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## Citizenship in Social Movements: Constructing Alternatives in the Anti-Privatization Forum, South Africa

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# Citizenship in Social Movements: Constructing Alternatives in the Anti-Privatization Forum, South Africa<sup>1</sup>

*Meghan Cooper*

## **Abstract**

This paper explores how social movements construct citizenship and redefine the very notion of the political realm. Social movements have quickly become powerful actors within South Africa's civil society. They are largely contesting the basis upon which South Africa's post-apartheid reality has been constructed according to specific policies. Citizenship is in turn used as a lens of analysis to show how social movements in South Africa are contesting macro and micro-economic policies and government re-structuring. The case analysis of the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) represents one of countless South African movements searching for alternatives to ongoing socio-economic policy. The overarching aim of this paper is to display how social movements actively construct citizenship, and to interrogate the strategies that are used to advance their agenda. The outcome of this article is therefore to reignite the meaning of citizenship as a lens for understanding the goals and methods of citizen lead activism. Moreover, the article reveals the competing and conflicting interpretations of rights existing between the state and other actors as well as an interrogation of further strategies that could be explored for social movements.

## **About the author**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

All human beings are citizens somewhere, somehow with the fullest of rights to dignity, respect and identity. Exactly what these rights mean, how they are to be fulfilled and by whom, is contesting the concept of citizenship. Much ambiguity remains in what needs to be considered not only in the definition but also in the lived experience. Generally, ‘citizens are equal before the law, but the law is not applied equally to all citizens, because its interpretation is mediated by exclusion and discrimination because of race, gender, language or social status’ (Gamucio-Dagron 2008:70). There are few places where this is as overwhelmingly visible and with such a staunch historical context than in the case study for this paper; South Africa. South Africa’s governmental shift from the apartheid system of blatant citizen exclusion however, has not changed dramatically with the citizenship of historically persecuted communities failing to be considered in the construction of South Africa’s post-apartheid reality (Von Lieres 2007: 227).

The purpose of this paper lies with understanding a movement emerging from the Global South and their challenges to a distinct concept related to how rights are framed, claimed and ultimately realized – that of citizenship. It will be taken as an ontological stance in this article, that a part of how social movements promote their interests and challenge oppressive structures is in the construction of citizenship as a position not empirically given rather as a process that is contextually understood. Using the lens of citizenship this study will focus on the themes of legal approaches, increased violence against movements and the competing interpretations to citizenship that often exacerbate tensions between social movements and the actors they oppose. These discussions will be applied through an examination of the Anti-Privatisation Forum’s (APF) ongoing water struggles. Such an approach not only underscores a vibrant civil society but also a more pluralistic and contextual engagement of citizenship. In turn we can observe as argued by Mohan and Hickey that ‘citizenship analysis arguably has a significant contribution to make towards development theory and practice. As befits development theory, it is an inherently multi-disciplinary concept, relating to socioeconomic, political, legal and cultural spheres’ (2004, 70). By examining the cross –cutting methods of opposition among South African social movements, we can see an analysis of citizenship beyond a stagnant political or legal position but rather an engaged and constantly evolving social condition.

The APF presents a dynamic case study of opposition to material as well as ideological circumstances that have been created in post-apartheid South Africa. They are a formidable and increasingly recognized movement among a pattern of mobilizations, situated to the left of the African National Congress (ANC) who are arguably ‘failing to act on issues that affect a significant constituency’ (Buhlungu 2006: 68). Further, the APF has great relevance given that it is contesting common development terminology that relates to questions of citizenship such as the ANC’s promises for a more ‘people-driven development’ . If civil society is to forge meaningful relationships among its diversity it is necessary to critically discuss differing interpretations of what kind of citizens we wish to be and how we wish this to be upheld through a legal or democratic structure, thus an engagement of citizenship.

The research and analysis about to be presented in this article constitute a wider research study involving extensive literature reviews, 7 semi-structured phone interviews and detailed discourse analysis from APF public material. Increased focus was placed on

authors with historical involvement and attention to South Africa's political economy and civil society responses – in particular those of social movements. While not all authors come from the same epistemic tradition, they present a critical view to neoliberal traditions and post-apartheid development in South Africa. This paper will continue by discussing new and more dynamic understandings to citizenship, how this relates to the history of South Africa and finally focus in on the recently found challenges and innovations among South African movements. We must ask in such analysis: how do activist strategies employed by movements such as the APF ignite new interpretations of citizenship? Particular attention will be placed here on the APF's evolving methods of activism merging legal and civic approaches.

## FRAMING CITIZENSHIP AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF THE “GLOBAL SOUTH”

This paper could not possibly nor is it intended to provide a singular construction of citizenship, it is meant to provide a lens of analysis as to how social movements define citizenship in its application and lived experience. Before moving to this challenging task, it is helpful to first define some often used terms. What is a social movement? There is much contestation over what this term actually entails. In this paper it is considered that social movements are an ‘on-going process of collective action, whether organized locally, transnationally, regionally’ or all (Rudin and Hintjens 2009: 18). Taking as given that social movements are further ‘signifying agents actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists, and bystanders or observers’ (Benford and Snow 2000: 613), citizenship is very much contextually understood rather than a static concept. In merging the understanding of social movements, particularly those from the “Global South” and citizenship we may argue with Thompson and Tapscott that:

‘notions of citizenship and of rights broadly understood are not in themselves fixed and immutable. The types of identity formation and forms of collective action evident in communities in the South occur in contexts where the meanings of citizenship and rights are far more nebulous and contested, as well as globally referenced, than in the history of the North’ (Thompson and Tapscott 2010: 5).

As has been held in the course of this study citizenship is defined through social movements from a process of collective action framing, an inherently social constructivist standpoint and approach to social movement theory. This moves beyond state-centric notions accounting for assorted interpretations to rights and the structural barriers, which may limit their full realization. A study of this nature is therefore relevant to look at how social movements - especially those of the Global South who have too often experienced the detrimental effects of limited interpretations to citizenship - construct and experience citizenship as an oppositional tool to socio-economic and political policies.

Collective action frames as a primary theoretical approach for this analysis addresses how citizenship is a concept and practice constructed rather than empirically given. These frames are ‘not static, reified entities but are continuously being constituted, contested, reproduced, transformed, and/or replaced during the course of social movement activity’ (Benford and Snow 2000: 628). It is an evolving framework that considers material, socio-economic, political or cultural conditions in relation to ideological concerns that may inform these circumstances. Therefore, redefining citizenship implies a strong emphasis on

participation and a re-organization to what is defined as the political arena affecting the participants, institutions, processes and agenda of that arena (Dagnino 2008: 30). Such a process resonates with the political and transformative agenda often held within many progressive social movements such as those evident in South Africa.

## **CITIZENSHIP IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA**

The immense history of social movement activism in South Africa is relevant not only for the economic activity that has occurred following the 1994 political transition but must also be noted for what the transition itself represented. The post-apartheid shift in South Africa marked the normative shift from a fight of political nationalism to one of citizenship in a proclaimed liberal democracy. For example, Hassim argues in regards to the women's movement that the 'nature of that transition – that is, the creation of a liberal democratic state in which citizenship rights were accorded irrespective of race, gender or ethnicity – unexpectedly allowed feminists to articulate an agenda of equality...' (Hassim 2005: 55). Two important points are worth mentioning for understanding how citizenship provides a relevant lens and the historical underpinnings within this analysis. First, social movements were evolving the basis of their struggle from one surrounding nationalism and systematic discrimination to one of contesting citizenship where this discrimination still exists however, within a formal structure of so called equality. Second, the emphasis on citizenship under a liberal constitution opened new ways of thinking about political participation (Hassim 2005: 57).

Argued within this paper, social movements, such as the APF, are not only thinking about political participation, rather the very definition of the political system in which they may participate. If we limit citizen participation to merely formal realms of institutional structures this risks missing the many spaces available for engaging in the creative energy and agency of citizens. As such, Hassim accurately notes that while democracy confers to citizens the right to participate in the public sphere, conditions for the effective exercise of those rights are not only set by formal institutions. Citizenship can be exercised and created through social movements and other facets of civil society seeking to articulate the interests of various groups or in the case of the APF, the working class. Exercising citizenship through such politically autonomous mechanisms can challenge ruling definitions of policies and assert accountability from governments to citizens (Hassim 2005: 57). Not only does asserting citizenship through these means challenge institutional policies but also the very basis of how the ruling party may perceive citizenship and the associated provision of rights – a necessary confrontation for civil society and development discourse.

## **A MOVEMENT HISTORY: THE ANTI-PRIVATISATION FORUM**

Established on July 6th, 2000 at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the APF is exactly what its title connotes, a forum. This means that it is loosely structured and quite heterogeneous in participation allowing for flexibility and autonomy for constituent organizations and movements (Buhlungu 2006: 72). As a result, the APF is often considered a formidable social movement representing a platform for solidarity among groups of the left that have broken from alliances with the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) as well as in the townships living the contradictions of South Africa's macroeconomic framework defined under the 1996 Growth Employment and Redistribution's (GEAR) cost-recovery strategies (Buhlungu

2004: 4). Building itself as an ideologically socialist mass movement (APF 2007), the APF seeks to ignite political consciousness within South African townships and encourages collective action as central proponents to their political strategy. Linking and mobilizing various community members are part of how the movement opposes the ANC and the policy implications of economic restructuring within livelihoods of the working class (APF 2007).

Influenced by the strong role that unions played in the end of apartheid and having participated in liberation struggles with the ANC and COSATU, many activists gradually shifted towards South Africa's emerging new social movements such as the APF. Arguably, this shift was in response to discontent over government programs of economic liberalization, and cost recovery strategies in the face of job loss and a lack of social protection. As a result, the movement has expanded to question the role of government under a capitalist rubric directly relating to questions of democracy and local government, water, health, electricity, housing and finally employment and workers rights (APF 2006). Therefore, in opposition to this reality the forum was created from 'political activists and nascent community movements committed to the realization of the historic mandate of the people for the decommmodification of all basic needs' (McKinley 2008). From this observation, the history influencing APF framing of citizenship is in direct relation to the experiences and political identity of a working class discourse and should be considered upon viewing the APF's demands noted in Table 1 below.

**Table 1 – Demands Of The Anti-Privatisation Forum**

- An end to all privatisation programmes like and the return of all privatised services and assets to the public sector, including outsourced and corporatised services.
- The immediate end and reversal of retrenchments that are the inevitable result of privatisation.
- The election of local government candidates who stand on anti-privatisation platforms.
- The free supply of 50l of water per person per day.
- The free supply of the minimum amount of electricity needed for health, hygiene, cooking and heating.
- The introduction of a progressive block tariff system, ensuring free lifeline services cross-subsidised from the rich to the poor, from high-end users to low end users.
- The scrapping of arrears of the poor.
- An end to rent evictions and the attachment of household goods.
- An end to water and electricity cut-offs.
- An increase in the subsidy from national government to local government.
- The repudiation of the Apartheid debt.

Balancing direct action with legal consideration we can refer to the highly publicized Phiri water case. Standing against the Johannesburg Water and the National Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF), the APF and partners have sought to overthrow the pre-paid water system that disconnects thousands of Phiri residents from water supplies when they are unable to pay for meter credits. The resulting communities are frequently forced to go without water for weeks at a time because of a state program that seemingly ignores their socio-economic condition. The case sheds light on South Africa's Free Basic



Water Policy (FBW) demanding that Johannesburg Water give the Phiri community the constitutionally granted right to water through 50 liters per person per day (Centre for Applied Legal Studies 2009). While engaged in a legal battle, the APF and partners have continued with direct protest strongly opposing Operation Gcin'amanzi (Zulu for 'Save Water'). Launched by Johannesburg Water, the purpose of the Operation has been to curb water losses by replacing disintegrated infrastructure with prepaid water meters (Von Schnitzler 2008: 903). Seen as corporatization of a basic necessity for life, the APF has not succumbed to pressure, encouraging mass mobilization, community education programs and legal action in coordination with the Centre for Applied Legal Studies. Provoking civil and political rights, which in turn dictate social and economic rights, the work of the APF has revealed favoritism in South Africa's institutional framework that seems to afford a select population free access or majority control over basic services such as water (McKinley 2009).

## **USING A CITIZENSHIP LENS: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

The discussion surrounding social movements and citizenship is everything but short, and mixed with many issues. While it is difficult within the scope of this paper to grasp how various constructions of citizenship may be felt or experienced by South Africans themselves, there are particular issues and areas of concern that are worth exploring. Therefore, the questions I seek to assess as follows are: what approaches have been used by the APF to inspire new interpretations of citizenship? Who is participating in the movement? Finally, what are the approaches used and how successful have these been to claiming rights associated with citizenship?

### **Litigation for liberation?: Debating civic action and legal approaches**

Attuned to citing contradictory approaches in meeting obligations under major works of legal and political documentation, the APF acknowledges national legislation such as the Bill of Rights and the South African Constitution as well as international including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to name a few (McKinley 2008). Citizenship is therefore considered in an institutional framework of both national and international law. However, in separate interviews with McKinley and Ngwane (2009) it was stated that the APF views the legal system in a pragmatic fashion rather than as a primary source of liberation or for revolution, a statement conducive to a socialist project such as the APF's. Notwithstanding disputes to its applicability, South Africa retains a fairly liberal constitution, affording the APF full advantage of its text to encourage collective activity (Interview, McKinley 2009). Further to this, through engagement with local communities the APF directly confronts considerations of citizenship to push new conceptions 'shaped through actual struggles informed by people's own understandings of what they are justly entitled to' (Nyamu-Musembi 2005: 31).

In a study of the APF's water struggles Marcelle Dawson examines citizenship theoretically and practically, arguing that citizenship may actually be a form of reinforcing class inequality. She argues, 'resistance efforts should not be driven by a desire to belong or to be included, but should instead centre on citizens being actively involved in defining the basis upon which inclusion occurs' (Dawson 2006: 25). This places citizens 'in a stronger

position to claim citizenship rights on their own terms rather than in accordance with the rules set by capitalist agenda' (Dawson 2006: 25). Similar claims are made of working within an established legal agenda although in recent struggles the APF has merged approaches working with Jackie Dugard from the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALs) in rights-based litigation on the now infamous Phiri water case. In Dugard's opinion this case represents an example of how: 'right-based legal mobilization may in certain circumstances offer the left an additional tactic in a broader political struggle' (Dugard forthcoming 2010: 3). This is true 'even if rights-based litigation represents a choice from no choice for impoverished communities and associated social movements – or perhaps precisely because it does – it has the potential to tangibly contribute to the broader struggle for socio-economic emancipation by the left' (Dugard forthcoming 2010: 18). The Phiri water case evolved from a stagnant situation of increasing privatized water and dehumanizing circumstances from pre-paid water meters in some of South Africa's most impoverished communities, placing the APF with a necessity to address current struggles – thus taking on the "rules" of rights-based litigation.

While we can see the additional avenues opened by this change in activism, according to an APF newsletter 'we need to understand that the law in general favors the capitalist class and is also not always accessible to the working and the poor. We also need to have some discussions about getting good lawyers who are prepared to serve the APF on the basis of its politics' (Segodi 2007:6). Therefore, caution is warranted in Dawson's call for movements and civil society alike to form their own working conceptions of what a political sphere should be composed of rather than following a fixed scheme. However, within social movement theory and discussions, caution in using a legal approach is placed as binary opposites. It is rare that progressive movements, such as those challenging political frameworks not just outcomes and policy will be legally represented or similarly funded on the basis of that which they find most pertinent. We must remember that the APF is not merely antagonistic on the point of governmental programming rather they are transformative in their vision for a more social and worker sensitive egalitarian economic framework. As such, citizenship is a lived experience not only in how we participate in democratic structures but similarly enacted in our activism and civil society formations.

While there is no way to directly attribute a reason for the Constitutional court's decision to overturn the verdict in October 2009, there are lessons to be learned for future struggles. In an interview with former APF legal advisor S'phiwe Segodi referring to the Phiri water case, he noted that movements did not place enough emphasis on the case itself and what it was to achieve. Instead, the APF took the discussion surrounding the case beyond its original intent – to provide accessible water supplies in the Phiri Township. Arguably this detracted much needed pressure to the Johannesburg authorities regarding the details of the case, instead mobilizing on broader thematic issues such as privatization. These themes are unquestionably related to the case however; according to Segodi where pressure was needed is the material outcome – the courts verdict on the specific circumstances (Interview, Segodi 2009). We may suggest that the APF needs to discuss this contradiction where framing may be misplaced given the contextual necessities and also to question whom is directing the content of this framing. Moreover, it can be observed that the APF actually undertook quite a transformative step in adopting a legal strategy for this particular situation. Thus it can be seen that the reasoning for a legal avenue are far more grey than frequently discussed.

## **Engaging with the state and civil society**

Within discussions regarding movement strategies, the debate of working with or against the state is frequently treated as black and white – similar to arguments of utilizing a legal approach. Risks of cooptation by bourgeois elites or power structures are most prevalently disputed however, worthy of discussion are evaluations of civic engagement by the Development Research Centre (DRC) of the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Sussex. According to these studies there are a number of ways that citizens engage with the state and claim citizenship outside of simple electoral participation including: Forums created by the state, Non-governmental organizations, Self-organized social movements and parallel governance structures (Eyben and Ladbury 2006: 12).

Whether engaged through a state created mechanism or operating in an autonomous yet parallel governance system, these actions are all made relative to the state. Similar to movement's world wide, this contestation resounds within movement politics of South Africa and that of the APF. Without doubt the APF directly confronts and is often embroiled in a tenuous engagement with the state, contesting the ANC's motives, methods and outcomes for a 'people centered' development. DRC research suggests the importance of social movements in building a more democratically accountable state as they reflect a mobilized and organized citizenry, which in turn tests the states 'practical ability to uphold the constitutional rights of its citizens' (Eyben and Ladbury 2006: 15).

Further to this, the APF seems to caution the presence and purpose of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and forums created through the state for reasons of objectives and overarching goals that are not in line with working class interests. Evident in the APF newsletter 'the struggle continues' NGO's 'are opposed to the heightening of the class struggle, the defeat of capitalism and the victory of socialism. Instead they work to humanize capitalism' (Ngwane and Ntuli 2006:1). Although, Pithouse accurately observes that many organizations or NGOs engaging with or against the state, many involved with the APF, are quite beneficial therefore it is unhelpful to create this false binary. What is useful however, is a distinction between projects, however organized, that pathologise the violence on which capitalism depends while valorizing mass resistance, and those that pathologise direct mass resistance while pursuing a limited reformism that effectively normalizes the greater part of capital's violence (Pithouse 2004: 180).

In an interview with known South African activist and co-founder of the APF Trevor Ngwane, it was stated that he believed the ANC did not have much of a different perspective to what citizenship is. What has occurred is contradictions in the way the government has responded to rights by way of economic policy. As stated by Ngwane 'the economic policies which privatize capital over people creating a contradiction, is where we differ with the government' (Interview, Ngwane 2009). The APF is often critiqued for their unwillingness to dialogue with different factions of the ANC as a method of reaching middle ground or common understandings for practices and concepts towards something like citizenship. This concern resounded in an interview with known labour activist Pat Horn, who explained that non-dialogue with the ANC may limit achieving citizenship in line with a more diverse set of objectives from individuals who do not choose to separate themselves from the formal realms of the ANC (Interview, Horn 2009). However, Ngwane claims the APF's approach to be more about taking action while others are 'busy talking'. In many ways the movement continues to confront the current realities of post-apartheid

commodification and its operational ideologies. Although, the participation of apartheid activists has not dwindled the imagination within the movement for the creation of a new post-apartheid state construction accompanied by an active and integrated conception of citizenship.

### **Criminalizing resistance**

The strategies of resistance employed by the APF have become a source of contention among South African civil society, activists and of course within the formal allegiances of the state. Divisions between approaches of dialogue and those of direct confrontation employed by the APF continue to be a source of disagreement, within the movement and between movements. While the APF continues to encourage collective action, it has similarly been problematic in recent years with the states attempt to criminalize resistance. According to Ngwane (Interview 2009), while not admitted by many within the APF, this has severely weakened the movement over the years as the APF has lost many supporters out of fear or arrest or violence. In his words: ‘the APF is a peaceful organization operating within a democratic country, so when people start getting arrested and getting beat up ordinary people get frightened and they start to think either it is not safe to support the APF and its campaigns or there is something wrong in what they are doing’ (Interview, Ngwane 2009).

State efforts to suppress civic action and political dissent were echoed in interviews with labour activist Pat Horn and gender activist Teboho Mashota. While detrimental to the movements, it is doubtful that a state strategy of oppression will completely dissolve such antagonistic civic actions. During apartheid rule the government began a campaign to suppress freedom of expression and dissent to the point that ‘internally, it became almost impossible to organize politically, as the government murdered or imprisoned activists, or forced them into exile’ (Handmaker 2009: 76). Such repressive efforts however, only served to ignite new, creative forms of civic expression aimed at challenging the legitimacy of the government (Handmaker 2009: 77). While the state repression experienced today is different than that of the apartheid state system, the point worth mentioning is the history of an unwillingness to concede under such confrontation. Rather, civic actors continued to adamantly challenge them and in doing so made strides assisting in the dissolution of apartheid rule. Therefore, previous efforts within mass protest have overcome state repression to the redefining of the political arena into a democratic structure and are now opposing similar state resistance to redefine fundamental principles such as citizenship, which underscore and guide that democratic structure. It is a barrier across much of civil society however, similarly part of civil society to support movements facing such oppression as this only serves to diminish the inherent conflictual discourse necessary for an empowering approach to development.

A word of caution is towards continuing to peg actors such as the ANC as ongoing perpetrators of capitalist expansion. The APF seems to air on the side of caution against dialogue, as many claim this dialogue to rarely be sincere. However, growing state retaliation may be evidence of an emerging resistance on the part of the state and its partners to real dialogue and in turn of understanding the project that the APF seeks to insight. The state’s emerging reactions and furthermore, the recent ruling against Phiri residents in the Phiri water case (APF 2009) display that the movement may be at a crossroads of decisions, signifying a potential necessity for the APF to step up and initiate.

Such dialogue does not only need to take place with the ANC but through continued efforts with the South African Communist Party (SACP) or the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). This in no way implies that the APF should cease its current activities rather, it is to suggest that they diversify their approach opening themselves up to an exchange of idea with actors they contest. Responding to contextual circumstances are as much about a process of framing new ideas of citizenship as it is about repositioning yourself and your strategy to an empirical condition. Without doing so, may leave a movements conception of citizenship more of a normative argumentation rather than a practical application.

## **Competing interpretations and strategies**

How movements define citizenship has been displayed to occur in juxtaposition with a perceived antagonist, in this case the ANC and a South African capitalist class. An antagonist actor is understood in human or systematic terms judged by working ideologies and the methods employed by this actor to achieve the rights associated with citizenship. A further and notable example in South Africa is the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), who through their battle for anti-retroviral treatment has been credited with defining a state of 'health citizenship'. This was in direct contrast to the ANC's attitude at the time of AIDS denialism and continued ignorance of the AIDS crisis in South Africa (Robins 2004: 671). TAC's pursuit for a sense of "health citizenship" through consistent advocacy efforts, albeit some very different from those of the APF, nevertheless invited a new political understanding and attitude with regards to HIV/AIDS. In the case of the APF, the associated research proposes that they are drafting a rubric for the process of a working class citizenship. While there are many issues with this citizenship, social movements operate in cycles of change whereby this definition may be constantly evolving.

Citizenship is at the very core of actions surrounding participation and rights, however, how it is empirically experienced stem from fundamentally different and often-competing ideologies or interests. This battle of competing interpretations is the very battle that the APF is embroiled in with the ANC surrounding the provision of rights for South Africa's working class population. According to the APF it can be argued that the rights of South Africa's working class township residents are failing to be met and even exploited through the ANC's methods of privatization. As a result of the ANC's implementation of a neoliberal macroeconomic framework the APF seem to be constructing a notion of citizenship in opposition to the placement of citizens under a neoliberal structure. In doing so, 'there are no inevitabilities and no teleological paths to follow, and to imagine and act otherwise would be to one again, repeat the mistakes of the past and end up in the organizational and political cul-de-sac of the present' (emphasis in original, McKinley and Naidoo 2004: 22).

While not directly speaking to the concept of citizenship, the APF is actively defining an alternative working class rubric to the way that citizens participate in the democratic arena and the way that they experience their rights. Participation is not from purchasing power, is not mediated by gender, nationality or class and is not achieved through the commodification of basic services. Antagonizing systemic and human constraints to basic service delivery, citizenship brought through radical and working class movements such as the APF includes participation in drafting the structure of the political sphere and how it is to operate. It consists of a working class citizenry engaged in political processes, with a

public realm that is independent from private enterprise and for more direct municipal control over basic resources.

## **CONCLUSION: MERGING CITIZENSHIP AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN PRACTICE**

As new actors emerge and falter in disputing how the state provides services and includes or excludes citizens, citizenship is not merely a state-centric concept but is increasingly related to private actors, social relations among citizens and extends beyond national boundaries to consider global scales. Clearly, there is a resounding problematic surrounding how services are to be delivered and rights are to be met within neoliberal frameworks. Moreover, common activist critiques of engaging with the state and a legal system miss the understanding that citizenship beyond a legal definition requires the agency of citizens to choose multiple or new methods of fighting for their rights. The strategies of activism or engagement chosen by citizens will hopefully serve as an incentive for deeper analysis by NGO's or government sectors to consider not only the socioeconomic impacts but also political implications and messages from such practices. Finally, it serves to highlight for citizens the various structural or social arrangements in which their citizenship may be exercised and similarly redefined.

Not only is the APF concerned with material conditions but also about individuals as members within a political community who retain the right to question the formation of this political community. The APF has grabbed big issues such as water, engaging in multiple methods of activism with participation from various constituents to challenge how these issues are handled. However, as indicated, the APF remains weak in matching what they demand (see Table 1) with how they demand it. Their conceptual underpinnings for socialism or a capitalist overthrow seem to heavily influence their radical methods of engagement. Considering some of their practical demands for state reform and service delivery that would seemingly require the role of the state, the APF continues to be reluctant for dialogue.

In contrast, given the participation of former ANC activists and the nature of opposition within the APF, the ANC seems to be penalizing a movement that is in many ways a reflection of its former self. During the apartheid struggle movements such as those led by the ANC were skeptical of the legal system and of engaging the state. The APF is in a similar position now, with an understandable hesitance to using legal or state based mechanisms especially given the recent outcome of the Phiri water case whereby the South African Constitutional Court ruled that pre-paid water metres are lawful and "reasonable" (APF 2009). This vastly disappointing outcome aside, it does represent a strategy whereby the APF together with other partners, used a new and multipronged approach to attacking a particular issue. The APF's reinvention, adaptation to ongoing circumstances and their will to do what is necessary now and in the future to change it, is the very essence of a process that redefines citizenship as a pluralist, active and democratic process rather than a stagnant legal position within a political realm.

## **CONTINUING THE DEBATE**

Without doubt, as has recently been identified by Marcelle Dawson, state repression continues to persist and in recent years is on the rise (Dawson, forthcoming 2010). It

would be a worthy examination and support mechanism for these movements to identify ways that they can overcome their silencing and potentially if rights-based litigation could be a form of publicly denouncing defense and governmental tactics that limit and narrowly conceptualize citizenship. Let's leave these movements that we are researching about and analyzing with something tangible that is capable of contributing to their struggle.

This article has largely left how the APF's collective action framing resonates with those they target in the townships or beyond, unexplored. A primary discussion within this text has been the binary of interests and interpretations in how South Africa's post-apartheid democracy should look. This duality of interpretations directly relates to those who live among current circumstances. An important area of further research is among those identified by the APF as target populations suffering the detrimental effects of cost-recovery strategies. This would be to discover what is not being addressed or if movements such as the APF seem to encapsulate community concerns in their advocacy efforts. Moreover, this would reside with an analysis of the gendered concerns within such movements. Recent events surrounding the APF expelling members for the gang rape of a 29 year old woman, leaves much to be questioned not only about participants concerns but participant attitudes, particularly of a gendered concern (The Vaal Weekly, 2010).

Finally, a worthy examination is the APF's pragmatic legal approach especially in light of the disappointing outcome in the Phiri water case. While the Phiri water case did not have its desired outcome, it displayed an integrated approach of civic mobilization in concert with legal advocacy. What remains to be evaluated are the concerns previously adopted by S'phiwe Segodi of: how can movements such as the APF who see the law pragmatically, support legal initiatives while advancing their overarching ideological and material goals? Further, when merging seemingly competing narratives as evident in a socialist movement such as the APF, is it possible that the narrative from the strategy subsumes the overarching goal of the movement? Undoubtedly historical apartheid resistance efforts drawing from both camps could particularly inspire such an approach and evaluation. Many movements the world over continue to battle with this very question, therefore it would be interesting to examine how the APF can grow from such practices as our 'struggle continues'.

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