

"Failing Democracy: Race, Ethnicity and South African Opposition Parties"

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South Africa's democratisation process is characterised by weak opposition parties and a dominant ruling party. This paper engages the racial ethnic understanding of politics by opposition parties, which limits their ability to effectively present a viable alternative to the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and the extent to which this development has implications for democratic consolidation. This paper bases its argument on an interpretation and analysis of the 1994 and 1999 elections. It outlines the nature of the weakness and draws a link between the racial and ethnic understanding of politics by opposition parties and the resultant theoretical and practical implications for democratic consolidation.

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