory institutional governance; and there is evidence to suggest that the

liberationist logic is used to link the governing party to state in order to legitimise governance informalisation that accords distributive patronage-based power relations, authority and undue benefit in a democratic South Africa (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Emirullah & Ezam 2014).

Linking party to state, Jinping (2014:15) notes that “To run the country well” the party must first be run well; and, the latter is only possible with strict discipline. Since the dawn of democracy, the governing party has experienced an un-ending shedding of splinter groups that formed independent parties, notably the Congress of the People (COPE) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). Governance entails that governing party membership would display a “sense of urgency and responsibility” (Jinping 2014:16), which is now vividly absent in the governing party. Instead, factionalism, partisanship and patrimonialism have taken hold of the party thereby diminishing its state leadership abilities “to resist corruption”, prevent societal moral degeneration and undercut perceptions of public corruption risk (Jinping 2014:16).

Governance of Infrastructure Planning, State-owned Enterprises and Public-private Partnerships for Modernisation

In South Africa, there is excessive emphasis on qualities of public-private partnerships as though it were a panacea, especially in the domain of implementation of infrastructure plans (Wilkinson 2016). The idea of the public-private partnerships is itself imbued with the understanding of the state’s inability to meet its obligations, thereby formally seeking governance arrangements with the private sector for resources and expertise. This kind of governance arrangement is to a large extent a response to institutional void and inadequate regulations. Hence, there are instances where civil society actors, including private business, “bestow upon themselves the right to intervene” in localities (Dietz 1996 cited in Buscher & Dietz 2005:6) where there is perceived inadequacies of formal governance (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Emirullah & Ezam 2014; Jinping 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015).

Notwithstanding momentous investment in infrastructure, the majority of the South African society remain impoverished, with negligible access to modernisation and development processes. South Africa’s public sector spent R102 trillion on infrastructure between 2009/10 and 2013/14 (*Engineering News* 2016). State spending on infrastructure has been on the increase since at least 2011, whereas that by State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) such as Transnet and Eskom increased substantially in 2007/08 and then declined in 2013/14 and 2014/15 (*Engineering News* 2016). SOEs have been the largest contributors towards public sector infrastructure expenditure in South Africa (*Engineering News* 2016) whilst simultaneously grabbing the headlines as the most wasteful public entities, especially Eskom, Transnet, Passenger Rail of South Africa (Prasa) and the South African Airways (SAA). Whereas economic services have accounted for 82.2% of total public sector infrastructure spending, that for social services, education and health was 13.1%, 5.4% and 3.6%, respectively (*Engineering News* 2016). That is, the informalisation of SoE governance too has, among other things, sustained societal opportunity-cost that compromised national development. Broadly, South Africa’s governance has been clouded with patronage, creating bases for perceptions of state capture and use of state apparatus for mediation of personality contestations about public resources. The capability, availability and capacity planning are crucial elements that have a direct impact on the growing project implementation backlog in South Africa (Wilkinson & Mavuso 2016:48). These elements involve financial capital for



project funding and human capital (skilled human capacity) in the spheres of the public and private sectors responsible for planning.

Since 2012 the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission has been tasked with the launch of the *National Infrastructure Plan* (NIP) which was mandated “to define the challenges and enablers which South Africa needs to respond to in planning and developing enabling infrastructure that fosters economic growth” (James *et al.* 2016:48). Subsequently, 18 *Strategic Infrastructure Projects* (Sips) were developed and approved in order to “support economic development and address service delivery in the poorest provinces” (James *et al.* 2016:48). Instead, recent public sector headlines have been overwhelmed with “vast amounts of planning” devoid of implementation. South Africa is currently captivated by infrastructure projects hype (James *et al.* 2016:48), which is driven through Government National Infrastructure Plan (NIP) and the *Strategic Infrastructure Projects* (Sips), stagnated in the planning phase. The crisis of implementation in South Africa is largely explicable through the dearth of clarity and the non-actionable planning. Hence, there is absence of public sector leadership in project implementation, resulting in suboptimal productivity and economic growth (James 2016; James *et al.* 2016). Public sector leadership of projects is ineffective and it lacks integrity (James 2016; James *et al.* 2016).

According to Tshombe & Molokwane (2016), several states have been in a virtual rush to secure the Public-private Partnerships (PPPs) for infrastructure development and/or improvements. That is, PPPs are touted as panacea for infrastructure development and service delivery among developing countries. It is argued that they would serve to bridge “the gap between available resources and the cost of urgently needed infrastructure and services; and, to ensure that these are delivered as efficiently and cost effectively as possible” (Tshombe & Molokwane 2016:73). Proponents of this notion suggest that PPPs facilitate buy-in by both local and foreign investors in the implementation of infrastructure plans and projects where there is resources scarcity (Emirullah & Azam 2014; Tshombe & Molokwane 2016). To this extent, it is argued that PPPs are capable of injecting “greater efficiency and synergies” as well as boosting “financial revenues” whilst reducing deficits (Tshombe & Molokwane 2016: 73). Evidently, this justification of the PPPs for infrastructure development is grounded in the old contested dichotomous discursive of the efficacy involving public versus private ownerships. In Graham’s opinion, “Infrastructure development has been highly prioritised on the African agenda, as countries have realised the need for a long-term plan that drives socioeconomic development by improving infrastructure and increasing internet coverage” (cited in James 2016:50; see Emirullah & Azam 2014; Tshombe & Molokwane 2016).

Indeed, government in developing countries plan infrastructure projects, but hope to deliver implementation in collaboration with the private sector, largely due to the need for capital funding and human capital (Emirullah & Azam 2014; Tshombe & Molokwane 2016). But infrastructure delivery in South Africa through PPPs or SOEs has remained an equivalent of mediation of patronage on behalf of the elite and the private commercial interests by legitimisation of informal governance through distributive regimes. Hence, the logic of the *Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment* (BEE) is drawn from the liberationist connections between the governing party and the state. Whereas, it can be argued that the cry for project funding and skills acquisition have dominated the discourse in South Africa with the failure of implementation. As already discussed, there is diversity of ideologies, modes and principles of governance in the public and private sectors. Public governance

is, by its nature, driven by national social good and objectives, whilst private interactionism is undergirded by commercial and financial interests. Also, the structures and institutions of governance involved in public and private ownerships are hugely diverse and, sometimes, contradictory. It is this discrepancy in governance of public and private sectors that explains the disconnect of infrastructure planning and implementation in South Africa, which makes for suboptimal productivity and economic growth, at the centre of the deficiencies of societal modernisation and development. Further complexities are introduced in the PPPs by governing party and state exploitation of the liberationist logic to legitimise informalisation of governance for distributive patronage regimes.

Party-state-society Triad Power Relations and Democracy

A democratic South Africa involves a society that is dominated by self-entitlement psychology wherein actors have astronomically secured exponential regulatory, decisional and discursive powers over the state itself, with the result that the claims of state capture have come to dominate headlines over twenty years after democratisation. This eventuality in power relations and governance injects further complexity because of the “historical social identities and the cultural politics of place” (Buscher & Dietz 2005:6). However, the African state has not been helpless nor hapless in the face of globalism and localism; instead, it reacted to the contestations in a manner that mediated the power relations favourable to its exercise of stronger governance, largely informalised through proxy of latent non-state actors such as political party, business or family.

(Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Jinping 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015) agree that governance bias in favour of the informal regime legitimises and consolidates complex networks of patron-client relationships within the party-state-society triad, thereby conferring patronage benefits at the expense of prudence and democratic experiences. In this way, the predominance of informality of governance is a virtual preference of the governing party because it consolidates a weak state through which the Public Service Sector, including Chapter 9 institutions, is undermined in favour of “relational patronage” (Pitcher *et al.* 2009; Jinping 2014; Thondhlana *et al.* 2015).

CONCLUSION

To accord African characteristics to party-state and society triad interactionism, it is necessary to link governance to the notion of African Renaissance as an ideology and philosophy. The article concludes that the configuration of power relations and authority in the party-state-society interactionism through informalisation of governance is vital for a democratic South Africa.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bonnett, D. 2016. Up-scaled infrastructure and regional integration needed in Africa. *Engineering News*, 36(22):52.



- Buscher, B. and Dietz, T. 2005. Conjunctions of governance: The state and the conservation-development nexus in Southern Africa. *The Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies*, 4(2):1–15.
- Coe, C.A. 2013. Local power structures and their effect on forest land allocation in the Buffer Zone of Tam Dao National Park, Vietnam. *Journal of Environmental Development*, 22(1):74–103.
- Cundill, G., Thondhlana, G., Sisitka, L., Shackleton, S. and Blore, M. 2013. Land claims and the pursuit of co-management on four protected areas in South Africa. *Land Use Policy*, 35:175–178.
- Davies, A.I. and White, R.M. 2012. Collaboration in natural resource governance: Reconciling stakeholder expectations in deer management in Scotland. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 122:160–169.
- Emirullah, C. and Azam, M. 2014. Examining public private partnerships in ASEAN countries: The role of investment climate. *Theoretical and Applied Economics*, XXI(2):69.
- Engineering News. 2016. Trends in public infrastructure spending. *Engineering News*, 36(22):51.
- Givens, D. 2013. Defining governance matters: A factor analytic assessment of governance institutions. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 41:1026–1053.
- James, N. 2016. Wireless connectivity fundamental to infrastructure development. *Engineering News*, 36(22):50.
- James, N., Wilkinson, R. and Mavuso, Z. 2016. Collaboration on infrastructure projects can yield economic growth. *Engineering News*, 36(22):48, 51.
- Jinping, X. 2014. *The Governance of China*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.
- Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A. and Mastruzzi, M. 2009. *Governance Matters 2009: Learning from over a Decade of the Worldwide Governance Indicators*. <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2009/06/29-governance-indicators-kaufmann> (Accessed: July 03, 2016).
- Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A. and Mastruzzi, M. 2010. The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues. www.govindicators.org (Accessed: July 03, 2016).
- Kepe, T.V. 2008. Beyond the numbers: Understanding the value of vegetation to rural livelihoods in Africa. *Geoforum*, 39(2):958–968.
- Mwakaje, A.G., Manyasa, M., Wawire, N., Muchai, M., Ongare, D., Mugoya, C., Masiga, C.W. and Nikundiwe, A. 2013. Community-based conservation, income governance, and poverty alleviation in Tanzania: The case of Serengeti ecosystem. *Journal of Environment & Development*, 22(1):51–73.
- Ogbazi, J.U. 2013. Alternative planning approaches and the sustainable cities programme in Nigeria. *Habitat International*, 40:109–118.
- Pitcher, A., Moran, M.H. and Johnston, M. 2009. Rethinking patrimonialism and neopatrimonialism in Africa. *African Studies Review*, 52(1):125–156.
- Sebola, M.P. and Tsheola, J.P. 2015. African societies, nation-states, governance, human migration, xenophobia and cultural contestations: Editorial framing. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 11(4):iii–x.
- Thondhlana, G., Shackleton, S. and Blignaut, J. 2015. Local institutions, actors, and natural resource governance in Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and surrounds, South Africa. *Land Use Policy*, 47:121–129.
- Tsheola, J.P. 2013. State capitalism, meta-governance, state-capital nexus and state activism paradoxes in the Gauteng freeways. *Journal of Public Administration*, 48(1):35–50.
- Tsheola, J.P. and Nembambula, P. 2015. Governance and transformational leadership dilemmas for merged universities in a democratic South Africa. *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*, 12(1):20–40.
- Tsheola, J.P., Ramoroka, T.M. and Muzondi, L. 2015. Xenophobic societal attitudes in a “new” South Africanism: Governance of public perceptions, national identities and citizenship. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 11(4):232–246.

- Tsheola, J.P. and Segage, M. 2015. Governance, "society-state-territory triad", human population migration and xenophobia in (South) Africa. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 11(4):30–46.
- Tshombe, L.M. and Molokwane, T. 2016. An analysis of public private partnership in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(2):72–85.
- Vale, P. and Maseko, S. 1998. South Africa and African Renaissance. *International Affairs*, 74(2):271–288.
- Van Amerom, M. and Buscher, B. 2005. Peace parks in Southern Africa: Bringers of an African Renaissance. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 43(2):1–24.
- Watson, V. 2009. 'The planned city sweeps the poor away ...': Urban planning and 21st century urbanization. *Progress in Planning*, 72:151–193.
- Wilkinson, R. 2016. Improved project implementation will drive infrastructure growth. *Engineering News*, 36(22):53.

