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Ivanov Pavel Valer'evich

**«Stabilization of the political system in a heterogeneous society
through the lens of Afrikaner experience»**

**Specialty: 5.5.2 - Political institutions, processes, technologies
(Political Science)**

ABSTRACT
of the dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Political sciences

**PhD supervisor:
Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor
Nesterchuk Ol'ga Alekseevna**

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The relevance of the dissertation research is determined by the growing impact of interethnic antagonism on political system stability in heterogeneous societies. The increasing degree of social heterogeneity complicates identification and behavioral interaction mechanisms, which inevitably affects the system's stability. The presence of unresolved ethno-political conflicts and territorial disputes only exacerbates these destructive tendencies. The analysis of apartheid's ideological foundations through the lens of Afrikaner nationalism remains an understudied topic. Unlike most works focusing on the regime's victims, this research emphasizes Afrikaner identity and its connection to the political system's evolution. Understanding Afrikaner nationalist perspectives allows for a deeper comprehension of South Africa's genesis and its significance for national reconciliation and the formation of an inclusive society. Apartheid, recognized by the international community as a crime against humanity, requires a comprehensive political analysis. This study does not revise regime's crimes but examines Afrikaner nationalism as a case of interethnic antagonism. The concept of "separate development," initially articulated by D. Malan in 1948, only later acquired some definitive forms, becoming an attempt to humanize discriminatory policies. Despite post-apartheid reforms and multiculturalism, political disagreements in South Africa remain structured along ethnic lines. Xenophobic sentiments are not merely a consequence of ideological intolerance but a struggle for real political power. Racial dichotomy dominates mass consciousness, although in reality, the conflict represented an opposition of «Afrikaners versus everyone» within the context of institutional discrimination against indigenous peoples. For macro-analysis of social processes, the term "Bantu" is used, justified by the historical commonality of these peoples' experiences and institutional features of the apartheid system. Chronologically, the research covers three periods: 1652-1948 (formation of Afrikaner identity), 1948-1994 (transformation of the political system), and from 1994 to the present day (transition processes in South Africa).

To achieve this aim, the following **objectives** were set:

1. To examine the prerequisites, features, and necessary components for stabilizing the political system, describing main aspects of political processes within the political system.
2. To study the importance of the ethnic factor for the examination functionality of political systems, as well as its theoretical significance in explaining internal political processes within a system which may be immersed in a heterogeneous society.
3. Based on the South African experience, analyze the genesis of Afrikaner nationalism in the context of British colonial tradition and its influence on the formation of apartheid policy. Determine the role of repressive mechanisms in achieving Afrikaner hegemony within the apartheid political system.
4. As part of examining political system stability in heterogeneous societies, analyze the impact of political actors who transcend the system's legal framework through the duplication of legitimate state functions, with particular reference to South Africa and broader theoretical implications.
5. Examine the possibilities for consolidation of antagonistic ethnic groups following the dismantling of the apartheid regime. Evaluate the prospects of implementing consociational democracy as a mechanism for stabilizing South Africa's political system.

The object of this dissertation research is the stability of South Africa's political system in the context of a heterogeneous society, considering the legacy of apartheid policies.

The subject of this dissertation research is the relationship between ethnic antagonism and the stability of the political system in South Africa.

The hypothesis: from the perspective of Afrikaner nationalism, the policy of apartheid was driven by the heterogeneity of society combined with the lack of parity between political actors, where Afrikaner nationalism continued the British colonial tradition of social segregation and, through repressive manipulations, achieved hegemony within the existing political system. At the same time, although social homogeneity is associated with system stability, the very process of moving towards nominal

homogeneity in post-apartheid South Africa does not automatically guarantee a reduction in interethnic antagonism. Achieving this requires a comprehensive set of measures to harmonize relations between Afrikaners and Bantu groups.

Theoretical and methodological framework of the research. The following tools were used to accomplish the tasks set in this dissertation research: structural-functional approach, institutional method, comparative analysis, system approach, hypothetico-deductive method, explicative methods, regarding the acquisition of additional information necessary for maximum possible accuracy in processing content and event analysis (included in explicative methods), the expert assessment method was used (consultations were obtained from specialists in the fields of counter-subversion, public and political security). Quantitative methods were used to test the sub-hypothesis of Chapter III. Data for the "replication pack" is available online¹.

Scientific novelty of this dissertation:

1. It has been found that for a heterogeneous and non-parity society, the development of identification and behavioral patterns appropriate to a specific political system becomes crucial. The similarity of these patterns reflects a shift towards homogeneity, increasing the likelihood of political system stabilization within through a regular political exchanges.
2. The relationship between the ethnic factor and political system stability has been examined in the context of the proper functioning of system groups. Ethnic nepotism catalyzes institutional erosion due to the possible identification disparity between political actors and the political system.
3. It has been identified that contemporary South African society requires the consolidation of heterogeneous groups to build an inclusive society. Negative confrontational experiences complicate interethnic dialogue, manifesting in mutual accusations of xenophobia and bias. The potential for consensus can be achieved by shifting identification accents toward neutral symbols that imply involvement from both sides examined in this study (Bantu and Afrikaners).

¹ Ivanov P.V. Thesis Appendix. // OSF. [Electronic source] URL:<https://osf.io/txhkp/> (Assessed 25.11.2024) doi:10.17605/OSF.IO/TXHKP

4. The nuances of the formation of the South African polity, the emergence of the "separate development" concept, its contribution to transformation a heterogeneous society attempts, and efforts to humanize the repressive apartheid regime have been studied. The effectiveness of the methods within this concept has been evaluated, along with its positive and negative aspects.
5. The reasons for the emergence of Afrikaner nationalism have been identified. For the first time, Afrikaner identity is considered not as frontier-based but as a full-fledged civilization. Examining these characteristics will help better understand and prevent ethnic antagonism in South Africa in future.
6. The impact of the vigilantism phenomenon on political system stability issues has been described. Within this phenomenon, a new Ethnic Vigilantism Propensity index (EVP) has been proposed and additionally tested, which is theoretically allowing for the detection of intra-societal conflict potential among political actors at the early stages of political system's erosion.
7. The possibility of resolving the problem of South Africa's heterogeneous society through the implementation of so called "soft power" tools has been explored also. Practical recommendations have been developed with an aim for harmonisation current interethnic antagonism within South Africa's divided society.

The provisions of the dissertation submitted for the defense are:

1. In a heterogeneous society, the stabilization of the political system can be achieved through the formation of common identification patterns reflecting the aspiration for social homogeneity. The regularity of political exchanges between ethnic groups and the cultivation of appropriate forms of political participation contribute to reducing interethnic tensions and increasing the resilience of the political system.
2. The apartheid policy in South Africa represented an ambivalent system of state governance, combining repressive mechanisms against Bantu groups with elements of protectionism towards Afrikaners. Despite its declared goals of preserving cultural identity, this concept effectively served as a tool for maintaining Afrikaner hegemony.

3. The genesis of Afrikaner nationalism was shaped by a combination of negative experiences and nuances of religious dogmatism. Its foundation lay in the mobilization of political actors around a unique political myth, supported on one hand by a particular interpretation of religious texts and on the other - by civic nationalism. The aspiration for endogeneity is reflected in the clientelism of the National Party.
4. The phenomenon of vigilantism and the author's proposed index of Ethnic Vigilantism Propensity (EVP) have operational potential for detecting institutional erosion within the political system. Particularly in the case of South Africa, the EVP index showed the absence of equivalence between society's incline towards homogeneity and lockstep elimination of ethnic tensions between Bantu and Afrikaners just by a default.
5. The consolidation of contemporary South African society requires a shift in identification emphasis from restitutive to communal, with a mutual transformation in the perception of both the Bantu and the Afrikaners. The potential effectiveness of this approach is conditioned by the necessity of overcoming the historical trauma of apartheid and forming a new civic identity. As a method of "mutual image popularization", the impact of mass culture effect within the framework of "soft power" practices is proposed.

Theoretical significance of the dissertation:

This study presents an analysis of the relationship between the ethnic factor and the behavior of political actors and their influence on regularity of political exchanges and, consequently, possibility to affect political system's stability as a whole. Furthermore, the examination of vigilantism role has made it possible to identify potential factors contributing to a political system crisis, which may serve as a foundation for developing recommendations and/or strategies to address issues of political stability. The study of the genesis of South Africa's political system through the lens of Afrikaner ethnocentrism provides insights into the nature of apartheid and its impact on the structure and dynamics of the current political system. The materials of this research contribute to the

development of domestic political science, introducing new conceptual and categorical aspects.

Practical significance of the dissertation:

The results of this dissertation can serve as a foundation for further research in both African studies and theoretical or applied political science². They may be utilized by specialists in political ethology and political psychology and are valid for studying political processes not only in South Africa but also in the broader context of political system stability. The proposed EVP Index will enhance methodological diversity in academia, contributing to both the forecasting and analysis of political events and processes. Additionally, this research can be used in the teaching/studying process for postgraduate academic environment.

This dissertation research **aligns with the points outlined in the official classification of scientific specialties for the scientific specialization 5.5.2 – “Political Institutions, Processes, and Technologies”** specifically: p.1. Politics as a sphere of social life: structure and functions of politics ; p.3. Political power: nature, essence, functions, and legitimacy. Power processes and political institutions; p.5. Political behavior and participation: articulation and aggregation of interests, forms of mobilization; p.6. Political systems and regimes: structure, functions, types, and varieties; p.8. Political institutions: formation, development, and modern transformations; p.9. The state as a political institution: structure, functions, types, and varieties; p.10. Territorial-political forms of state organization; p.11. Regional dimensions of politics and political governance; p.12. Evolution of party and electoral systems: modern models of political representation; p.14. Political processes: essence, sources, structure, social foundations, and environmental factors; p.15. Psychological aspects of political processes;

² The findings of this dissertation have already been reflected in several academic works, including:

Folahanmi Aina / Aina, F. – Politics of “Localised Legitimacy,” Vigilantism, Non-State Policing, and Counter-Banditry in Northwest Nigeria: Evidence from the Epicenter // *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 2023, pp. 1–28. ; Hanna S. Kassab – Power Vacuums and Global Politics: Areas of State and Non-State Competition in Multipolarity // New York: Routledge, 2023, 200 P.

p.16. Processes and mechanisms of political perception. Political consciousness;
p.20. Mechanisms and technologies for managing political changes; p.21. Ethnopolitical
processes and conflicts: national-state, national-territorial, and national-cultural self-
determination; p.24. Political archetypes, symbols, and myths. National mentality and
political culture; p.25. Political socialization: institutions, factors, and agents;
p.26. Social and political conflicts: causes, factors, types, and regulation technologies;
p.28. Political identity: essence, types, structure. Mechanisms of political identification
of individuals and social groups; p.33. Strategic governance, political forecasting, and
designing political institutions and processes.