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## **The Political Thought of Nelson Mandela and the Resurgence of South Africa on the Global Stage**

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### **ABSTRAK**

The aftermath of World War II not only impacted the nations competing for power worldwide, but also had significant consequences for countries that were merely pawns in the war. During World War II, much of Asia and Africa were colonized by European powers. Consequently, these nations experienced significant shifts in politics, economics, and other aspects of life. Due to the exploitation of its natural resources by Europe, Africa was more devastated compared to Asia. Despite both positive and negative consequences of the Second World War, one certainty is that African societies had to laboriously work for an extended period to restore every aspect of their lives to ensure their survival in the future. Following the victory of the African National Party in the 1948 elections, South Africa was declared a white-dominated country. People of other races were denied political rights and full citizenship. The practice of Apartheid sparked protests in South Africa and worldwide. Discrimination in education, social, and cultural spheres resulted from Apartheid policies, which were opposed by the black population. Nelson Mandela was one of the prominent figures who fought against Apartheid in South Africa.

Keywords: *political apharteid, nelson mandela, political thought*

### **ABSTRAK**

Apa yang terjadi setelah Perang Dunia II tidak hanya berdampak pada negara-negara yang bersaing untuk kekuasaan di seluruh dunia. Negara-negara yang hanya digunakan sebagai boneka dalam perang juga mengalami konsekuensi yang signifikan. Selama Perang Dunia II, wilayah Asia dan Afrika sebagian besar dijajah oleh negara-negara Eropa. Akibatnya, negara-negara ini mengalami banyak pergeseran dalam politik, ekonomi, dan bidang kehidupan lainnya. Karena Eropa dieksploitasi seluruh sumber daya alamnya, wilayah Afrika paling hancur dibandingkan dengan Asia. Meskipun ada konsekuensi positif dan negatif dari pecahnya perang dunia kedua, satu hal yang pasti

adalah bahwa masyarakat Afrika harus bekerja dengan sangat keras dalam waktu yang lama untuk memulihkan setiap aspek kehidupan mereka agar mereka dapat bertahan hidup di masa depan. Setelah Partai Nasional Afrika menang dalam pemilu tahun 1948, Afrika Selatan dinyatakan sebagai negara kulit putih. Orang-orang dari ras lain tidak diberi hak politik dan warga negara penuh. Praktik *Apartheid* menghasilkan protes di Afrika Selatan dan di seluruh dunia. Diskriminasi di bidang pendidikan, sosial, dan budaya disebabkan oleh politik *Apartheid*, yang dituntut oleh orang kulit hitam. Nelson Mandela adalah salah satu orang terkenal yang menentang *Apartheid* di Afrika Selatan.

Keywords: *politik apartheid, nelson mandela, pemikiran politik*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nelson Mandela is a figure who advocated for justice for all native people of South Africa. Mandela's mission as an anti-apartheid revolutionary was to establish equality and freedom for all women, men, and children. He also fought to defend the basic rights of all humans, regardless of gender, nationality, or race. It was these aspirations that ultimately led to Nelson Mandela being imprisoned for 27 years.

Mandela's passion for the struggle grew even stronger, this time leading him to pursue a political path. He joined the African National Congress (ANC), an organization advocating for freedom and justice in South Africa. Mandela's role expanded further when in 1950 he was entrusted with the position of chairman of the ANCYL (African National Congress Youth League). Under his leadership, Mandela often voiced and inspired the struggle against apartheid governance through peaceful actions without resorting to violence. During his leadership, Mandela underwent many changes, especially in his perspective. He eventually realized the necessity of building multiracial unity to achieve democracy and abolish apartheid injustice.

South Africa became a republic in 1961 after a special election for the white population. Starting in the 1960s, the 'grand apartheid'—also known as "grand apartheid"—was adopted, emphasizing territorial segregation and police brutality. Even by the end of the 20th century, black people were still marginalized. Tony Beaumont stated in his book *South Africa After Siege* that the essence of apartheid was that each group should develop separately and achieve autonomy in its own territory. This was divided into four categories: civilized races, white interests over black people, the use of English, white descent, colored (mixed-race), and Asian descent (usually Indian people).

The ideology of apartheid underpinned the Group Areas Act of 1950. Residences were divided based on racial stratification. Many black individuals resided in areas between the northern and eastern borders of South Africa. Black individuals found outside their designated areas for more than 72 hours without special permission from Native Affairs officials would be imprisoned.

In February 1990, the National Party government under President FW De Klerk released Nelson Mandela from prison. This was done due to pressure from other countries and strong opposition from various anti-apartheid movements, particularly the African National Congress (ANC). Apartheid began to be phased out, and the first non-

discriminatory elections were held in 1994. Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the first black President of South Africa after the ANC's significant victory. The black community now held power, but millions of people still lived in poverty.

## **Literature Review**

The study conducted by Julio F. Carrion and Stuart Kaufman (2020) on "Public Opinion and the End of Apartheid" . These research findings contribute to unraveling the initial puzzle have been posed: why did whites support political changes that would end their political dominance? They demonstrate that our model, based on a redefined version of symbolic politics, offers a robust theoretical framework for comprehending this puzzle. It accounts, on average, for over half of the variance in white attitudes towards change, despite the questionnaires not being ideally suited for testing it. One of the most influential factors we identified was the respondents' symbolic inclination towards political parties: in every instance where sentiments of affiliation with political parties were gauged, white voters' sentiments towards the National Party strongly predicted their support for de Klerk's negotiation policy, even when it was evident that the ultimate outcome of these negotiations would be the termination of white supremacy in South Africa.

Symbolic predispositions towards political leaders also proved significant, as evidenced by clear measures. Data from July 1992 indicated that white attitudes towards Mandela were inconsequential at the time, yet trust in de Klerk remained associated with support for the negotiation process. A similar trend was observed in the 1991 survey data, where trust in de Klerk strongly predicted support for his negotiation policy. Although we omitted this variable from our model due to the similarity in question wording, charisma—initially exhibited by de Klerk and later by Mandela after the transition—appears to have played a significant role.

The subsequent study conducted by Luis Cordeiro-Rodrigues and Jonathan O Chimakonam (2020) focuses on "The South African land question in light of Nelson Mandela's political thought." This research aims to evaluate the alignment of protest methods adopted in South Africa regarding the land issue with Mandela's political philosophy.

The analysis concluded that benign property occupation and symbolic and economic disruption are morally acceptable according to Mandela's principles, as they adhere to his criteria for the use of force. Conversely, forms of violence involving killing, torture, and illegal land seizure are considered unjustified, as they impede future reconciliation efforts and diverge from the principle of gradually escalating violence. Subsequent research should delve into applying Mandela's principles to other protest movements in South Africa, such as the Rhodes Must Fall campaigns.

The research conducted by Kathleen C. Schwartzman and Kristie A Taylor (1999) concluded that in a 1992 national referendum, white South Africans voted to transition to full democracy. The study aimed to understand what motivated ruling whites to dismantle the forty-four-year-old apartheid system and open up the political arena.

Various explanations have been proposed for the recent surge of democratic transitions. Some argue that transitions seen in the Soviet Union (1991), Brazil (1981), and Portugal (1974) resulted from social protests, while others attribute them to the emergence of an industrial labor force.

South African observers suggested that domestic economic stagnation would necessitate political adjustments, while globalization made democratic coalitions more favorable and feasible. Utilizing South African data and a time-series path model, the researchers investigated these alternative explanations for the South African transition. Their analysis indicates that constraints on the domestic labor market and international financial boycotts were the primary factors contributing to the collapse of apartheid.

## **METHOD**

The data collection method employed in this study is a qualitative approach based on library research, where the data obtained are secondary data sourced from various references such as scholarly books, research findings, documents, journals, magazines, newspapers, internet sources, and other relevant media related to the research object. The data analysis method utilized is deductive analysis technique, where several theories are initially applied, followed by the collection of data and facts to analyze the relationship and connection between the theories and the relevant data and facts systematically.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In this discussion section, which serves as an analytical chapter, the author will outline the steps taken by Nelson Mandela to address apartheid. Apartheid in South Africa has led to numerous issues related to racism and violations of human rights perpetrated by the black community against the white community. Here, Nelson Mandela, as a South African citizen and a member of the black community, endeavored to tackle apartheid in his country with his abilities. The diversity of South Africa's populace extends well beyond the binary division between black and white. During the apartheid era, South Africa categorized its population into four racial groups: blacks, whites, coloreds (individuals of mixed race, predominantly Afrikaans speakers), and Indians. As of 2010, blacks constituted 79.4% of the population, whites 9.2%, coloreds 8.9%, and Indians or Asians 2.6%. Although the proportion of the white population has decreased in recent years, blacks have consistently constituted the vast majority of the populace. (Kaufman, 2012)

Within these groups, there exists significant diversity, particularly in terms of language. Present-day South Africa recognizes 11 official languages: Afrikaans, English, and the languages spoken by the nine largest black ethnic groups. Among the latter, the Zulu ethnic group constitutes the largest portion of the population, accounting for approximately 24% in 2001, predominantly residing in what is now KwaZulu-Natal Province. Following closely are the Xhosa, representing 18% of the population, with most residing in Eastern Cape Province. Both Zulu and Xhosa, along with Swazi and

Ndebele, belong to the Nguni group of languages and share mutual intelligibility, with Zulu often serving as the lingua franca among them. Afrikaans, the third most prevalent language, serves as the mother tongue for white Afrikaners and many colored individuals. Notably, Afrikaans speakers, primarily colored individuals, constitute the majority in two South African provinces: Western Cape (encompassing Cape Town) and Northern Cape.

South Africa's inaugural fully democratic elections, held in April 1994, marked a resounding victory for the African National Congress (ANC) under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. This transition from apartheid to majority rule necessitated significant shifts in both elite policies and public sentiment over the preceding decade. In his 1985 "Rubicon speech," President P.W. Botha adamantly asserted that whites would not relinquish power, adamantly rejecting any notion of "abdication and suicide" (as cited in Welsh, 2009: 231).

This stance was supported by white public opinion, with 62% of whites opposing negotiations with the ANC as late as 1988 (Welsh, 2009). Less than ten years later, however, the successor to Botha, F.W. de Klerk, consented to an agreement criticized by a prominent white historian (Giliomee, 1997) as "surrender without defeat," and de Klerk garnered public support for his actions: more than two-thirds of white voters backed his initiatives in a March 1992 referendum.

In 1993, Mandela and De Klerk were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts in combating apartheid. They continued negotiations between black and white communities. Mandela envisioned a society without class distinctions, advocating for equal access to education and job opportunities for all races. The conflicts in South Africa stem from apartheid and its legacies, including stark wealth disparities and higher incomes among whites compared to blacks, who remain below the average income level. While negotiating the end of apartheid and the transition to democracy, Mandela delivered speeches to thousands, addressing themes of peace, freedom, and democracy in 1993. He also discussed how to address militancy among young people. Mandela concluded his speeches with reaffirming his commitment, echoing sentiments expressed during his trial in 1964.

In his autobiography, Mandela reflected on his experience as a lawyer in South Africa, where he learned that he could not rely on the legal system to deliver justice. Despite occasional instances where justice prevailed, such as his first treason trial which ended in acquittal after six years of legal proceedings, Mandela did not hold expectations of justice from an inherently unjust legal system. (Dyzenhaus, D, 1998)

Mandela advocated for tactics such as sabotage, strikes, protests, and mass demonstrations to challenge the unjust system upheld by the National Party and its white supporters. He faced trial and was eventually convicted of treason and accused of Communist party membership, although he later distanced himself from these allegations, asserting his support for capitalism and British-style parliamentary government. Mandela spent twenty-seven years in prison, initially engaged in hard labor and later serving as a legal advocate and political activist within the confines of his cell. He fought for basic rights such as long pants and bread, demonstrating both resilience and resourcefulness. Despite his incarceration, Mandela maintained his activism, forming relationships with his jailers while also challenging the prison administration

and the broader systemic injustices. Mandela viewed prison as a microcosm of the wider world, where every space was a battleground for advocating for change and exposing injustice. His spirit remained unbroken, and he viewed his time in prison as an opportunity to strengthen both his political resolve and his physical endurance.

Mandela's multifaceted legacy as both a political revolutionary and a dedicated activist was undoubtedly shaped by the diverse environments he navigated throughout his life. Born and raised in a small rural town in the Transkei as a Xhosa, Mandela was immersed in the traditions and ceremonies of his culture, including the significant ritual of traditional circumcision marking his passage into manhood. Despite his father's connections to Xhosa leadership royalty, Mandela was raised in a Methodist household by a devout Christian mother. While growing up in the royal "great place" of his tribe, Mandela defied tradition by fleeing with his adopted brother to evade arranged marriages and pursued education at elite black African institutions.

Mandela furthered his studies with a BA degree from Fort Hare (University College) and engaged in correspondence courses in law, although he did not complete a formal LLB at Wits in 1949. Nonetheless, he later attained a law degree while incarcerated, having practiced law at the first all-black law firm following an apprenticeship with liberal white lawyers in Johannesburg. Throughout his life, Mandela's perspectives evolved, particularly regarding the composition of the African National Congress (ANC) and its alignment with Coloreds, Indians, and white communists. His views were also influenced by the actions of the Pan African Congress, Chief Buthelezi, and the KwaZulus, particularly their more violent and nationalist approaches.

While Mandela was trained as a lawyer, he primarily functioned as a skilled and pragmatic political strategist. His decisions and tactics were shaped by a rich tapestry of personal experiences, exposure to diverse ideologies, and relationships with inspirational figures and leaders. The emergence of influential figures like Nelson Mandela, characterized by his unwavering determination to address deeply entrenched issues, is significant, especially considering the prolonged existence of apartheid in South Africa. Beyond his expertise in politics and law, Mandela, as a black citizen, staunchly opposed the discriminatory policies of apartheid and made concerted efforts to bring an end to its era of dominance.

## **CONCLUSION**

Nelson Mandela played a crucial role in the development of South Africa. Born on July 18, 1918, he was known for his unwavering determination. During his time, South Africa was grappling with a critical issue: the implementation of apartheid. This system had detrimental effects on the lives of South African citizens. Mandela made every effort to end apartheid.

Apartheid was a system that segregated people based on their skin color, dividing them into black and white groups. This segregation not only marginalized black individuals but also placed white individuals in dominant positions across various aspects of leadership. The people of South Africa, particularly the black population, suffered

greatly under the rules of this system. The injustices that ensued led to international outcry.

From the steps taken by Nelson Mandela, apartheid was finally abolished in South Africa on June 30, 1991. Subsequently, in 1993, South Africa enacted new laws recognizing equality between black and white citizens. Following these developments, South Africa held general elections, during which Nelson Mandela was elected as the country's first black President. He was officially inaugurated on May 10, 1994.

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