Micro-politics in South Africa:
Governance and Development in the Rural Areas

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Political and Economic Development in South Africa Today

- Heard many lectures on South Africa as one of the BRICS

- Economic development indicators

- Political and economic challenges

- This talk takes this to the micro-level

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Taking it to the the Micro-level

- What do we mean by the micro-level?

- Why is the micro-level important?

- My experience in South Africa

"The Rural Areas"

- What do we mean by the "rural areas?"

- About 39.3% of the population or about 19 million people (World Bank, 2010), but decreasing

- Eastern Cape: 6.5 million
KwaZulu Natal: 10.2 million
Limpopo: 5.4 million
Mpumalanga: 4 million
North West: 3.5 million
(Community Survey SA, 2007)

Photo credit: http://www.tumuga.com/userfiles/image/Maps/province_map.jpg

Development Indicators in the Rural Areas: Community Survey, SA Statistics, 2007

- Fewer households using electricity for lighting in Eastern Cape (66%) and KZN (72%) [national average 80%]

- Fewer households using piped water in Eastern Cape (70%), KZN (79%), and Limpopo (84%) [national average 89%]

- 25% of households in Eastern Cape have no toilet; 56% of households in Limpopo use a pit latrine without ventilation [93% and 85% of households in Western Cape and Gauteng respectively use flush toilets]

- Literacy and numeracy in Limpopo about half what they are in Western Cape

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Historical Perspective

- Natives Land Act (1913): Prevents Black population from buying land outside of the reserves

- 7% of the land for the Black population (which was more than 80% of the total population)

- Black population in reserves or homelands

- TBVC States get "independence" in late 1970s, early 1980s; others have partial autonomy

Racial Concentrations and Homelands

Racial concentrations of 30% or more by magisterial district

NOTE: Portions of Colored, Indian, and white areas may also have an equal or slightly larger percentage of other racial groups. Black areas have no other racial groups as high as 30%. Homelands are traditional areas set aside by the South African government for specific black ethnic groups. All have a black population in excess of 90%. Bophuthatswana, Transkei, and Venda have been granted nominal independence by South Africa.
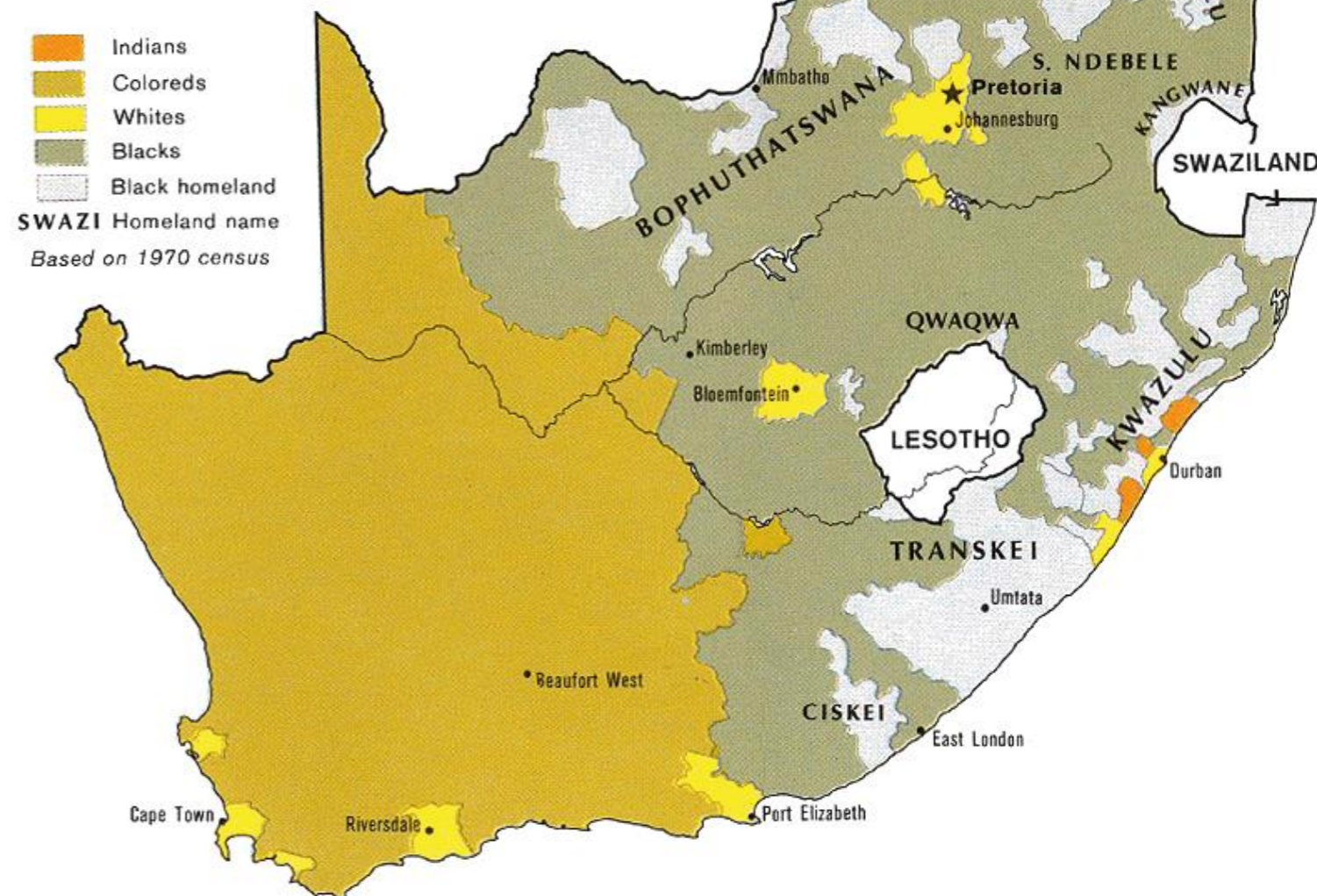
Indians
Coloreds
Whites
Blacks
Black homeland
SWAZI Homeland name
Based on 1970 census

VENDA
GAZANKULU
LEBOWA
Pietersburg
Mmbatho
S. NDEBELE
BOPHUTHATSWANA
Pretoria
Johannesburg
KANGWANE
SWAZILAND
KWAZULU
QWAQWA
Kimberley
Bloemfontein
LESOTHO
Durban
Beaufort West
TRANSKEI
Umtata
CISKEI
East London
Cape Town
Riversdale
Port Elizabeth

Theoretical Perspectives: Divide and Conquer

- Mamdani's **Citizen and Subject** (1996) explores the "Native Question"

- Govern through local leaders

- Divide and conquer, government for citizens that gives rights

- Government for natives that controls

- Separate and unequal within a bifurcated state

Photo credit: http://ruthleavett.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/img_0068.jpg

Theoretical Perspectives: Create Cleavages

- Control through Native Authority

- Elevate the status of chiefs and men

- Use customary law

- But need labor from the rural areas

- How do you maintain control?

Photo credit: http://buildthenations.org/graphic/gallery/market.jpg

Theoretical Perspectives: Create Cleavages & Prevent Linkages

- Further divide the urban from the rural to prevent linkages

- People in urban areas have a *higher* living standard than those in the rural areas

- Divisions in terms of economics, education, and language

- Keep dissatisfaction local

Photo credit: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/31/UniversityOfVenda.JPG

Theoretical Perspectives: Prevent Linkages

- Protest in the urban areas heightens from 1980s onwards

- Linkages did occur between urban and rural, regionally, and internationally

- Democratic South Africa in 1994

Photo credit: http://www.dwaf.gov.za/iwqs/rhp/state_of_rivers/state_of_letluv_01/photo/2_Luv_4_800.jpg

Apartheid Legacy: Economic

- What does this mean for economic and political development in the rural areas today?

- Land holdings

- Other development indicators

- RDP, GEAR, other macroeconomic policies face difficulties developing rural areas

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Apartheid Legacy: Political

- What does this mean for governance in the rural areas today?

- Mamdani: "Institutions" created during apartheid still exist

- De-racialization but not detribalization

- Big Man, local governance, "traditional" governance

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Governance: The "Big Man"

- Chabal and Daloz's "Africa Works" (1999): "Big Man" phenomenon

- Big Man based on ethnic/ national group controls local population through allegiance

- People support if standard of living not decreasing

Photo credit: http://wetu.com/ImageHandler/1280x1280/23820/HW0_7981.JPG

Local Government Today

- Eight metropolitan municipalities; 44 district municipalities; and 226 local municipalities

- Project Consolidate, Local Government Strategy of 2009, and Outcome 9 have all failed

- Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in 2009: "Local government just isn't working"

Photo credit: http://binaryapi.ap.org/7ecad8e81c2943f7a910a6af159b8082/460x.jpg

Local Government Policies

- Why? Poor governance and financial management, lack of transparency and accountability, human resource gaps, poor planning

- Central government not able to deal with the issues, allegations of corruption, role of local elites, and clientelism

- Mamdani: Accountability is to the party rather than the constituency, "empowerment" buys off

- Chabal and Daloz: Big Man and party loyalty more important than delivery

What about "Traditional" Government?

- "Traditional" government operations

- Department of Traditional Affairs established in 2010 to transform Traditional Leadership into a strategic partner for government

- National House of Traditional Leaders promotes traditional leadership, enhances understanding amongst traditional communities, and advises national government

- Practical avenues for development assistance: Land and service delivery; initiation and traditional healing

Photo credit: http://www.aimsouthafrica.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Limpopo-Fruitmarket-in-Venda.jpg

Questions Going Forward

- Changed since Mamdani?

- Role for traditional governance in a democratic society? Elements of democracy (councils where 40% of population is elected, one third must be women)

- Gender dynamics

- Governed by customary law

Photo credit: http://www.africanbiodiversity.org/sites/default/files/images/2009venda_18.jpg

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Set of questions to consider:

1. What roles should local government and "traditional" government play?
2. Is it important to increase political participation in the rural areas?
3. How can we understand democracy and gender dynamics?
4. What are some practical avenues for development assistance?

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