

The thesis addresses the municipal system in South Africa which has gradually evolved as a result of decentralising process in the 1990s and it compares it with the role of municipalities in earlier decades. The current as well as the previous South African political systems are analysed from the point of view of decentralisation and federalism and, at the same time, the present-day position of provinces within the system is also discussed. The aim is to evaluate the scope of decentralisation in South Africa and to validate or falsify the hypothesis on the structural connection between the decentralisation process on one side and the conflict between two sub-state actors in Western Cape (provincial government and the metropolitan municipality of Cape Town) on the other side and, subsequently, to attempt to classify the South African municipal system on the basis of analysed data.