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Perspectives in Education

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The policy of *Perspectives in Education* is to promote rigorous critical discussion and debate about education, particularly in South Africa. At this stage of South Africa's educational development, the vigorous exchange of views is vital. The major purpose of *Perspectives in Education* is to clarify the issues at stake in the relation between education and South African society.

The members of the editorial committee wish to affirm their unequivocal rejection of all discriminatory principles and practices in education, and in particular their rejection of the racist and discriminatory features of the South African education system. They furthermore express their committment to a single non-racial education system which will be established by the democratic participation of all South Africa's peoples, and which will provide for the development of their full potential.

Editorial

The system of Bantu Education which produced the schools that have been centres of social conflict since 1976 has been the focus of many analyses. It is a system which has commonly been seen as a uniquely South African phenomenon. In this issue of *Perspectives in Education* we include an article by Jonathan Hyslop which argues that the system of Bantu Education has been unique in its racist and repressive character, but that a careful investigation shows that it also shared features of a more universal development in the educational history of societies that have undergone the transition to monopoly capitalism. For Hyslop, Bantu Education is the South African version of an education order based on mass schooling. He shows that the crisis around and within the mission school system in the decade preceding the introduction of Bantu Education was such that ruling class spokespersons of all political stripes (and not only the National Party) were advocating restructuring of the system. All wanted to see a system which would secure effective control over large numbers of urban youth unaccommodated by mission schools, and provide the increased numbers of semi-skilled workers required by the labour market.

While the system of Bantu Education, more particularly its urban dimensions, has been the subject attracting the greatest attention, the determinants and dynamics of schooling in South Africa's rural areas have been relatively neglected. Graaf attempts to redress this imbalance by a study of school enrolment rates in three Bophutatswana regions. He argues that 'rural parents, their capacity to carry certain costs, their priorities and values, are central aspects of understanding rural schooling'. There are solid reasons, he shows, why parents are uninterested in educating their children. Far more significant than income level in determining these attitudes are local power and gender relations. By drawing attention to local and regional determinants, Graaf challenges functionalist forms of analysis from which the practices of agents in shaping their lives are absent.

The extent of educational disadvantage in rural areas is often reflected in high levels of illiteracy. Mastin Prinsloo, a former literacy teacher, questions in his contribution, the shift in the

labelling of literacy programmes to Adult Basic Education (ABE). In so doing he explores the hidden but inseparable connection between knowledge and power as discursive practices, arguing that ABE becomes yet another discourse to maintain boundaries between different classes of people.

In our Discussion section, Steven Appel takes issue with the way Alan Morris, in *Perspectives in Education* vol 9 no 1, has used the categories 'class' and 'culture' to imply that specific cultures have particular class belongings.

With this issue of *Perspectives in Education* we also want to thank Wally Morrow of the Education Faculty, University of the Western Cape, for his inestimable services to *Perspectives in Education.* Wally founded the journal in 1976, devoting his energies to promoting open and critical debate and discussion about all aspects of South African education in its pages. Wally now leaves the Editorial Committee of *Perspectives.* His heritage, however, will be carried on in the new *Perspectives* which will appear next year, unchanged in character and focus, and differing only in appearance and in an increased reliance on articles showing evidence of original research. This new departure is not solely attributable to pressures from dominant definitions of research. It also owes a great deal to a deeply-felt need to tap and make available more than we have done in the past the seminal research on education that is being conducted in South Africa. With this shift we hope to participate more actively and meaningfully not only in local but also international debates on education. To some extent *Perspectives in Education* has already begun to do this: The 'new look' journal will attempt only to deepen this trend. We thank Wally for helping to set us on this path, and trust that he will continue, with us, in the search for an open and democratic cultural politics in South Africa.

ARTICLES

The concepts of reproduction and resistance in the sociology of education: The case of the transition from 'Missionary' to 'Bantu' education 1940-1955

Jonathan Hyslop

In his paper on the 1980 school boycotts, Molteno[1] raises two problems which are central to current writing on the nature of educational systems and educational change. He asks whether the notion of education as reproducing existing social relations, and particularly as reproducing the workforce, does not render the idea of the failure of the education system inconceivable. If school reproduces society how can it be that South African schools have become centres of social conflict and upheaval? How can 'reproduction' explain a situation where schools cease to produce the kinds of workers required by capitalism? The other issue of great importance that he raises is that of the way in which we discuss resistance, and specifically student resistance. He suggests that an over-simplified concept of reproduction is linked to an over-simplified concept of resistance. Not every outbreak of youthful rebellion, he reminds us, should be glorified as 'resistance': change involves a conscious process of transformation of the educational and social system. The constructive political actions which he considers in his account of the 1980 boycotts should, Molteno says, be seen as a process of 'cultural production'.

This paper aims to consider the problems raised by this challenge to received notions of reproduction and resistance, and to apply the conclusions of that discussion to the analysis of a decisive upheaval in South African education — the change from the 'missionary' to the 'Bantu Education' system.

Broadly my stance is as follows: I accept that a mechanical application of the concept of reproduction does in fact lead to a 'functionalist' conception of education, which makes it impossible to explain either the

breakdown of an education system or even changes within that system. But, I would suggest, such a crude use of the concept — while present in the work of some it most noted exponents[2] — is not the only one possible. In capitalist society — and especially in those capitalist societies which have entered a phase of industrialization under monopoly conditions — the state inevitably uses the school as a direct instrument of policy, consciously tailoring the education system to what policy makers perceive as economic, political and social ends. While ideological factors and fractional interests may mean that these perceived needs are not identical with the requirements of capitalist accumulation, it would be strange indeed if there were not some relationship between the two. Therefore I would argue that a historically sensitive application of a concept of reproduction or 'correspondence' between school and the capitalist labour market can be made without lapsing into functionalism. To observe that a reproduction process takes place in education is merely to recognize that a viable capitalist state must attempt to ensure a relationship between education and economy. The fact that in certain circumstances this relationship can break down does not negate the usefulness of the concept.

A particular education system is established in response to specific class conflicts and specific needs of the dominant class. In time it may become increasingly irrelevant to contemporary circumstances as, hidebound by its own ideological and bureaucratic inertia, it fails to respond to the changing world around it and thus generates growing internal conflicts. Such a situation will necessitate a struggle by the dominant class to change the education system — precisely because it requires schools to play a reproductive role. Even in the current South African situation it is not accurate to suggest that schools have totally ceased to perform this role. The state only considers it worthwhile to close sections of the schooling system which undergo the most extreme levels of conflict. And the current educational restructuring provides the state with possibilities of a more useful and controllable education system which opponents of the state are ignoring at their peril. Thus student insurgency within an education system is in my view evidence of internal conflicts which are quite explicable within the framework of 'reproduction'.

My argument here should not be read as one which views the state as a monolithic entity, or as one which takes a purely 'top-down' view of educational change, that ignores the role of subordinate social groups in shaping their own education. Clearly, the state is an arena of struggles

between sectional interests within the dominant classes and of struggles waged by sectors of the dominated classes who can attain a purchase on state institutions. However, I would argue that in a situation such as South Africa's, where the mass of the population is denied direct political representation within state structures, there is a far sharper distinction between struggles within and outside the state than there is in countries with liberal or social democratic political systems which encompass full representative democracy. Where popular and working class movements enjoy direct political representation they can inject their political-educational programmes directly into the political process. In an oligarchic system such as South Africa's, this is impossible: the pressures of the masses on the educational terrain are relatively 'external' to the state. Changes in educational policy in South Africa are often responses to the actions of the dominated majority, and especially the working class. But they have been precisely that — responses thrashed out in conflict within the dominant class. We should thus beware of modelling our understanding of educational struggle in South Africa on European or American approaches which expand the sphere of 'the state' to encompass all educational politics.

In South Africa, the conflicts within the state have been vitally important, but they have been ones conducted to a great extent by dominant group representatives, with mass politics being in varying ways a central determining factor, yet 'outside' the actual decision-making process. My emphasis on politics within these dominant groups in this paper doesn't ignore the fact that the framework in which these groups act is largely determined by mass politics; but it does recognise the reality that the imposition of state policy does occur in a more authoritarian way than in a liberal democracy. The extraordinary authoritarianism of the South African State is also a reason to avoid giving too much weight to micro-level cultural resistance in shaping educational policy. Much of the history of modern South African education involves the over-riding of such resistance by edict or force. It is only in periods of general political crisis such as the present that cultural resistance in education has been able to force itself through fissures in the state strucutres opened up by wider forms of resistance. In summary, in South Africa the masses have not been able to impose aspects of their own political-educational structures, although today this may be becoming more possible, as the collapse of classical apartheid and the rise of a new mass politics opens up a policy disarray within the state.

This provides us with a basis for assessing Molteno's critique of resistance. I fully agree with him in respect of the need to differentiate conscious, political action from random outbursts. To give blanket endorsement to every 'militant' action is a short-sighted approach which does nothing to encourage the development of coherent challenges to the existing education system. Lumpen violence masquerading as 'struggle' ought never to be diplomatically ignored. But even the most undirected and individualistic outbreaks of students do tell us something about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the schooling system. The nature and form of such outbreaks tell us how the schools fail in their tasks of social control and labour reproduction. Thus while we should definitely distinguish conscious political action from lumpen violence, the latter may be as symptomatic of the problems of the education system as the former.

Reproduction debates

In the course of this paper I want to put forward a few concepts which I think are of assistance in constructing a non-functionalist usage of the reproduction concept. Before doing so, however, I would like to consider the two seminal contributions to the debate on education as reproduction made during the 1970s — those of Louis Althusser[3] and Samuel Bowles and and Herbert Gintis[4].

In his 1970 essay on ideology, Althusser advances the notion that all those institutions which may be considered to maintain the hegemony of the ruling class constitute 'ideological state apparatuses'. These operate at the ideological level determined by economic forces only in 'the last instance'. Ideologies are material: they are embodied in apparatuses and their practices, which contribute to the reproduction of the relations of production. The school is, for Althusser, the dominant ideological apparatus in contemporary capitalism. Teachers who strive to break out of their place as servants of the apparatus do so largely in vain. Althusser's great contribution in this piece was to focus attention on the role of the school in sustaining existing social relations. This focus was fruitful in moving the direction of the study of education toward a linking of classroom processes and class relations outside the school. It helped to shift Marxist educational thought in the West away from the perspectives dominant from the thirties to the early sixties which had stressed inequalities of access to education, while leaving the nature of education relatively unexamined.

However Althusser brought to the debate a theoretical baggage-train which caused extensive confusion. The failings of his account of the school's role are legion[5]. Is the school really the dominant ideological apparatus — what about the family, which certainly has a more pervasive influence on the child? Does the school really function by ideology rather than repression — what of compulsory attendance and corporal punishment? Don't economic factors affect education directly, not only in the mysterious 'last instance'? Is education a *state* apparatus at all? To regard all schools in this light is to collapse the Gramscian distinction between state and civil society. Notoriously, Althusser's picture of the school is so monolithic that there seems little scope for internal conflicts or effective rebellion within it. Thus his formulation of the concept of reproduction, for all that it is an important contribution, does lay that concept open to the charge of functionalism, in a way which would not have been the case in a more flexible theoretical framework.

A far more utilizable 'reproduction' approach is that of Bowles and Gintis. In a study which remains impressive in its scope and execution they argue for the existence of a 'correspondence' between the social relations of production and the social relations of education. Thus:

> . . . the educational system tailors the self-concepts, aspirations and social class identifications of individuals to the requirements of the social division of labour[6].

They argue that in contemporary capitalism, education acts to reproduce a certain type of workforce, subordinating personal development and egalitarian considerations to this end. The 'correspondence' of education to work operates through certain clearly identifiable mechanisms: by producing individuals with the right technical and cognitive skills for the performance of certain jobs, through education's role in legitimizing social inequality; through the rewarding and labelling in school of characteristics appropriate to different positions in the occupational hierarchy; and through producing a 'stratified' consciousness amongst the workforce. What occurs in the classroom mirrors and prepares for the relations of the workplace: hierarchy, alienated labour, and competition.

It has become almost ritual amongst Marxist writers on education contemptuously to distance themselves from Bowles and Gintis' alleged 'economism', 'functionalism', etc[7]. Some of these critics put one in mind of Sebastiano Timpanaro's savagely polemical comment that:

> Perhaps the sole characteristic common to virtually all varieties of Western Marxism is their concern to defend themselves against the accusation of materialism[8].

It is true that Bowles and Gintis are weak on the issue of the school's role in the construction of identities based on gender differences and, to some exent, on the classroom transmission of dominant political ideology. But surely a focus on the place of school which begins from the social division of labour is not an unreasonable starting point for an historical materialist analysis.

The charge of functionalism is in fact far harder to sustain in relation to the work of Bowles and Gintis than in considering that of Althusser, who seems to get off lightly on this score. They specify particular mechanisms through which economic change can be translated into educational change — the mechanisms of 'pluralist accommodation' and 'class struggle' — but more of how internal conflicts can develop within educational systems, and how those systems change through political struggle. Their work, which is the best analytical account of education and educational change in a capitalist social formation, needs to be critically considered and developed rather than dismissed en bloc.

The education order and mass schooling

If one is to discuss educational change one must be able to differentiate effectively between different forms of education system, in terms which permit one to assess what has changed and how. For this purpose I now need to define two terms which help to delineate the nature of education systems. The first of these terms is what I will call the 'education order'.

The education order is the specific ensemble of educational ideologies, practices and institutions dominant in a particular society across an extended period of time. Major crises in a given social order are reflected in and affected by related crises of its educational institutions. As I have suggested earlier, a dominant class, if it is to overcome such a crisis, must remodel the educational institutions along with reforming other aspects of society. It must, in my terms, lead a transition from one education order to another. The new education order, if it is to be effectively established and contribute to the resolution of the crisis, must 'correspond' broadly to the economic and political requirements of the dominant class. However, once established , this correspondence may weaken, making the schooling system less effective as a reproductive agent. The education order develops its own bureaucratic and pedagogic practices which may become

increasingly out of line with surrounding social reality. Internal conflicts between students, teachers, and administrators grow. State attempts to implement new policies may be resisted by those wedded to the ideology of the existing education order. Once again the state must impose a new educational order if the dominant class is to surmount the crisis. Both student political resistance and less focussed student discontent are signs of the growing incapacity of an education order. The difference between them is that political action has the possibility of affecting — or in a revolutionary situation dictating — the outcome in terms of the nature of the subsequent education order.

My second term is a well known one — mass schooling[9]. But I would like to give it my own definition. The most important break in the educational history of any nation certainly comes when the state accepts responsibility for channelling the bulk of the juvenile population through structured educational institutions for a substantial period of their lives. It is this transition that constitutes the birth of a mass schooling system. Such systems are very recent in origin: none existed anywhere in the world 200 years ago. Schooling on a mass scale has thus been a feature of the historical era of capitalist industrialization. But in particular, the development of these systems appears to have coincided with the advent of monopoly capitalist industry. Why? Because the forms of social reproduction required in a society dominated by monopoly capitalism are distinct from those necessary under mercantile or competitive capitalism, and cannot be provided without mass schooling. If it is true that in certain historical circumstances mass schooling has preceded monopoly capitalism (Denmark, parts of Germany, regions of the contemporary 'third world') it is also true that history furnishes no examples of a developed monopoly capitalist social formation that lacked mass schooling. Let us enumerate the reasons for this.

First, there is the issue of labour requirements. A workforce divided on the artisan/unskilled basis characteristic of competitive capitalism can to some extent be reproduced without a full-blown school system. The artisan can be trained through apprenticeship, while his acquiescence in the existing social order can be secured through the craft ethos of his fellows, and the price artisan skills can command in the labour market. The unskilled worker, whose position may be undermined by the lack of strong working class organization and culture often characteristic of the early stages of proletarianization, can be disciplined through direct supervision, repression and religion. Schooling may assist in this process, but it is not essential.

However, with the transition to monopoly industry a different division of labour is required. Now, industry needs vast numbers of semi-skilled machine operatives, who must be numerate, literate, and instilled with a certain internalized work discipline. It requires, too, a multiplicity of junior managers, technicians, supervisors and so on who must not only have skills which require extensive formal education but also a commitment to the structures within which they operate. Far more complex mechanisms of reproducing and maintaining the existing social division of labour are thus called for. Following Bowles and Gintis, we can then argue that a monopoly capitalist social order requires an educational structure which will: allocate those who have been subjected to appropriate socialization and skill training to different positions in the labour market; legitimize social inequality on the basis of educational achievement; and instil work discipline through acceptance in school of hierarchical, alienating and competitive work conditions.

However, one does need to go beyond Bowles and Gintis' categories to explain other key requirements which necessitate mass schooling in a monopoly capitalist order. The second feature that I want to look at is mass schooling's role in social control of urban working class youth. Industrialization and proletarianization necessarily lead to rapid growth in their numbers. Many of these are likely to be marginal to the labour market and end up on the streets where they pose a threat in terms of crime and potential riot to the smooth operation of capitalist dominance. Typically in the early stages of industrialization 'philanthropic' organizations address this issue. But the greater scale of monopoly industry, and the greater pressure on the state to intervene in and moderate class conflict will eventually force it to intervene in and regulate the lives of working class youth. Historically, this has been a major factor in the rise of mass schooling.

Thirdly, mass schooling is required in order to ensure the hegemony of the ruling class in the political sphere. In the conditions of monopoly capitalist industrialization, the state needs to socialize politically the children of millions of urbanized peasants who are thrown into the towns by the penetration of capitalist relations to the countryside. In some cases these newly urbanized people will have little sense of national identity (e.g. 19th century Europe), in others they may be foreigners (turn of the century USA). Generally the growing strength of the working class numerically will pose the danger of the rise of proletarian and popular challenges to ruling class hegemony. It thus becomes essential to subject working class youth to

a socialization process capable of providing them with a common and socially acquiescent political ideology. (The success of the American high school in transforming immigrants into 'Americans' in a single generation is perhaps the outstanding example here.)

Finally, I would argue that the imposition of mass schooling involves what MacDonald conceptualizes as the imposition of the dominant class's form of the family[10]. The process of proletarianization notoriously leads to the disintegration of traditional, extended, peasant families. But the need for the uninterrupted production of the next generation of labourers, and for informal control of working class youth, requires that the ruling class supervise a rapid reconstruction and maintenance of the proletarian family. Further, it requires that the form of the family cheapest to maintain, most divisive of the subordinate class and most congruent with capitalist rationality be put in place — the nuclear family. The gender roles taught in school underpin the type of family strategy required by social reproduction. Again, these issues are generally only faced by the state in the monopoly phase of industrialization. When a small proportion of the workforce is in industry, it does not threaten social reproduction if the workers' conditions fall below a point conducive to it: other labourers can be pulled off the land to replace them. But once the more massive industrialization of the monopoly phase has got under way, the dominant class needs to ensure that its labour supply is self-renewing, for it faces an increasingly permanent working class, which will collapse demographically if not provided with minimal conditions of reproduction.

How does this relate to origins of 'Bantu Education' in South Africa? In considering this important historical transition, Marxist authors have found themselves in something of a dilemma. On the one hand there is a healthy wish to challenge liberal accounts which glorify and romanticize the mission system[11]. Such accounts present Bantu Education as an absolute break with previous educational history, ignoring the role of the mission schools in maintaining the existing social order and reproducing the labour force before 1955. However, in trying to counteract such views there has been a tendency to de-emphasize the importance of the transition to Bantu Education[12]. This is equally inadmissable — the scope and importance of that change cannot be doubted. We thus need to construct an analysis of Bantu Education which does not over-emphasize either its continuities or its discontinuities with what went before.

I would suggest that the concept of a change in the education order may be of some utility here. The 1940s and early 1950s presented the ruling class

with a multi-dimensional urban crisis, involving the problems attendant on rapid expansion of secondary industry, massive urbanization, and mass discontent around community issues. Under these strains, the social order of the 1920s and 1930s was coming apart: the institutions which had then been able to guarantee order and stability were now increasingly unable to do so. It became apparent to the most diverse sections of the ruling class that a restructuring of the totality of social institutions was imperative. The solution imposed by the Nationalist government was one possible form of ruling solution to this crisis. Another fraction of the ruling class may have imposed a solution of a different type — but none could have avoided a massive restructuring without placing themselves in profound danger.

The change of education order from that associated with the mission churches to that associated with Bantu Education was the necessary educational component of the Nationalists' strategy. Like other institutions the existing system of predominantly mission-run schools with limited state subsidy was failing to perform the tasks required of a schooling system in the new situation. The ruling class could thus not avoid making a drastic change in the education order. That shift was also, I would suggest, a shift into an education order of a mass schooling type: Bantu Education, I would argue, represents the South African form of the introduction of mass schooling.

During the late 1950s, for the first time the majority of black South African youth were subject to an extended period of institutionalized schooling. This form of schooling had, of course, an exceptionally racist and class discriminatory character, reflecting the nature of the South African state. Nevertheless, it represented an endeavour by the state to achieve the same sort of goals as mass schooling attained elsewhere in the world. As elsewhere, the transition to mass schooling coincided with the development of monopoly capitalist industrialization, and sought to solve the same problems as mass schooling elsewhere — new labour needs, control of urban youth, the need to establish ruling class political hegemony, and the reconstruction of the working class family. I will suggest in the next section of this paper that not only the Nationalists (NP), but also the United Party (UP) and indeed important missionary spokesmen recognized that the existing education order was collapsing. There was far less divergence in the educational policies advocated by UP and NP intellectuals than is generally believed. The ruling class broadly accepted the need to change the education order; their differences were now over the form that change should take.

In considering the crisis of the missionary education order, I want to differentiate between the crisis *around* it and the crisis *within* it. By the crisis around the education order, I mean its inability to reach and deal with sufficient numbers of urban youth to make it an adequate ruling class policy instrument. By the crisis within the education order, I am referring to internal conflicts of the mission schools, which were making them increasingly unviable institutions.

The crisis around the education order, 1940-1953

The most central failing of the mission system was the fact that it was unable to accommodate the majority of urban youth within its structures, or to hold those who did enter the schools for long. School inspectors estimated in 1952 that of African children of schooling-going age on the Rand, 58,138 were in school while 116,276 were not[13]. The attrition rate of those who did attend was exceptionally high: in 1945 only 50% of pupils in the Cape studied beyond the first two years of school, and only 2% reached beyond Standard VI[14]. State provision of schools remained very limited: perhaps 2000 out of 7000 schools were state institutions by the early 1950s. But the position in the Cape particularly was very poor with only 24 out of 2296 recognized schools being state provided[15]. Secondary schooling was very weak: it was only in the 1930s that St Peters became the first school in the Transvaal to take African pupils to matric level[16].

Mission schools were thus unable to provide education for most of those of school age in the urban South Africa of the 1940s and 1950s. Yet in an endeavour to deal with this problem they expanded pupil intakes drastically, imposing a massive strain on their existing resources[17]. They thus were failing to perform effectively either in relation to the majority of potential pupils who they were excluding, or in relation to the minority of actual pupils whom they took in. While a few leading mission schools like St Peters provided an outstanding education to their students, standards in the majority of the mission schools were abysmal. The Eiselen Report was thus doing no more than giving a realistic appraisal, from a ruling class perspective, of the actual situation of the existing schools when it said of them that they:

(i) . . . are providing education for a relatively small proportion of a backward (sic) population;
(ii) the rate of elimination at an early stage is very high;
(iii) the standards of achievement in the schools as measured by

examinations and achievement tests are low'[18].

The Nationalist perception of the inadequacy of mission education was thus not purely an ideological one, but reflected a grasp of the demographic failure and internal problems of those schools. The introduction of Bantu Education was not an ideologically motivated, wanton destruction of an effective mission school system, but rather a response to the ruling class's real need to restructure education.

It also needs to be understood in terms of an attempt by the ruling class to relate the education system more closely to changing economic needs. What is of particular interest here is that the common impression that a United Party government in the late 1940s and early 1950s would have carried out an educational policy far more favourable to high-level black skill training than that pursued by the Nationalists does not seem to have been borne out by the UP's own policy pronouncements. There was a far greater degree of overlap of policy in this area than is generally acknowledged. During the 1940s the growth of secondary industry, with an increasingly strong monopoly sector, generated a vast number of jobs for semi-skilled machine operatives, two thirds of these being filled by black workers, of whom 50% were African[19]. But the complementary growth of technical and supervisory staff in monopoly industry did not lead industrialists to train blacks for these positions: industry preferred to rely on white skilled labour[20]. Far from encouraging black skill upgrading the Smuts government's attitude was consistent with this new racial division of labour. The third interim report of the Van Eck Commission in 1941 argued that there should be an increased emphasis on training whites for skilled labour in industry, instead of providing them with unskilled jobs in government departments[21]. The Secretary for Native Affairs outlined the Smuts government's policy to the De Villiers Commission in the following terms:

> The needs of the country for native journeymen and the existing opportunities for their employment in the recognized trades are much more restricted than those for semi-skilled men. Moreover, it can be argued that the generality of the Natives should be satisfied with an intermediate position for the time being . . . the unfolding of extensive Government development schemes in Native areas will bring into being a large number of skilled posts[22].

Thus the UP, as the Nationalists were to do, did not see ruling class labour requirements as necessitating black skill training at artisan level or above,

and moreover justified this situation on the basis of largely mythical opportunities in the reserves or homelands. Another justification of the policy put forward by the De Villiers Commission was representative of current thinking on the issue: 'The mentality of the Native', it opined, 'makes him peculiarly suited for repetitive operations'[23]. There was a clear recognition by the UP's policy makers that a restructuring of education was required to generate the semi-skilled African labour they sought. The system they advocated clearly prefigures that realised under Bantu Education.The De Villiers Commission urged educational expansion in order that 'we could profitably use so many efficient Native man-hours'[24]. Just as the Eiselen Commission was to do, they urged the linking of education and work skills: 'for their present stage of development (Africans) profit much more from practical subjects than from academic subjects'[25]. (The De Villiers Commission also made a fortunately unimplemented recommendation for the establishment of training camps for 14 to 18 year old blacks, linked to labour bureaux[26].)

The difference between NP and UP in respect to directly labour market oriented aspects of their education policies lay more in the energy with which the Nationalists moved to restructure education than in their basic perception of labour requirements. Thus when the Afrikaner educationist and head of Diepkloof Reformatory, W Kieser, wrote that the African student 'leaves the school with just enough training to disincline him to any manual work'[27], or when the Eiselen Commission wrote that 'the general orientation of school work is too academic'[28], they were expressing a perception also present in UP circles and amongst industrialists. While it is true that Nationalist policy was more sympathetic to the labour requirements of agriculture than the UP would have been, their educational policies did not in the 1950s obstruct the production of the type of labour that industry by and large required.

During the 1940s and 1950s great disquiet was shown by missionaries and white politicians of all stripes about their inability to exercise any form of control over urban youth. From a number of very different quarters there were calls for the expansion of schooling as an answer to this problem. In his 1946 presidential address to the South African Institute of Race Relations, Senator Edgar Brookes spoke on this theme:

> In our towns thousands of children are growing up juvenile delinquents, and a State which is prepared to maintain a police force and reformatories is apparently not prepared to increase the expenditure necessary to keep them off the streets during their

formative years[29].

Brookes advocated compulsory education as a 'preventative against delinquency and crime'; his concern over the urban crisis was reflected in his suggestion that compulsion could be introduced more slowly in the rural areas[30]. Similar views were expressed by others associated with the UP. The Smuts government's Secretary for Social Welfare voiced the view that compulsory education was needed to overcome the 'scolly' problem: in yet another pronouncement presaging Bantu Education, he called for a differential syllabus which would include social and personal hygiene[31]. The De Villiers Commisson reported that:

> A number of witnesses, including responsible municipal officials contended, in evidence before the Commission, that juvenile delinquency among Natives was assuming alarming proportions, especially on the Rand, and that compelling all Native children of school age to attend school would reduce the incidence of delinquency. It was argued that these children, being usefully occupied during part of the day would acquire habits of orderliness and industry, and become amenable to discipline[32].

Similar themes were taken up not long after by Nationalist spokesmen. The 1952 Van Schalkwijk Committee noted 'an appreciable increase in the juvenile population of the urban areas during the last decade . . . (who) fall an easy prey to the vice of the towns'[33] and bemoaned the fact that 'absence of compulsory education in towns . . . results in greater freedom from supervision of non-European juveniles'[34]. In the same year W Kieser wrote of how 'thousands of Bantu children laze around the locations, aimless and without the necessary supervision . . . the number of juvenile delinquents grows daily'[35].

It was certainly a fact that juvenile crime was at high levels, especially on the Rand. It was also the case that the state's apparatus for dealing with it was very limited: there was only one reformatory for African male youths (Diepkloof), and one for female youths (Eshowe) and four institutions run for less hardened offenders by the Department of Welfare[36]. Kieser supported his argument that lack of schooling contributed to delinquency with statistics demonstrating that, of his charges at Diepkloof, 29% had never been to school, while a further 47.5% had only studied to Standard Two or below[37]. There was thus a widespread belief amongst the dominant social groups that juvenile crime was a growing threat to social order, and one that could most effectively be countered by mass schooling.

But control of urban youth was also seen as a problem at the political level. Kieser, for example, noted that the nature and enforcement of the pass and liquor laws had brought the law itself into contempt amongst the urban black community[38]. He also observed resentment of 'so-called' (!) discrimination, and bitterness and envy towards white economic privilege[39]. The former was (inevitably!) largely attributed to 'incitement and ideas with a strongly Communistic influence'[40].

Official thinking also identified the weaknesses of township family structures as a source of weakness in terms of control of working class youth. The Van Schalkwijk Committee saw 'the neglected children of divorcees and unmarried mothers and of poor or destitute families' as particularly prone to fall prey to urban 'vice'[41]. Kieser complained that 'The parents are not in a position to give their children the necessary guidance'[42], and also expressed shock at what he perceived as the unwillingness of black parents to discourage their children from engaging in theft[43]. Kieser was concerned at the black family's failure to inculcate Western gender stereotypes, reflected in the fact that one out of eight African convicted juvenile delinquents was female, compared to one out of thirty white delinquents[44]. That the family in the urban areas was not on a nuclear pattern is represented in the fact that only 305 of the 839 pupils at Diepkloof came from families in which both parents were present[45].

Thus it was apparent by the late 1940s and early 1950s that the school system, the reformatories, and the family structures were not controlling urban youth in an effective manner. It was also apparent that schools were not geared to providing the increased numbers of semi-skilled workers required by the labour market. From a number of different perspectives, ruling class spokesmen advocated schooling expansion as the solution to this impasse.

The crisis within the education order, 1940-1953

But if the mission schools were not addressing the task of schooling urban youth effectively, how healthy were they internally? I would suggest that they were in a parlous situation. They were experiencing virtual financial collapse, a high level of student militancy, and a breakdown of the acceptance of missionary institutions by African teachers and the community. Contrary to the impression given by liberal critics of Bantu Education, the mission system was almost unviable in 1955. Any political leadership wishing to create a schooling system which effectively served the needs of capitalism would have had to create a new education order.

The crisis of the missions manifested itself first of all as an economic one. The De Villiers Commision identified 'financial starvation' as one of the chief causes of the deficiencies of African education[46]. Brookes described a situation where almost every training college and high school 'had to live from hand to mouth' and where the existing school buildings were 'from an architectural and health point of view as well as from a purely education point of view, very unsatisfactory'[47]. The principal of Healdtown complained in 1945 that although teachers were paid by the Province, all other charges, including food and medical attention for 900 people and the upkeep of buildings, had to be met from ordinary income, which consisted almost entirely of fees[48]. At the same time, the tradition of the missions meant that schools did not usually charge pupils for books, bearing these costs themselves[49]. The impoverishment of mission finances contributed to growing student discontent. Traditionally, students at the missions lived on a 'starchy and monotonous' diet[50]. This continued into the forties, provoking continual resentment amongst students. While more perceptive missionary figures like Brookes came to recognize the negative effect this had on student attitudes[51], funds were not available for the missions to be easily able to change their practice in this regard.

Student discontent in mission schools, expressed in boycott incidents, took place as early as 1873[52], but became fairly common only after about 1920. It is my view that the numbers of such incidents increased fairly sharply from about 1940. Hirson has sought to argue that incidents in the 1930s were hushed up by the government, and that this accounts for the limited numbers reported before the forties[53]. But this seems to attribute a greater degree of control over the press to the government than it actually possessed. It is more likely that the political and social conditions of the 1940s generated something of a student upsurge. Certainly leading missionary figures felt the situation deteriorated from the early 1940s. Rev R Shepherd of Lovedale stated at the time of the student riots in his institution in 1946 that there had been 16 major student upheavals in missions over the last two years[54]. The Rev AEF Garrett wrote in 1953 of the 'growing disregard for discipline and authority in every area of life...'[55].

Most of the school riots of this period were sparked off by very limited issues — inadequate food, lack of student representation, unpopular rules[56] — but the intensity of these incidents, involving in many cases the burning and stoning of buildings and mass arrests suggest deeper causes. I would argue that the political and social ferment of the forties brought about a breakdown of previously existing trust relations between students

and missonaries. This breakdown involved a partial rejection by students of the mission school ideology, and increasingly ineffective operation of the mission education system as conflict and distrust undermined it.

The missionaries themselves made the link between political radicalization and student action. A missionary memorandum opined that 'many forces, all too often negative, mischievous and injurious in their approach combine to inspire irresponsible and unworthy reactions to the church and its institutions'[57]. Rev BK Hazell of Faku Training Institution wrote in 1953 that 'subversive' literature had been distributed in his district for some time, mentioning particularly the Unity Movement publication, 'The Torch'[58]. In November, teachers had sold pupils copies of 'The Student' which Hazell identified as 'the product of clever Communist agitation' and which contained a 'garbled' account of the recent Healdtown riots with 'the suggestion that other students should arise in the same manner'[59].

Some contribution to the politicization of the missions was certainly made by returning war veterans, radicalized by their service experiences, who went for teacher training on their return. A case in point is Potlake Leballo, later a major leader of the Pan African Congress. After leaving the army, Leballo went to Lovedale where he participated in the leadership of the 1946 riot[60]. He then managed to obtain entrance to Wilberforce Academy, where the headmaster, Rev BS Rajuili, described him as 'quite interested in the disturbance of authoritative administration'[61]. He subsequently led a sit-down strike at Wilberforce, in conjunction with a group of teachers[62].

There were major problems from the forties onwards in maintaining the numbers of white teachers who had traditionally been present in the missions. A growing exodus of them took place, partly because of the turbulent conditions in the mission schools and partly because of the lack of promotion possibilities there[63]. According to ZK Matthews, there was a decline in the proportion of motivated white missionary teachers[64]. Furthermore, the government's insistence that the missions offer white teachers the same wages as their counterparts in white schools made it difficult for the missions to afford them[65].

Simultaneously, there was a breakdown in the relationship between the black teachers in missions and the mission authorities. Missionaries began to be aware of the new unwillingness of black teachers to accept a subservient position. Shepherd noted in 1945 that:

> African teachers, particularly graduates, are claiming exactly the same treatment and to have the same customs as Europeans who are their fellow teachers . . . African teachers feel that their salaries, as compared with European teachers doing the same work, are too low and this leads them to think that there can be little or no claim on extra services[66].

Shepherd was responding to an observation by Rev D W Semple of Blythswood that he found his African teachers unwilling to undertake extra-curricular activity[67]. It was hardly surprising that black teachers were increasingly resentful. Lovedale, for example, had a whites-only top table in its dining hall[68] and its senior posts were occupied by whites only[69]. There was a strong suspicion on the part of teachers that the missions passed over suitably qualified African teachers for such posts in favour of whites: In 1952 the local branch of the Cape African Teachers Association criticized Healdtown on this score[70].

This all combined with a growing antagonism on the part of communities toward the missions. The older and more conservative section of the rural elite still felt strong links to the missions. G Bikitsha told the Blythswood Governing Committee in 1946 that there was much 'disappointment' with recent student actions, and praised the principal of Blythswood for allowing meetings of local associations and attending them: 'good understanding, goodwill and harmony have resulted and displaced or replaced misunderstanding'[71]. But already these close, paternalist relations were disintegrating under the impact of the social crises of the 1940s. Black opinion was increasingly unwilling to give missions the benefit of the doubt. Brookes commented in his 1946 address that during the Lovedale disturbances:

> . . . large sections of responsible Bantu opinion seem to have condemned the authorities and the missionary bodies without condemning the indiscipline and licence which lies behind such action on the part of adolescents[72].

The 1946 riots were followed by numerous appeals on the part of the expelled students[73]. Govan Mbeki, in his capacity as General Secretary of the Transkei Organized Bodies, lobbied the Secretary of the Association of Heads of Native Institutions calling for an enquiry into the issue[74], and led a TOB delegation which met Shepherd about the dismissals[75]. In 1950, following disturbances at St Matthews, the Rev JA Calata, as President of Cape African Parents Association, convened a public meeting on the issue

near the school[76]. CAPA sent a letter attacking the mission for calling in the police, for discriminating against Africans in appointments and administration, and not fully warning those involved in the riots[77]. Following the events at Healdtown in 1953, the Rev S Pitts was widely criticized for his disciplinary action against students[78]. A group of Port Elizabeth parents led by W Tshume circulated a Memorandum complaining that 'the relationship between the Institution and the parents have (sic) deteriorated for the past two years'[79]. Popular sentiment was no longer with the missionaries.

Conclusion

The implementation of Bantu Education must thus be understood as a coherent response by the ruling class to certain crucial aspects of the social crisis of the 1940s. Through a political struggle, a new education order was imposed. For the first time a South African education order with the characteristics of a mass schooling system was put in place. Bantu Education for the first time drew a majority of black youth into the schools, thus dealing with the demographic ineffectiveness of mission education. Schooling was subordinated more closely to capitalist labour requirements producing sufficient unskilled and semi-skilled labourers to sustain the great boom of the 1960s. The fact that a greater proportion of children were in school contained (for a time) the threat of juvenile crime and urban riot.

There were systematic attempts to foster the growth of the urban working class family. The schools taught, to some extent, the political ideology of the Bantustan system, with some success inculcating a sense of the 'reality' of the Bantustans, and fostering ethnic division amongst the oppressed, thus presenting an ideological basis for the acceptance of political rightlessness in the central state. Tight-fisted government education spending policy enabled the state to carry out all of this on the cheap. The restructuring combined with high levels of political repression enabled the state to create an educational system which was well able to serve the needs of capitalist reproduction in the 1960s and 1970s. Within itself the system generated new contradictions which led to the outbreak of the 1976 riots.

We can conclude then that reproduction only becomes a functionalist concept when it is conceived of as occurring automatically. Our case study has demonstrated the way in which a particular education order can lose its reproductive capacities by becoming increasingly less articulated to the

needs of capital. Resistance by students reflects and is part of the crisis of an education order, whether it is conscious action which recognizes and tries to act on the crisis, or unstructured violence which simply responds to it. In such a situation it is only through a political struggle on the part of capital that the reproductive capacities of education can be restored.

Finally, we should note that while the 'Bantu Education' system was particularly racist and repressive in its nature, it was not an absolutely unique phenomenon. The advent of monopoly capitalist industrialization necessitated in South Africa as elsewhere, a transition to an education order based on mass schooling. If the consequences for education were unusually horrific, the process was not one without parallels.

NOTES

1 F Molteno 'Reflections on Resistance — Aspects of the 1980 Students Boycott' in M Lawrence (ed), *Kenton-at-the Stadt 1983 Conference Papers,* Mafikeng: University of Bophuthatswana, 1983.
2 For example, L Althusser 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in L Althusser *Essays on Ideology,* London: Verso, 1984.
3 *Ibid.*
4 S Bowles and H Gintis *Schooling in Capitalist America,* London: RKP, 1979.
5 See the criticism by M Barrett *Women's Oppression Today,* London: Verso, 1984, pp 120-124, on which I have drawn.
A M Wolpe 'Education and the Sexual Division of Labour' in A Kuhn and A M Wolpe (eds), *Feminism and Materialism,* London: RKP, 1980 exemplifies the deficiencies of the Althusserian account of education.
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7 See M Sarup *Marxism and Education,* London: RKP, 1979), chapters 10 and 11, and the 'critique' of Wolpe *op cit.*
8 S Timpanaro *On Materialism,* London: Verso, 1980 p 29.
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20 *Ibid*, p 121.
21 *Ibid.*
22 UG 65/1948 *Report of the Commission on Technical and Vocational Training* Chairman: Dr F J De Villiers, Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1948, para 1871.
23 *Ibid*, para 1866.
24 *Ibid* para 1837.
25 *Ibid*, para 1798.
26 *Ibid*, paras 1883-1923.
27 Kieser *op cit*, pp 70-1. This and other quotes by Kieser is translated from the Afrikaans.
28 Eiselen Commission *op cit*, para 1047.
29 Brookes *op cit.*
30 *Ibid.*
31 De Villiers Commission *op cit*, para 1824.
32 *Ibid.*
33 UG 31/1952 *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Abuse of Dagga* Chairman: L van Schalkwijk, Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1952, para II 48.
34 *Ibid*, para II 53.
35 Kieser *op cit*, pp 41-3.
36 *Ibid*, p 96.
37 *Ibid*, p 53, pp 73-74.
38 *Ibid*, p 58-9.
39 *Ibid*, p 81-3.
40 *Ibid.*
41 Van Schalkwijk Committee *op cit.*
42 Kieser *op cit*, p 70.
43 *Ibid*, pp 59-60.
44 *Ibid*, p 63.
45 *Ibid*, p 69.
46 De Villiers Commission *op cit*, para 1793.
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75 MS 16 453 Anonymous 'TOB Mission to Lovedale: Justice Promised': Shepherd to Mbeki, 8 October 1946.
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78 MS 16 598 Rev A E Garrett to Rev S Pitts, 28 October 1953.
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Rural parents and school enrolment rates in two regions of Boputhatswana: subjects for reconsideration

Johan de Villiers Graaf

Introduction

This study is based on a questionnaire survey done in three rural villages in Bophuthatswana during July, 1984. Questionnaires were administered by research assistants in the villages of Morokweng (121 households) and Ganyesa (174 households) in Ganyesa region, and Khonutsoane (119 households) in Lehurutshe region. (See Table 1 for a summary of population characteristics in the three villages). This was followed up by a series of structured interviews with teachers, school principals, school inspectors, circuit education officers and others with knowledge of the area.

The paper comprises a theoretical and an empirical section. In the first theoretical section, we shall illustrate the shortcomings of functionalist analysis, both at the abstract level and specifically with regard to the South African political economy, and suggest ways of re-introducing agents into this kind of analysis. From there we consider the particular macro-structures which would conceivably exercise an influence on our agents' decisions. We argue that neither the direction nor the efficiency of rural schooling in Bophuthatswana is of particular concern (a) to capital, (b) to the South African state, nor (c) to the Bophuthatswana government at the present time, and that even if they were, something quite radical would need to be done to rural schooling if it was to acquire the capacity to perform any meaningful function within these structures.

An additional problem with these three factors is that none of them appear capable of explaining the discrepancy in educational enrolment levels in adjacent regions or localities of Bophuthatswana. The differences between localities is of critical importance in our analysis. Having shifted these three structural factors into the background, we focus attention on

the role of parental decisions in sending or withdrawing children to/from school and the economic environment within which these decisions are made. While they have less control over curriculum content in rural schools, parents exercise considerable influence over how many schools exist and how many children fill them.

In the second empirical section we examine the economic and non-economic considerations which form the basis for parental decisions: How much money must be paid in sending such or such a number of children to school? How does this compete with other economic and status needs? How much income does a household forego by having so many children sitting on school-benches instead of herding animals or earning a wage? How easy or difficult is it for communities to mobilise to get new classrooms or schools built in their villages? Do children really increase their wage-earning capacity by attending school, and if so, by how much? And, finally, to what extent are village communities able to make their voices heard against the inherent tendency for the political and economic core-area (at Mmabatho) to peripheralise or discriminate against them? While parents may not explicitly articulate these considerations, they are all elements which add up to a composite rational decision-making process. It is through their subjective evaluation of the relative weight of each of these factors that agents mediate, reproduce and change the political and economic structures into which they are inserted.

The view from the village: a conceptual reorientation

In this section the aim is to justify our interest in parents' decisions in their children's schooling. Parental attitudes and action in the educational area are not usually the focus of attention in South African educational writing, for two reasons. First, the influence of structuralist and functionalist thinking on Marxist writings has shifted attention away from subject's decision-making of any sort. Structuralist thinking requires that social structures and constraints virtually cancel out freedom of movement for social agents, whether they be individuals, classes or other groups. Functionalist thinking, by contrast, requires that a social system's needs will determine to a large extent how its constituent parts operate. In 'strong' functionalist thinking, constituent parts are *always* functional to the whole. We shall not here discuss the inadequacies and fallacies in these kinds of thinking, which topic is dealt with fully elsewhere[1].

Secondly, where social agents' decisions and actions are acknowledged,

attention is often focussed on the ruling class. And the ruling class is seen to deploy its instruments of control with such machine-like efficiency that the outcome of social interaction is never in doubt, hardly needing analysis. As Cleary writes of homeland financial dependence on Pretoria: 'The implications for political control are too obvious to require spelling out.'[2] Or as Southall writes in analysing the position of the Transkeian petty bourgeoisie: 'So severe are the structural limitations imposed upon the bantustan economy that the emergent homeland petty-bourgeoisie has little option but to reinforce and strengthen its ties with Pretoria . . . its situation is almost wholly constrained by its almost total continuing dependence on white power'[3].

Our approach, by contrast, argues that we need to rethink quite seriously the way in which rural schools are integrated into the South African political economy. And this needs to be done at both the objective and the subjective levels.

At an objective level, the function which rural schools perform is significantly different from that of urban schools. Rural children, in fact, spend so little time in their schools (and we shall see exactly how little in the latter part of this paper) that schools are not given much chance to perform any function at all. We can explain that by looking at the mechanisms by which schools are conventionally seen to operate: (i) socialisation (or the inculcation of attitudes and values); (ii) the transfer of knowledge and skills (ranging from literacy through various kinds of technical competence to problem-solving and self-actualisation); and (iii) allocation (or the variation in the numbers and levels of school-leavers to mesh with the changing labour-requirements in the economy)[4].

It is evident that in each of these areas a school's impact is crucially affected by the amount of time that children spend in the school. Socialization theory conventionally allocates far greater influence to parents than teachers at primary school ages. Whatever impact schools may have is undermined where parental attitudes are not congruent with those of teachers, and this is particularly likely in rural areas where traditional tribal values hold sway[5]. Even this influence would be negated if children denied the school's legitimacy and relevance either in the employment arena or otherwise. The possibility that this is, in fact, the case arises from the considerable number of children in our survey who leave school, of their own accord, and often against their parent's wishes.

More important, the lack of fit between educational qualifications and wages illustrates clearly that, below Std Five, the rural school's allocative

function can be ignored. (See Table 5 and the discussion below.) In short, whatever it is that rural schools impart to their pupils, for the most part it is not relevant to the needs of capital.

At a subjective level, the powerful individuals and groups who, in an urban context, are normally concerned with the way schools perform — economically, politically and socially — have their anxieties and interest focussed on other areas — the headline-catching areas of township unrest. The ruling class have their time taken up by more pressing concerns. The schools of Morokweng, Ganyesa and Khonutsoane are, for them, literally and figuratively, very far away. And this lack of concern is reflected in the silence which pervades both government and academic writing with regard to rural areas. The De Lange Commission Report hardly mentioned the word, 'rural'. Kallaway's authoritative work, *Apartheid and Education*, is equally reticent on the subject. Private sector interest in education via bodies like the Urban Foundation, Anglo American Chairman's Fund, does not go beyond township borders[6].

And if the ruling class in 'White' South Africa has its attention focussed elsewhere, the Bophuthatswana government is not much more interested. Although at a rhetorical level concern has been expressed at the lack of development in Bophuthatswana's rural areas via the Wiechers Commission Report, and at the parlous state of rural schooling via the Mokotime Commission Report, in concrete terms very little has been done to alleviate the problems. Attention and the major part of the budget is focussed on the capital, Mmabatho, and its schools, technical colleges and the university.

The local context

In order, then, to understand the context within which rural schools operate we need to examine *local* power groups for it appears that they do not mesh with the national power network in the way that the urban Black elite do. They operate in a more isolated context.

At the local village level the power-holders relevant to the school are the chief or headman; the circuit inspector; school principals and teachers; and parents. The initiatives, attitudes and decisions of these local groups are thrown into sharp relief by the system by which rural schools are financed. For the Bophuthatswana government (as most other homeland governments) provides neither free education nor free school buildings. Rural parents must pay for their children's entry into school (by means of

fees, funds etc.) and for the buildings in which their children are taught. Unlike urban Black schools both inside and outside homelands, the ability and willingness of parents to carry this double educational cost is, therefore, a crucial variable in determining how many children are able to attend school and how long they stay there.

It is only once that fact is understood that we can begin to explain how school enrolment rates and educational levels vary so sharply from region to region, from village to village and between the sexes. Conventional educational theory with its structuralist and functionalist concerns gives us no purchase on this kind of local variation. After all, if rural schools are to be functional to capital, there is no evident reason why one homeland region should be more functional than another; or one village more functional than its neighbour; or, for that matter, why girls' education should be more functional than that of boys'.

It bears emphasizing that the quantitative aspects of primary schooling assume far greater importance in rural areas. In urban areas where school attendance rates are relatively high, school buildings not so scarce and school fees relatively low or non-existent, attention can be shifted to qualitative aspects like pass rates and the content of curricula. In homeland rural areas the number of children who are turned away from primary schools each year is still disturbingly high. The space to accommodate such children and the people who control the expansion of that space (i.e. parents) loom much larger than in urban areas. The same applies to those who must carry the costs of pupils' education. In short, rural parents, their capacity to carry certain costs, their priorities and values are central aspects of understanding rural schooling.

Why do parents withdraw their children from school?

In the sections which follow we shall analyse each of the following considerations in parental decisions and attempt to show which are the significant and which the less important factors. In selecting these elements we have drawn on suggestions made by interviewees as well as those from academic sources: How much money must be paid in sending such or such a number of children to school? How does this compete with other economic and status needs? How much income does a household forego by having so many children sitting on school-benches instead of herding animals or earning a wage? How easy or difficult is it for communities to mobilise to get new classrooms or schools built in their

village? Do children really increase their wage-earning capacity by attending school, and if so, by how much? And, finally, to what extent are village communities able to make their voices heard against the inherent tendency for the political and economic core-area (at Mmabatho) to peripheralise or discriminate against them?

The question at the head of this paragraph, 'Why do parents withdraw their children from school?', sets the theme for some of the answers to the above questions, but also underlines a particular bias in our interviewees. Village parents appeared to our interviewees to be uninterested in educating their children. This may be an understandable bias given the fact that most of them were educators who had had experience in urban areas. But, as we shall show, there are also quite solid objective reasons why parents are right to be less than enthusiastic about the benefits to be gained from education for their children. A lack of interest in investing in education should not be seen as something irrational or 'tribal'.

The direct costs of schooling

The direct costs of schooling are those related to school fees, books, uniforms, other occasional contributions required of parents, travel costs and boarding fees (for secondary school pupils). It was our expectation that household income would be intimately related to school attendance variables: (i) the number of children of *schoolgoing age* in each group who are not at school for financial reasons (financial non-attenders), (ii) the number of children of *working age* who have in the past been withdrawn from school for financial reasons (financial dropouts), (iii) the average educational level (measured in years of schooling successfully completed), and (iv) the school attendance rate (measured as the percentage of the age-group 7-19 who are attending school).

For the purpose of this investigation our sample was divided along several lines of stratification. These were (i) income-group (high — earning more than R250 per month, middle — earning between R125 and R249 per month, and low — earning less than R125 per month), (ii) sex of the household head (female-headed households are conventionally expected to struggle), (iii) village membership and (iv) the ownership of agricultural resources (for farmers, their children's school attendance can entail significant costs).

Table 1
SUMMARY OF SAMPLE POPULATIONS IN MOROKWENG, KHUNOTSOANE AND GANYESA

	Morokweng (n = 121 households)		Khunotsoane (n = 119)		Ganyesa (n = 174)	
A. Employment	**Number**	**Av. Wage**	**Number**	**Av. Wage**	**Number**	**Av. Wage**
Mines	62	214	29	265	62	206
Farm-workers	19	37	20	50	23	64
Domestics	28	42	3	52	29	65
Labourers			32	106	15	130
Nurses	7	201	0		3	650 (n = 1)
Teachers	5	297	0		11	340
Other			PPC 17	289		
Pensioners	43		19		23	
Self-employed					11	
Housewives	51		54		118	
EAP (15-59yrs)	431	% Unemployed 24.6	442	% Unemployed 38.2	562	% Unemployed 19.6
B. Dependents						
Unemployed	106	Fem. 74(69.8%)	169	Fem. 122(72.2%)	110	Fem 54(49.1)
Over 60 without pension	26		29		85	
Children at school	286		171		383	
Children not at school: 6 and under	143		260		174	
Children not at school over 6	48		119		38	
Total children	458		550		595	
% of 7-19 age-group at school	77.8		43.6		79.6	
Total dependents	590		748		790	
Total sample population	929		834		1154	

Income groups

The most commonly mentioned reason in our survey as to why (i) children of school-going age are not now at school, and (ii) why children who are of working age were in the past withdrawn from school, is the inability to pay the costs of schooling. And this varies significantly with income-level, as one would expect. Those households with lower incomes have more children in the abovementioned two categories than those with higher incomes. (See Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2
THE NUMBER OF FINANCIAL NON-ATTENDERS PER HOUSEHOLD

Income Group	
Low	0.42
Middle	0.30
High	0.28

Table 3
THE NUMBER OF FINANCIAL DROPOUTS PLUS NON-ATTENDERS PER HOUSEHOLD

Income Group	
Low	1.1
Middle	1.3
High	0.76

More important, however, than income-levels for our dependent variables was the village where households lived. Even when income-level is held constant, Khonutsoane village displays substantial educational disadvantages. This applies to all our variables. School attendance rate in Khonutsoane is 43.6% of the 7-19 age-group in comparison to 77.8% and 79.6% in the other two villages (see Table 1). The number of financial non-attenders per household (0.78) is three times higher than for Morokweng village (0.24), and twenty-five times higher than for Ganyesa village (0.03).

When school absentee rates are controlled for income-level, the importance of the village in which schools are located becomes even more apparent (see Tables 4 and 5). While absentee rates vary clearly but gradually over the different income-levels in Khonutsoane, in Morokweng and Ganyesa this variation is not at all clear. However, absentee rates in all income groups are dramatically lower in Ganyesa village than for both the other two villages.

Table 4
THE NUMBER OF FINANCIAL NON-ATTENDERS PER HOUSEHOLD

Income Group	Khonutsoane	Morokweng	Ganyesa
Low	.92	.28	.04
Middle	.68	.00	.08
High	.79	.14	.00

Table 5
THE NUMBER OF FINANCIAL NON-ATTENDERS PLUS DROPOUTS PER HOUSEHOLD

Income Group	Khonutsoane	Morokweng	Ganyesa
Low	1.7	1.1	0.5
Middle	1.4	2.4	0.5
High	1.4	1.0	0.3

This is an interesting result, not only for the fact that it contradicts our original hypothesis that educational variables would correlate strongly with income-levels, but also because Khonutsoane is not necessarily a 'poor' village. About 20% of the economically active population work at the Slurry cement factory with an unusually high average income of R289 per month (compare average wages in Table 1) plus extensive welfare benefits. One might have expected the village to be able to draw on this substantial group of well-paid wage-earners to finance school-building operations or through extended family networks, to cover the school costs of individual children. Either these mechanisms do not operate the way we expected or they are overshadowed by more powerful factors. We shall return to this discussion below.

Female-headed households

The second basis for stratification was the sex of the household head. Female-headed households in our sample were substantially over-represented among those households with financial difficulties in keeping their children at school. While female-headed households represent only

21.9% of all households, they form 40.9% of those presently struggling to keep their children at school.

We should be careful not to assume that all female-headed households are uniformly disadvantaged. Research in Lesotho and Botswana indicates such women may be adequately provided for by working sons, brothers or lovers. Particularly at risk will be those women who are older, without a supporting wage-earner or from poorer families[7]. This is well illustrated in our sample. Although female-headed households do cluster in the lowest income group (being 33% of this group), there are significant numbers of such households in the other two income groups (being 8% and 16% of the middle and high income groups respectively).

Our discussion thus far has produced some interesting conclusions. First, while absentee rates do vary over income-levels in Khonutsoane village, the differences are not clearly marked in the other two villages. Secondly, while female-headed households are not uniformly poor, they are overrepresented among those who struggle to keep their children at school. As we shall see later, this is related to the fact that a significant number of such household heads are grandparents. Thirdly, far more significant than income-levels is the village where parents reside. What is it about Khonutsoane village which makes school attendance rates differ so dramatically from the other two villages?

The answer to this question appears to be related to the capacity of the village's headman to provide support for school-building activities. It is in this sense that Khonutsoane finds itself in a particularly disadvantaged position. Its population is composed of people resettled from either the 'old Khonutsoane' located a few kilometres to the east of where it is now, or from Ottoshoop. As such the members of the village are not members of the Moiloa tribe, nor was their original headman related to the Moiloa chief's family. This appears to be the reason for a measure of condescension and prejudice by Dinokana village (where the chief of the Moiloa clan lives). The people of Khonutsoane are referred to as 'makurukuru' — the half-castes. As a result, the Dinokana tribal authority is, among other things, inordinately slow in making funds available for school-building in Khonutsoane. This happens because monies collected in or donated to Khonutsoane village must be deposited in the tribal authority's coffers. Expenses are then covered by application to the tribal authority for reimbursement. But this takes a very long time, and often only after intercession by the local magistrate. During 1983 the original headman was replaced by a member of the Moiloa family. Despite this

enhanced claim to legitimacy, matters have actually deteriorated somewhat. The new headman appears to be uninterested and lethargic. The initiative for the collection of monies is left entirely with the school principals[8].

Whether the Khonutsoane inhabitants are subject to unusual prejudice or not, the friction between tribal authorities, on the one hand, and parents and teachers, on the other, seems to be widely felt throughout Bophuthatswana. The Mokotime Commission (inquiring into the provision of educational facilities in rural areas) reported: 'Throughout its deliberations, the commission found the tendency for the parents with their institutions and the 'educationalists' to blame the traditional authorities as being the main cause for the existence of such a poor state of affairs'[9].

School finances

While the legitimacy of tribal authorities leaves much to be desired, it is the system by which school-building is financed which places a particularly heavy burden on rural communities in Bophuthatswana. To be brief, rural communities are expected to carry the greatest part of the costs of building new schools or adding classrooms to old ones. In *theory*, this is not the intention. Following the principle introduced by the Bantu Education Act of 1953, the Bophuthatswana government today undertakes to share, on a 50-50 basis, the costs of new classrooms (but not of administrative offices, staff-rooms, ablution blocks or fences — these are wholly financed by the community if they are built at all). In *practice*, rural communities cover 100% and more of this cost.

It happens like this. Under the old Bantu Education system, for every rand collected by the community, the Department of Bantu Education provided an equivalent amount of up to R700 per classroom[10]. Subsequently the amount available rose to R2000 for a primary classroom and R2500 for a secondary one to keep pace with the rising costs. Following the takeover of educational control by the Tswana Territorial Authority in 1972, the cost of building a classroom gradually rose to stand (as it does today) at R10 000, but without any adjustment in the original financial subsidy. With the result that in order to build a primary classroom in 1985, a rural community pays 80% of the building costs (R10 000 minus R2 000) as opposed to 50% previously. What aggravates matters is that the Department of Education expects classrooms to be completed before the

subsidy is paid. In practice, therefore, the community collects the full R10 000 for a new classroom. When the supplementary R2000 is paid, and this often takes some time, it is, in Ganyesa village at any rate, used to build classrooms in outlying villages around Ganyesa. The reason for this is that at Ganyesa, the chief, being relatively young, is unable to stand up against the older members (uncles) on his tribal council. They are then able to siphon off funds from the much larger Ganyesa village to their smaller villages nearby.

The Mokotime Commission was of the opinion that two major problems lay at the root of the problems with regard to the financing of school facilities. The first concerned the state of uncertainty as to who carried the ultimate responsibility for providing school buildings. The second concerned the amount of money available from government sources. 'A glaring deficiency in the subsidy system is that the costs of erection of administration blocks, ablution blocks or latrines and fencing are not taken into account for purposes of subsidies.' But in the final analysis, the funds available for subsidies are, in the Commission's opinion, simply inadequate[11].

As can be seen, a number of institutions are involved in different ways in the financing of different aspects of educational needs. While it is, in the opinion of the Commission, the Department of Education which is legally responsible for taking the initiative in this matter, established practice has left things in the hands of local institutions, without any clear indication as to whose authority applies in which areas, with the result that 'there seems to be an inter-person and inter-institutional state of mistrust and jealousy'. The remedy for this would, according to the Commission, be to spell out clearly in legislation exactly how duties are to be allocated[12].

Conclusion

In this section we have spent some time discussing the public and private aspects of financing the costs of education in rural areas. The intention has been to highlight some of the severely demotivating burdens placed on individual households and individual communities. As we expected, female-headed households find the job of keeping their children at school quite difficult. But contrary to our expectations the income-level of a particular household is not necessarily an important factor. Households with very similar income-levels have very different experiences in this regard *depending on the village in which they live.* An important factor here appears to be the strictness with which regulations are applied by

individual school principals. But it is the effectiveness, initiative and prestige of individual chiefs, headmen and their tribal councils which distinguishes clearly between villages. On all our educational variables, Ganyesa village appears to be especially advantaged and Khonutsoane village especially deprived no matter how much individual households earn.

Finally the ways in which 'aided' or 'community' schools are financed puts very serious constraints on the expansion of rural schools throughout Bophuthatswana. The system is ambivalent and confusing, and pits communities and school councils against their tribal authorities. The money budgeted by central government, on the other hand, is drastically inadequate, and the manner in which it is administered is designed more to discourage than encourage the expansion of schooling.

The opportunity cost of schooling

Opportunity cost refers to the cash-earnings or other contributions which a household sacrifices by keeping a child in school. Younger children in rural areas can get jobs on White farms especially during harvest-time. In the village household children of schoolgoing age are expected to perform certain tasks. Young boys are expected to herd cattle or small stock from as early as 4 years of age (some say 7). School attendance can interfere with the performance of these tasks so parents may decide to withdraw their children, particularly boys. This helps to explain the quite sudden drop in the number of boys as compared to girls from the end of Std One in Bophuthatswana enrolment figures[13].

But this hypothesis has not been sustained by our evidence. Those households which do own animals do not show a lower average education level in the 16-25 year age-group. In Khonutsoane village, in fact, animal-owning households have a higher average educational level in this age-group than other households. In addition, our survey indicated quite a small number of people employed in white agriculture, even on a casual basis (4.3% of the EAP) of whom only 8 were below 20 years of age and none below 16. Whatever it is that pushes or pulls children away from school, it is not the prospect of employment at a young age nor the need for animal-herders of a relatively young age.

The economic value of education

When we ask how parents assess the economic value of education, what

we mean to say is, first, how do they assess the contribution that educated children are likely to make to overall household income, and, secondly, how will more years of education affect this contribution?

While we were unable to extract survey information concerning parents' views on the economic value of education, there is considerable objective evidence which indicates that below a certain threshold level an individual's educational level does not significantly influence his earnings. In two major areas of employment for wage-earners in our sample, mining and agriculture, there is very little premium on rising educational levels. On the mines, and at the Slurry cement factory, promotion occurs via in-house training programmes and not educational levels.

Evidence taken over the whole of Bophuthatswana by the Bureau of Market Research in 1981 shows that for the rural population, people with up to two years of education actually earn less on average than those with no education at all. With 3-6 years of education (Stds One to Four) average earnings rise by less than a third (29%) above the level for those who are illiterate. (See Diagram 1.) At this level average earnings (R120 p.m.) are those of an unskilled labourer. It is only with seven or more years of education (Stds Five and Six) that rural earnings rise significantly (by 60% to R148 p.m.). Evidence from our survey shows this more dramatically. Even people with 4-6 years of education (the curve marked G&L in Diagram 1) are earning less than those with no education at all, while wages for those with 7-8 years are only 27% above illiterate levels (at R184 p.m.).

This is, however, a somewhat simplified picture since age appears to be a very significant intervening variable. There is a very strong inverse relationship between age and average educational level. (See Diagram 2.) Average educational level in the 16-25 year old group is 6 years, but only 2 in the 46 and above group. If one differentiates average wage by age-group, then, (see Diagram 3), *the 7-8 year level of education from Stds Five and Six once again appears to be the common threshold point.* From this point wages rise significantly above the illiterate level, but in different measures for different age-groups. Above Std Four older people earn higher wages than younger people even with similar educational qualifications. More importantly, up to Std Four, which is the stage at which most children are leaving school, there is no correlation between educational level and income at all, whatever the age. For the majority of rural children, therefore, the amount of education they are likely to get will not affect their wage-earning capacity. Is there then any reason why they should attend school at all?

Non-economic values

We should be careful not to assume that education is valued only for its economic rewards, or job security. The conventional wisdom as set out by Todaro postulates that demand for education will be determined by the amount of education perceived to be sufficient to qualify an individual for entry into modern sector employment opportunities. Demand for education will therefore correlate positively with (perceived) urban-rural income differentials, the probability of success in finding urban employment, direct private costs of schooling and opportunity costs[14].

But this is an incomplete picture. On this scenario parents would have very little reason for sending their children to school when the economic value of education falls, as when farmers do not wish urban jobs for their sons, or when daughters are being prepared only for marriage, or when urban salaries fall, or when in periods of economic decline, jobs are simply not available. Oxenham argues that in these circumstances demand for education will indeed fall, but not below a certain minimum level since there are non-economic cultural values attached to education. Thus in Mexico villagers perceived education as a weapon against oppression through providing access to the oppressor's language and to calculating skills. Literacy and numeracy and access to a wider world of knowledge acquired a social value and prestige. In some instances, failure to afford schooling carried a social stigma. Alongside these values schooling was also seen as performing a disciplining function[15].

In our study examples of all these non-academic and intrinsic values occur. Education is seen as enlightenment, gateway to literacy and as protection against exploitation and against youth delinquency. Exactly at what minimum threshold level these apply is difficult to say at this point. We would expect this value to drop for uneducated parents who do not themselves perceive the intrinsic value of education.

That schooling as a source of discipline for children is important in our villages is understandable. The long-term absence of fathers and often mothers, too, means that children are being brought up by other members of the extended household, many of these being female and either very old or relatively young. Truancy was seen by several interviewees as a serious problem in Ganyesa village. This is reflected in the frequency with which parents see the school as a bulwark against delinquency. Schools stand in loco parentis. In Morokweng village, in response to the question: 'Have (children) suffered from (not going to school at all or not long

enough)?', one out of three responses mentioned delinquency as a problem. Interestingly, female household-heads seem to be particularly concerned about this problem. Although female-headed households constitute one in three of all household-heads in Morokweng, they provided almost half the responses mentioning delinquency. Their average age is 61.

Simultaneously, many parents are unable to keep their children at school even when they can afford it. At a certain age (probably 15 or 16) children start making their own decisions on whether to stay at school or not. Parents report quite frequently that children leave school against their wishes. In Morokweng village, after the inability to pay the school costs, this was the most common reason why children who are now of working age are reported to have left school — 34% of all responses.

In summary, rural parents attach great value to the putative 'disciplinary' effect of school attendance. It is likely that they think this aspect more important than the enhanced wage-earning capacity to be gained from school attendance. School-leavers from rural areas only benefit from their educational qualifications if they have, at least, passed Std Five.

Urban bias

It is an accepted tenet of rural sociology that village communities cannot match the political clout of their urban counterparts. Urban communities concentrate the rich, the educated, the vocal, the influential. The weak position of rural communities and their subsequent lack of developmental activity has been documented in some detail in Bophuthatswana by the Wiechers Commission. Here we find a careful analysis of the reasons for the ineffectuality and weakness of chiefs as a class of leaders. They are entrusted with few responsibilities, they are without funding sources, or personnel, they are permitted very little initiative. They are often uneducated, and sometimes of 'poor character' and 'indigent'. For their part, the Mokotime Commission provided extensive evidence of the neglect of physical facilities for rural schools and the drastic inadequacy of government funding.

While chiefs and headmen may be weak, they remain the symbols of their community. They are still the link between government and the rural people. Without their approval and mediation very little could happen in the average village. What this means is that in the absence of chiefly initiative, it is left to inspectors, circuit education officers and MP's (who

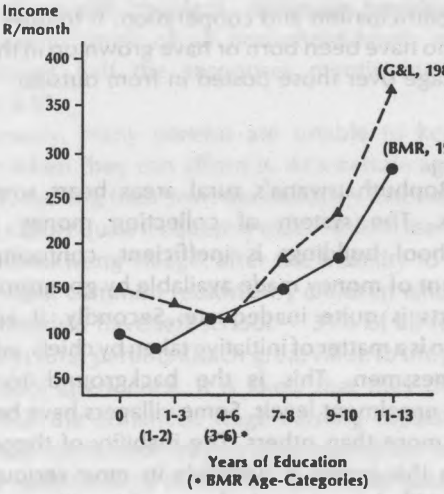
are often ex-teachers) to promote the expansion of schooling.

But they need to understand the detail of local politics to move chief and people, to get their participation and cooperation. It follows that senior education officials who have been born or have grown up in the area have an immediate advantage over those posted in from outside.

Conclusion

First, schooling in Bophuthatswana's rural areas bears some severely debilitating burdens. The system of collecting money from rural communities for school buildings is inefficient, confusing and discouraging. The amount of money made available by government to back up community efforts is quite inadequate. Secondly, it appears that educational expansion is a matter of initiative taken by chiefs, educationists and wealthier businessmen. This is the background to the sharp differences in village enrolment levels. Some villagers have been pushed into education a lot more than others. The inability of theory on Black education to explain this aspect is probably its most serious lacuna at present. And the most likely reason why less wealthy villagers need to be pushed to educate their children is that education does not pay. Contrary to our expectations, and contrary to clear findings from across the border in Botswana, the opportunity cost of schooling is not a factor in our sample. Finally, the village group most likely to suffer educational deprivation is not that with the lowest income-level (except in Khonutsoane, but other factors are operative there), but those households with unsupported female heads. Being on average much older, they rely for the most part on very meagre pension payments.

Diagram 1:
Monthly income/Educational level among Rural Workers



Note: the gap between the two curves can be explained by the three year time-lapse between the two studies.

Diagram 2:
Average Educational Level by Age Group

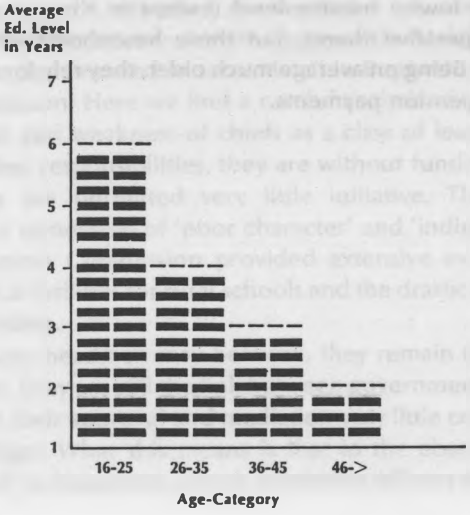
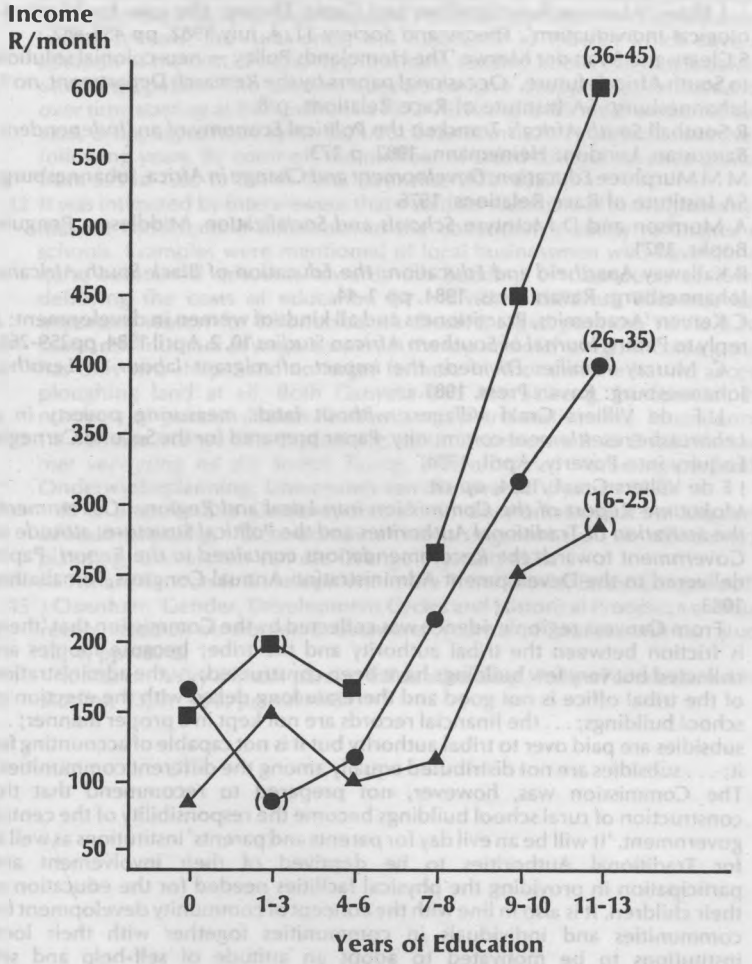


Diagram 3:
Monthly income/Educational level among Rural workers controlling for age.



(*) Coordinates in parenthesis indicate very small sample

(The age-group 46 years and above has been excluded from this diagram since most of the readings are based on very small samples.)

NOTES

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2 S Cleary and S van der Merwe 'The Homelands Policy — neo-colonial solution to South Africa's future,' *Occasional papers by the Research Department, no 1*, Johannesburg: SA Institute of Race Relations, p 8.

3 R Southall *South Africa's Transkei: the Political Economy of an 'Independent' Bantustan*, London: Heinemann, 1982, p 173.

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8 J F de Villiers Graaf, 1984, *op cit*.

9 *Mokotime Report of the Commission into Local and Regional Government, the activation of Traditional Authorities and the Political Structure: attitude of Government towards the Recommendations contained in the Report*, Paper delivered to the Development Administration Annual Congress, Mmabatho, 1983.
From Ganyesa region evidence was collected by the Commission that 'there is friction between the tribal authority and the tribe; because monies are collected but very few buildings have been constructed; . . . the administration of the tribal office is not good and there are long delays with the erection of school buildings; . . . the financial records are not kept in a proper manner; . . . subsidies are paid over to tribal authority but it is not capable of accounting for it; . . . subsidies are not distributed equally among the different communities.' The Commission was, however, not prepared to recommend that the construction of rural school buildings become the responsibility of the central government. 'It will be an evil day for parents and parents' institutions as well as for Traditional Authorities to be deprived of their involvement and participation in providing the physical facilities needed for the education of their children. It is also in line with the concept of community development for communities and individuals in communities together with their local institutions to be motivated to adopt an attitude of self-help and self development.' But they did recommended that 'Funds raised by school councils should not be paid into the tribal accounts and should be administered by the school council.'

10 M Horrell *Bantu Education 1948 to 1968*, Johannesburg: SA Institute of Race Relations, 1968, p 28ff.

11 In the financial year 1983/84 an amount of R962,500 was budgeted by the

government for this subsidy. Were the government to pay 50% of the present cost of building a classroom, namely R5000, this amount would be sufficient to build 192 classrooms. Brazelle (1978:70) reports that in 1976/77, 534 classrooms were built, of which only 341 were subsidized. The Commission calculates the classroom backlog in Bophuthatswana's rural areas at 3424. The total subsidy for 'aided' schools, the rural ones, was R2,842,500 in 1984/84 which covers, in addition to the cost of buildings, furniture, reading books and handbooks and other equipment. This amount appears to have dropped quite dramatically over time starting at R4.1 million in 1972/73, rising to R5.1 million the following year, dropping to R321,054 in 1974/75, R45,408 in 1975/76 and R60,00 in the two following years. By contrast, the number of aided schools has risen gradually from 593 in 1969 to 904 in 1976. (Brazelle, 1978: 68,57).

12 It was intimated by interviewees that wealthier members of the community can make a considerable difference to the community's ability to finance new schools. Examples were mentioned of local businessmen who have donated quite substantial amounts towards the building of classrooms or towards defraying the costs of education for individual children. This may be an important reason for Khonutsoane's disadvantaged position. While it has a substantial number of wage-earners at the top end of the high-income group, it has only two shops, and no larger farmers — Khonutsoane has no access to ploughing land at all. Both Ganyesa and Morokweng, by contrast, have numbers of general dealers, bottle stores, petrol stations etc. in evidence.

13 I V van der Merwe *Die Beplanning van 'n Skolenetwerk vir Bophuthatswana met verwysing na die Streek Taung,* Bloemfontein: Navorsingseenheid vir Onderwysbeplanning, Universiteit van die Oranje Vrystaat, 1978.

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'Adult basic education' and 'non-formal education': What skunks behind the rose?

Mastin Prinsloo

What's in a name?

In August 1980 Professor J D Turner of the Department of Higher and Adult Education of the University of Manchester, at a conference at the University of Cape Town, announced that the term 'literacy work' 'had accumulated somewhat derogatory associations of non-professional charity work — apart from its inaccuracy' — and recommended that the activity of teaching adults with little or no schooling experience in future be named Adult Basic Education. This event is recorded in the Human Sciences Research Council, (HSRC) survey of illiteracy in SA[7], and Turner is clearly used here as an authoritative source, to legitimise and to launch the change of nomenclature in South Africa. Writers on the topic quickly fall into line, and ABE becomes the correct term to use when talking seriously about these things, despite the fact that both terms had been around for ages.

As a 'literacy-worker' at the time I reacted with hostility to this rewriting of the language. Why should people who were remote from the coal-face, and clearly had little conception of the realities of adult literacy work have the power to change the way we talked about these things? As a practitioner I had a clear idea of what the activity was about and a renaming which drew on the influence of a professor from England and an endorsement from the HSRC didn't impress me. Somehow this formal change of name, trivial as it may seem, signalled for me that a process of limiting and containing the activity was in progress, though I wasn't clear what was being circumscribed, by whom, or why.

The insight that my own bedrock notions of the meanings of literacy and illiteracy were founded on vague, confused and ambiguous assumptions

was not available to me at the time. These assumptions had been given the aura of truth and obviousness by the discourses of Unesco in particular, starting back in the 1950's, and included variations of the notions that the usefulness of literacy was intrinsic and universal; that literacy was a basic human right, an essential means to a fuller life; that illiteracy, like polio and small pox, was susceptible to complete eradication by way of well run campaigns; and that the desirability of literacy because of its inherent efficacy would be recognised by all illiterates[2]. Modifications to the above were added by the influence of Paulo Freire's writings which brought a sense of the political importance of literacy work.

How does one make sense of these shifting notions,this ebb and flow of ideas? This paper explores the possibility that bits and pieces of Michel Foucault's thought can be of help, particularly some of his earlier thoughts on 'discursive practises', in his 'Orders of Discourse'.

Although it is difficult, and probably foolhardy to attempt to characterise Foucault's thought, one way of describing his work is as a 'history of ideas' although he is no historian in the usual sense. Foucault does not take theory seriously, in that he is not interested in the truth of grand theories but rather in specific theoretical practices and their conditions of production. His focus is upon the shifts and movements in the 'conditions of existence and possibility of discursive practice'. He is thus concerned with 'truth', not in any absolute sense, but as what can be said in a particular context, and its conditions of 'sayability'. He characterises his work himself as being the 'archaeology' of thought — the investigation of the conditions of production of sanctioned forms of available rational discourse. He is concerned with how these conditions articulate with 'power/knowledge', control, institutions and disciplines.

Although discourse is not seen by Foucault, as it is in classical marxism or in the writings of Althusser as a representation, through ideology, of the interests of the ruling class, his notion of discourse is inseperable from notions of power, control and struggle. However these have efficacy only within discursive practice, and are not, for example, pre-constituted at the level of the relations of production. Foucault describes some of the constraints on discourse thus:

> 'in any society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a number of procedures whose role it is to avert its powers and its dangers, to master the unpredictable event'[3].

and he describes various procedures of 'exclusion' and limitations on discourse: Certain prohibitions operate, for example:

> 'We know very well that we are not free to say anything, that we cannot speak of anything where and when we like, and that anyone in short, cannot speak of just anything'.

Put more formally, these are 'the taboo of the object', 'the ritual of circumstance', and 'the privileged right of the speaking subject', all intersecting.

Principles of division and rejection also operate to limit discourse. Certain discourses, e.g., that of the 'reasonable man' are accepted, others are rejected, some are 'true', others 'false'. Procedures that limit and control discourse from within include 'commentary', which is seen as the endless working over and interpreting of 'primary' texts, religious, legal, literary and scientific.

Also, discourse is produced within 'disciplines', which impose

> 'a corpus of propositions regarded as true, a set of rules and definitions, techniques and instruments . . . A discipline is what makes new statements, new propositions possible . . . every discipline is made up of errors as well as truths . . . The discipline is a principle of control in the production of discourse. It fixes limits through an identity that takes the form of a permanent reactivation of rules'.

Thus, although the resources of a discipline enable discourse, they also have a constraining function.

Foucault describes a further group of procedures for the control of discourse, the conditions of communication. These include 'ritual' — the appropriate style and gestures accompanying discourse, 'societies of discourse' — who preserve and produce it and the 'social appropriation of discourse' — e.g., education provides access to discourse,

> 'But we know very well that, in its distribution, in what it permits and what it prevents, it follows the lines laid down by social differences, conflicts and struggles. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, with the knowledge and power they bring with them'.

It is clear, though, that discourse (including educational discourse) is not

the instrumental reflection of Power, emanating from a unified state apparatus or a pre-constituted ruling class, whose task it is to ensure the subjection of the citizens of a particular society. As Sheridan sums up Foucault's concept of power:

> 'Power should be understood as the multiplicity of power relations at work in a particular area. These power relations are the object of an increasing struggle in which they are transformed, strengthened and sometimes reversed . . . (they) are to be found not in some primary, central point, in a single source of sovereignty . . . (Power) is exercised from innumerable points in a set of unequal, shifting relations. Power comes as much from below as above. Power relations do not exist outside other types of relations (those found in economic processes, in the diffusion of knowledge, in sexual relations), but are innermost in them. They are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and imbalances to be found in them, and, by a movement of return, the internal condition of these differences. They do not belong to some superstructure, with a simple role of prohibition or mediation; they play a directly productive role. They are not governed by a total, binary opposition between dominator and dominated, which is reproduced from top to bottom in ever smaller groupings, but are formed and operate in places of work, families, institutions, groups of all kinds, etc., and serve as the supports for the broad effects of divisions that run through the whole of society'[4].

Knowledge and power, (as discursive practices), are inseperable, but not simply reducible to a coherent set of class interests, nor simple in their sources or predictable in their outcomes. Focault sees power as not embodied in the state but diffused throughout society in every practice.

To return to the original question, then: What new discursive endeavours were being signalled by the naming of the activity Adult Basic Education (ABE)? And to add a few more pot-boilers: Why should a diverse range of practices, (including ABE) by yoked together in discourse and described in terms of what they are not — 'Non-Formal Education'? Why should diverse institutions in South Africa, including the major state-backed research agency, the HSRC; the major business-backed 'Development Foundation' the Urban Foundation; and the Universities,

more or less simultaneously actively proceed to involve themselves in discursive production on ABE and Non-Formal Education? Why do these discourses take the forms they do, and what is their efficacy?

To take ABE first: The description of adult literacy work as 'non-professional charity work' by Turner above is in fact a fair summary of many activities associated with the name. Because it has been regarded as a marginal activity, it has traditionally been the terrain of missionaries and subversives, do-gooders and revolutionaries. In South Africa since the turn of the century up to the 1980's, notable actors in the field have been the Communist Party, the Methodist and Catholic churches, the Institute of Race Relations and the Black Consciousness Movement, and all efforts have been fervent and localised. It is true that adult literacy work was only reaching a small fraction of adult illiterates but was it because of its unprofessional style, and was professionalisation of the activity going to make a difference? What was going to happen to the various notions about the political and spiritual efficacy of literacy work when they were submitted to rigorous study, to the resources of the 'disciplines'?

Urged on by the Wiehahn and Riekert Commissions who pointed to the vast untapped resources of illiterate humans waiting in the wings to be brought on to pump life into th economy, the HSRC, the universities and the Urban Foundation took on adult literacy and non-formal education as serious concerns. As 'Adult Basic Education' literacy work suddenly becomes part of an established order, a coherent, rationalised, hierarchical framework of educational provision, where its efficacy is knowable and usable. The uncertainties (and the specificity) of the activity melt away. The connection is made with an established discourse. The touchstone is formal schooling. ABE, as it is clearly aimed at adults who never or hardly went to school, is essentially primary education, the equivalent of basic schooling for children, with appropriate adaptations to make it suited to the specific conditions of adults. Just as children in primary school are taught, in addition to reading and writing, a range of things that children ought to know, ABE is seen to go beyond the mere teaching of reading and writing to encompass a whole range of activities. For example, French writes:

> 'Literacy would of course remain a key component of Adult Basic Education (ABE); competence in the major lingua franca of the learner's environment would also be most important, and sometimes more important than literacy, and basic

> numeracy skills should be given high priority. However, ABE should ideally also provide opportunities for training in situation-related skills and knowledge relevant to the learners' competence in his social and work milieu'[5].

Other writers extend the net even wider. Noor, in a World Bank Staff Working Paper describes 'basic education for adults' as being 'literacy, numeracy, general civic, scientific and cultural knowledge, values and attitudes, hygienic practices, sanitation, nutrition, family planning, the environment, management of the family economy, the maintaining of the home, and production of skills'[6], (everything including the kitchen sink). It can be seen that as soon as the activity of organised teaching of adults is defined in wider terms than merely reading and writing but is still termed Adult Basic Education (or basic education for adults) it becomes a catch-all for every kind of 'developmental' and welfare activity to be directed by an authority at low income or rural communities, and takes the notion of 'basic' to its logical conclusion by suggesting that 'basic education' should include the *'teaching'* of even those practices which people will carry out anyway, cultural practices. The questionable assumption that underlies this move is that people who cannot read or write will be 'deficient' in other social and environmental skills, and that the way to respond to these 'deficiencies' is through appropriate education programmes. As ABE this work gets legitimised and 'disciplined', subject to a growing body of assumptions, 'true' and 'false' which will come to constitute the science of the process, and submitted to the power of institutions. Its relationship with an actual situation of 'real needs' must be an imaginary one and within these terms a framework of control is extended.

Some interesting things can be seen to be happening here. First, the concept of adult illiteracy becomes associated with the notion of 'undersocialisation'. Secondly, the politics of urban and rural poverty disappear in this 'educational' discourse. (In the earlier 'modernisation' discourse, of which this is an offshoot, the poverty of the poor nations was fundamentally due to their shortage of both available capital for investment purposes and human capital by way of activated manpower to put that capital to work. This poverty was basically nobody's fault, and could be solved by way of centrally directed application of modern technological knowhow.) Thirdly, the worth and efficacy of 'education' is taken for granted, as being inherent in the activity itself, and not in need of substantiation. In summary, the resources of the discipline are being

brought to bear in an attempt to control the dangerous, political and unpredictable nature of work with poor/exploited communities by submitting it to discourse, where the solutions are non-political, non-organisational, but 'educational' and individualised rather; where the dynamics of power are supposedly contained in a situation where 'useful knowledge' is transmitted to supposedly grateful recipients.

It is also noticeable that the light of this discourse, as will be discussed later, is not dimmed by failure.

This is as good a point as any to bring on that other concept from the same stable, that has found form lately, and is running strongly in South Africa — 'non-formal education'. Although a recent arrival and as yet untested, a lot of hopes are riding on this one, despite its unavoidable points of likeness to some of the other old carthorses. And because it is barely institutionalised, it is still possible to see the way assumptions congeal as fact around this concept.

The idea of 'non-formal' education was given a shove in the late 1960's and early 1970's by the impact of, particularly, Philip Coombes' writings, sponsored by Unesco and the World Bank. Educational expansion had, since the early 1950's been a major priority for poor countries, fuelled by the intellectual metaphor of human resources development. A combining of neo-classical economic notions of human capital development with socio-psychological notions of psychological modernity and the achievement of entrepreneurial spirit resulted in a stress on educational development in much of the development literature.

In *The World Education Crisis* (1968) Coombes documented the high costs of the educational expansion that was taking place in the poor countries, and the 'bad fit' between the 'occupational requirements', in these countries and the 'competencies fostered by schools'. Coombes' systems analysis methodology led him to pull 'non-formal education' out of the hat as the answer to bottle-necks in the system. Besides promoting 'greater efficiency' in the use of 'in-school resources', Coombes said that policymakers needed to diversify the ways in which training and educational opportunities were provided to youth and adults and that the best way to meet the needs of the poor, particularly the rural poor, was through low-cost, well-aimed and skill specific educational programmes outside of the school system, through 'non-formal education' which he defines as 'any organised educational activity outside the established formal system — whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity — that is intended to serve

identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives'[7]. Non-formal education is thus also distinguishable from 'informal education', the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attributes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment — from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the marketplace, the library and the mass media. Examples of informal learning that Coombes gives include the language-learning of children, and the learning of skills, including occupational skills, from parents and peers. He sees the role of non-formal education as completing the 'unfinished business' of the schools and notes that under non-informal education will fall activities not previously considered education at all. ABE falls under 'non-formal education' of course, and so do various other activities classifiable as 'proficiency' education and 'community education', e.g. such diverse activities as agricultural extension work, community health work, vocational training, worker education, 'cultural groups', business skills courses, 'life-skills' training, etc.

In one grand sweep (or foul swoop) most of human experience becomes reducible to educational activity. Everything outside of schools must be either non-formal or informal learning in this new trinity. And it is clear that the concept which grounds or centres this framework is formal schooling, and the concept of non-formal education is made credible by association with this concept, itself firmly grounded in an established discourse. It must be for this reason, to link them with established, institutionalised practices, that this diverse range of activities become known by reference to that which they are not — 'non-formal education'. It is also interesting to see that the perceived failure of educational expansion to produce the hoped-for results (by way of development, economic growth, attitudes to 'modernity') does not lead to the discrediting of the initial assumptions — based on the metaphor of human resources development — but to the opposite, an expansion of the discourse to take in other aspects of human experience.

Coombes, in drawing up this framework, is less bold than later writers. He suggests that these are just 'useful . . . categories', and notes that there is overlap and a high degree of interaction between them. A 'science' of non-formal education develops, however, which stresses the practical nature of the activity, its low cost, its community-centredness, its learner-centredness, its flexibility, its uninstitutionalised nature, its democratic form. The observation that most of the activities classified as non-formal

education don't fit one, several or all of the categories is beside the point. What is important is that non-formal education is knowable as the 'alter ego' of formal schooling. As illustration, Simkins' 'Ideal Type Model of Formal and Non-Formal Education' is repeatedly used in recent writings in South Africa on non-formal education to explain the notion. (An abridged version of this model is included at the end of this paper.)

Jacques Derrida has suggested that when explanation is attempted in terms of dichotomous concepts, where the one is explained by reference to the other, the two poles invariably collapse into one another when looked at too hard[8]. In this case, for example, as the professionalisation of non-formal education proceeds, adult educators are emerging with a professional ideological commitment to notions of 'learner-centredness', flexibility, democracy, etc., whereas it is the discipline which limits the action, and it is the provider who says what the 'needs' are. Similarly, concerns with large-scale co-ordination, and the instituting of credentialling to increase the appeal to users are among the possibilities suggested by the Urban Foundation's *Draft Report on Non-Formal Education in South Africa*, for example, all these supposedly antithetical to the nature of non-formal education. The harder we look at 'non-formal education' the more its particularities fade, and the more applicable are the critical analyses we usually apply to 'formal schooling'.

The generally promotional posture of much of the writings on non-formal education is given mild expression in Coombe's claim that non-formal education, 'when well aimed has a high potential for contributing quickly and substantially to individual and national development'[9]. It is this assumption, though, that is much criticised, mostly by writers from perspectives informed by 'dependency' theory, Marxist, neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian theories. They point out that the arguments for non-formal education are still generally located in a modernisation perspective, within the intellectual metaphor of human resources development. They question the assumption that there is an 'essentially benign' relationship between education and development, point to the suppression of concerns with the centrality of power, and the suppression of concern about the allocating and legitimating effects of eduction, formal and latterly non-formal.

In this light Bock and Pappagianis argue that non-formal education is 'potentially an even more effective means for limiting cross-segment mobility' than formal education, that 'non-formal education does not provide the accepted and socially valid certification that is the 'gatepass' to

primary sectors jobs', that it 'does not socialise its students to the noncognitive values and styles that are learned in formal school and that are critical to promotability'[10]. They have collected various studies of non-formal education programmes from Latin America, South East Asia and Africa to support their claims, e.g., Dall *et al* suggest, through a study of programmes in Zambia, that the 'cooling-out' effect of non-formal education is significant, whereby individual aspirations are actually lowered; that rather than making a significant contribution to development, a range of programmes including the teaching of dressmaking, typing, carpentry, agriculture, metalwork, actually help to transform 'potentially discontented school dropouts into subject citizens, assimilating them into modern society (the lower rungs of the modernising sector) without requiring the state to alter the structure of inequality or to deal with the fundamental sources of the crises it faces'[11].

Unfortunately, the force of such criticisms is weakened by their tendency to collapse into functionalist explanation, where education is understood as a sub-system performing system-maintenance functions. A theorisation of power is implicit, where, as in structural functionalist theory, power is the ability of the social system to maintain itself, and the real efficacy of the different aspects of the social is thus ignored. By way of example, the 'cooling-out' function of education was first theorised by Burton Clark within a structural functionalist framework, and 'cooling-out' was regarded as a positive effect of open educational systems, whereby equal access, followed by failure at different levels enhanced the socialisation of individuals by helping them to rationalise their particular social status. The only difference in the later version is that 'cooling-out' is now seen, just as mysteriously, to serve the interests of the dominant segment of an unequal, exploitative system rather than the system as a whole. Institutionalised education becomes reducible to its legitimating, allocating functions. However, there is no reason to think that education is blindly performing its 'allocating' and 'legitimating' functions anymore effectively than it was once supposed to provide equal access, or be an equalising force in society. The 'functionality' of this form of education is unjustifiably assumed, and the potential for counter-hegemonic work in this respect is denied.

In this perspective, the extent to which educational practices have been fought for and are being struggled over is largely lost, knowledge is reduced to the instrumental reflection of a power located elsewhere, and education (and knowledge) understood in terms of their supposed social

function — that of boundary maintenance, of legitimising and policing the boundaries between classes of people.

It is the task of future critical study to document the intellectual, institutional and political processes that are shaping the discursive practices around 'non-formal education' and ABE. The extent to which centrally controlled ABE and non-formal programmes will inhibit the development of forms of popular education which are truly enabling needs to be considered.

Appendix

IDEAL TYPE MODELS OF FORMAL AND NONFORMAL EDUCATION

FORMAL	NONFORMAL
Purposes	
Long-term and general	Short-term and specific
Credential-based	Non-credential-based
Timing	
Long cycle	Short cycle
Preparatory	Recurrent
Full-time	Part-time
Content	
Input-centred and standardized	Output-centred and individualized
Academic	Practical
Clientele determined by entry requirements	Entry requirements determined by clientele
Delivery System	
Institution-based	Environment-based
Isolated (from the socio-economic environment and from social action)	Community-related
Rigidly structured	Flexibly structured
Teacher-centred	Learner-centred
Resource-intensive	Resource-saving

FORMAL	NONFORMAL
	Control
External	Self-governing
Hierarchical	Democratic

Modified from Simkins, **Non-Formal Education and Development.**

NOTES

1 E French *The Promotion of Literacy in South Africa*, Pretoria: HSRC, 1982, p 4.
2 See for example H Graff *The Literacy Myth*, New York: Academic Press Inc, 1979; also R Levine 'Functional Literacy: Fond Illusions & False Economics' *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol 52, No 3.
3 M Foucault 'L 'ordre du discors', p 11, translated in M Sheridan, *Michel Foucault, The Will to Truth*, London: Tavistock 1980, pp 121-127. The quotations folowing by Foucault are from the same source.
4 *Ibid*, p 184.
5 French, *op cit*.
6 Quoted in H Perraton *Basic Education and Agricultural Extension*, Washington: World Bank, 1983.
7 P H Coombes *New Paths to Learning*, Unicef 1973.
8 J Derrida, 'Structure, Sign & Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', *Writing & Difference*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978.
9 P H Coombes *The World Education Crisis: A Systems Analysis*, OUP 1968, p 38.
10 Bock & Pappagianis *Non-Formal Education and National Development*, New York: Praeger, 1983, p6.
11 *Ibid*, p 100.

DISCUSSION

Class, culture and schooling: a response to Morris

Steven Appel

Alan Morris' paper 'Social class and matric results'[1] is an attempt to explore the 'relationship between social class and performance at school' (p23). It correctly identifies the theoretical poverty of much of what is South African educational thinking and it attempts to remedy this by re-introducing into the discourse class and culture. Morris does not simply want to say that class and culture are among a gamut of factors affecting school performance — he is arguing for the *primacy* of class-determined culture. So far so good. However he makes one simple, and unfortunately not uncommon, error — he uses class and culture only as convenient (and scientific?) methods of social categorisation. I will argue that class and culture are not just the origin of human action, they are the result of it. Before considering the political pessimism inherent in his view we should examine his paper. I do not propose to provide anything like a full discussion of class and culture, but merely to show that historical materialism is both more complex and more illuminating than 'Social class and matric results' (hereafter SCM) portrays.[2]

Here are three of SCM's arguments:

1. (a) Schools can be identified with precise class categories. (b) Every class category has its own culture. Therefore, (c) every school operates within a specific class-determined culture.[3]
2. (d) Culture determines academic performance. (e) Academic performance is measured by matric results. Therefore, (f) culture determines matric results.
3. (b) Each class category has its own culture. (f) Culture determines matric results. Therefore (g) class determines matric results

It is clear that if this understanding of class and culture are shown to be problematic all the assumptions besides (e) are to be regarded as questionable. Let us reflect firstly upon class.

SCM tells us in footnote 16 that 'Wright's categorisation of the petit bourgeoisie' has been used to separate out class strata. This means, it says, that one can separate out specific class levels like the upper working class, lower petit bourgeoisie, etc. The paper uses the criterion of occupation to establish class position, and income is treated as a function of occupation (e.g. 'the working class cannot afford to commute' (p33), and 'on the basis of this paper we can conclude that it is probable that pupils of petit bourgeois origins, even in Black schools, will not only have an adequate studying milieu but will also be attending schools that have reasonably adequate teachers and facilities' (p31)). This is what Wright has to say, though:

> Note that the distinction between semi-autonomous employees and workers is not based on skill-level, or on income. A draughtsman or an airline pilot is an extremely skilled position and may be quite well paid, but they both lack any meaningful control over what they produce and would generally be located within the working class.[4]

As for the dissection of classes into fractions, Wright does not do this only to categorise:

> Any complex analysis of the class structure of advanced capitalist societies must . . . not simply investigate the size of the working class and the bourgeoisie[5], but the shape and magnitude of these *contradictory locations* within class relations as well (my emphasis).[6]

Besides having a partial reading of Wright (ignoring relations to the means of production and contradictory class locations), the paper is not worried about its implied static, ahistorical concept of social class. If an occupation, say teaching, becomes deskilled and further removed from the control of its product through mechanisation (educational technology) and the deepening of monopoly capitalism it will move 'further' from the bourgeoisie and 'closer' to the working class. A categorical approach to class precludes this kind of relational-historical insight.

Marx made an analytical distinction between *classes in themselves* and *classes for themselves*.[7] He wrote of the working class: 'The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests'. This is a class in itself — the contradiction between capital and labour creates the objective class structures. Notice the use of the perfect tense —

'has created'. But he continued:

> In the struggle . . . this mass becomes united, and constitutes a class for itself . . . . [T]he struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

We see here the political struggle of classes in the making. Marx writes in the present tense to emphasise ongoing historical action.

Class, then, simply as a pre-existing category or structure is a concept of limited usefulness. Its reductionist pessimism ignores social action.[8] Class is useful when also understood as the activity of class formation. SCM only recognises classes in themselves and therefore 'reduces the meaning of class from that of a collective, historical actor to a location or place in an order, and then to that of a salient, static attribute describing group differences'.[9]

Classes do not simply *exist* — they are the result of collective struggles of *groups in antagonism.* Nowhere does SCM mention the contradiction between capital and labour or class struggle. Its 'major methodological problem' is, not surprisingly, how to establish the class composition of a school. There is a disturbing fixedness of comprehension demonstrated by the attempt to label a school, say, 'lower petit bourgeois — middle petit bourgeois' for all time. People move, occupations and incomes change, political consciousness and struggles change, unemployment grows, relations to the means of production modify. This ignoring of conflict and human agency is reflected in the paper's use of the concept culture.

'Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language'.[10] This is nowhere more apparent than in South Africa where the *cultures* of racial/ethnic groups have been used to justify apartheid, there is a Department of Education and *Culture* and the Freedom Charter demands that 'the doors of *culture* and learning shall be open to all'. Radical theorists must beware of falling into what has become a common-sense usage of the term: a tool for the categorisation of people into groups. It is not initially clear from SCM what is understood by culture — the author appeals to Bourdieu, Willis and Jackson and Marsden in attempting to show the relationship between class and culture. It seems strange that theorists as different as Bourdieu and Willis should be used together so unproblematically. Bourdieu talks about cultural *reproduction* while Willis deals with cultural *production.* These theories are not simply additive — they are attempts to explain very different matters.[11] It would seem that Bourdieu is the more appropriate theorist for SCM's essentially

reproductionist project as Willis is concerned with *resistance* — a notion absent from the paper. SCM argues (and here the reader has to read his/her knowledge into the text) that cultural capital determines school performance. One would have liked, though, some explication of exactly how this happens in South Africa. And while we are considering Bourdieu it is sobering to recall Mary Crewe's caveat:

> The inherent danger of applying Boudieu's theory to South Africa is that the notion of cultural capital could lead to the persuasive argument for different schools catering for different cultural groups with the intention that no one will be disadvantaged vis a vis another group.[12]

Whereas apartheid's apologists categorise *racial groups* under the guise of culture, SCM categorises *class groups* by 'culture'. We should briefly consider some of the problems of dealing with cultures as categories. In a devastating critique of fundamental pedagogics Wally Morrow shows that:

> It is radically unclear which among the countless differences between human beings are to be regarded as *cultural* differences. Furthermore, in any country in which there is geographical mobility, such as South Africa, it is clear that we will find considerable overlapping, criss-crossing, and mingling of 'cultures'. This makes the identification of various people as belonging to particular 'cultures' a particularly arbitrary affair (his emphasis).[13]

There is little doubt, however, that SCM sees culture as a mechanism for classifying people — 'culture' becomes 'cultures'. It talks, for example, of 'these different cultures' (p26). So we end up with a theory that proposes that there are objective class strata each with its own matching class stratum-culture. Class and culture become synonymous: 'pupils with similar class origins/cultural heritages' (p26). The concept of culture has become 'so reified that it has virtually become a place which people inhabit, rather than an aspect of what they do .... Culture acts as the secret police of the social structure, arresting the suspects and showing them into the correct cells'.[14]

A most worrying aspect of SCM is its pessimism. People are born into a certain class position, thereby inheriting the accompanying culture which in turn reproduces the original structure of society. Connell calls this belief that there are overwhelming structural limitations on our possible

'penetration' of reality the 'contraceptive theory of culture'.

What then is culture? *In The German Ideology* Marx criticises all previous materialisms for not understanding 'that the object of contemplation, reality, what we apprehend through our senses, is . . . sensuous human activity, . . . practice'.[16] In other words, culture refers to all the practices people engage in when dealing with the world — culture is a thoroughly dialectical set of interactions. It is clear why such a notion of culture would be inappropriate for SCM: the paper is concerned to show that social class produces the appropriate culture which determines matric results. It is not concerned with what people do. The complete absence of even fleeting reference to current struggles in schools (apart from a condemnation of COSAS's political naivety) is quite breathtaking.

SCM does not tell us why or how 'culture' is so important in shaping scholastic performance apart from borrowing from Willis the gross generalisation that working class and lower petit bourgeois pupils are characteristically 'anti-intellectual' (p26) — (what about Willis' own 'ear'oles'?). This the paper proposes to validate by examining matric results and it continues its disagreeable habit of dealing with crucial variables in footnotes when it acknowledges that matric results are 'a debateable measure of ability' (p31).

Is SCM saying that matric results only reflect the ability to pass matric exams? No, it seems that it believes (again one has to read between the lines) that there is a connection between cultural capital and matric results.

Perhaps it means that the cultural capital necessary to succeed in matric is reproduced by the school. Or is it by the class origin of the pupil? (SCM suggests that they are the same — see proposition (b)). The paper strangely refuses to engage with the problems of matric results and cavalierly assures the reader that 'this study will illustrate the validity of this postulate [that working-class pupils are anti-intellectual] by examining matric results in 'white' and 'coloured' schools that vary in terms of the class composition of their pupils' (p26).

To sum up, I have shown that because neither class nor culture are simply categorising mechanisms, there can be no causal link between social class and matric results. Let me rewrite SCM's propositions:

> Each class category does *not* have its own culture. Culture does *not* determine matric results. Therefore, class does *not* determine matric results.

To be sure, they are related, but in complex and unpredictable ways. But

before I end I want to touch on some of the implications of the SCM paper and its thinking. Firstly, it is a pessimistic vision that mitigates against political action: if social class determines culture, why struggle? Secondly, in its haste to reject racial explanations the paper turns away from the State. And yet the paper *itself* looks at 'white' and 'coloured' matric results separately! This does not mean that Morris is a racist — it shows that the State cannot be erased from any analysis of South Africa. You cannot wish apartheid away! It is therefore reactionary to attack COSAS for taking seriously what people experience as real suffering (p31). And lastly, if race gets short shrift in SCM, the reader should not be surprised to see no reference to sexism. Inequality in South Africa cannot be fully explained by racism and sexism, but racism and sexism shape the particular form of the South African social order and they are the mechanisms that both entrench and disguise class exploitation. Apartheid and sexism are not sufficient explanations for, say, matric results — but they are necessary for that explanation. And again, race and gender (like class and culture) are social constructions — people make them while being shaped by them.

The central problem of the SCM paper is its domestication of the struggles of people. Indeed, people do not feature much in the paper at all. In its welcome attempt to turn liberal race analysis on its head it has ended up with stagnant conceptions of class and culture. They are treated as if they were 'natural' categories like skin colour, whereas they are both limiting structures and the outcome of actions and struggles of people with each other and the world. These are often contradictory and it is therefore inappropriate to try to establish causal relationships between class, culture and schooling as if they are all structures that pre-exist social action.

The paper is ahistorical — it accepts (questionable) categories of people in a way that implies that not only have things always been thus, but they will also stay this way. There is no sense of change or dialectic.

Am I arguing that there is no relationship between class, culture and matric results? Clearly, not. Nor am I denying the importance of social class and its influence. I am saying that class does not 'determine' culture in a simple or predictable way. The mode of production only sets limits and boundaries to what can happen, and that the 'super-structure' overdetermines the economic base. I am arguing that classes *in themselves can become classes for themselves* through struggle but that this is not inevitable. Similarly, culture is a complex changing *process*. One can say, as SCM does, that matric results are influenced by 'cultural capital', but this 'cultural capital' is precisely the cultural content of the struggle. People are

fighting over what is to be legitimate. So yes, class does affect matric results and Morris is quite correct to suggest that matric results will not simply improve with the disappearance of apartheid. His instinct to look for deep structures perpetuating inequality is correct. Unfortunately, though, his paper emphasises the determination of the economic base at the expense of the historic struggles of people.

As an antidote to a reductionist understanding of class and culture let Stuart Hall have the last word:

> There is no one-to-one relationship between class and a particular cultural form or practice. The terms 'class' and 'popular' are deeply related but they are not absolutely interchangeable. The reason for that is obvious. There are no wholly separate 'cultures' paradigmatically attached in a relation of historical fixity, to specific 'whole' classes . . . . The people versus the power-bloc: this rather than class-against-class, is the central line of contradiction around which the terrain of culture is polarised.[17]

NOTES

1 A Morris 'Social class and matric results', *Perspectives in Education*, Vol 9, No 1, July 1986, pp 23-33.

2 I do not want this paper to be read as an attack on the person of Morris with whose desire to radicalise educational debate I sympathise. I will therefore refer rather to an abbreviation of the title of the paper with which I have problems.

3 Unfortunately, Morris uses 'determines' inconsistently and without elaboration. However it is clear from the adamancy of his argument that he wants to prove causal relationships between class, culture and matric results, and not merely that there is a loose connection between them.

4 E O Wright 'Class and occupation', *Theory and Society*, Vol 9, No 2, 1980, p 182.

5 O Crankshaw 'Theories of class and African "middle class" in South Africa, 1969-1983' in *Africa Perspective*, 1(1 + 2), 1986, pp 3-33 warns of 'the limitations and usefulness of a structural class analysis'. This analysis 'is restricted to objective categories, 'empty places' in the structure of a capitalist economy . . . . As an analysis of objective categories; at the level of 'class-in-itself', these results therefore aim to provide a basis for further studies of class formation; class characterised by organisation and consciousness of solidarity; at the level of 'class-for-itself'" (p16).

6 Wright, *op cit*, p 183.

7 K Marx *The Poverty of Philosophy*, London: M Lawrence, n d, pp 159-60.

8 It would be naive idealism to believe that this view is not pessimistic precisely because the paper raises the possibility of a critical consciousness by its intervention. Critical consciousness comes through struggle — it is now

bestowed benevolently from above.

9 P Wexler 'Movement, class and education' in L Barton and S Walker (eds), *Race, Class and Education*, London: Croom Helm, 1982, p 22.

10 R Williams *Keywords*, 1976, Fontana, Glasgow, p 76.

11 P Willis 'Cultural production is different from cultural reproduction is different from social reproduction is different from reproduction', *Interchange*, 1981, 12(2-3), pp 48-68.

12 M Crewe 'A reply to Dr Muir' in W Morrow (ed), *Proceedings of the Kenton Conference*, Department of Education, University of the Witwatersrand, 1980, p 22. The fact that Bourdieu is avowedly not a Marxist makes it seem odd that his theories should be simply pasted onto those of Wright — a declared Marxist.

13 W Morrow '"Philosophies of education" in South Africa' Part II, *South African Journal of Education*, 1984, Vol 4, No 2, pp 88-9.

14 R W Connell *Which way is up?* Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1983, p 227.

15 *Ibid*, p 230.

16 K Marx *The German Ideology*, 1963, London, p 197, quoted in R Williams *Marxism and Literature*, 1977, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p 30.

17 S Hall 'Notes on deconstructing "the popular"' in R Samuel (ed) *People's History and Socialist Theory*, 1981, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp 232-239.

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For articles: Alan Simon and Paul Beard, 'Discriminatory Factors affecting Women Teachers in Natal', *Perspectives in Education* 9, 1 (July 1986).

For chapters in books: Frank Chikane, 'Children in Turmoil: The Effects of the Unrest on Township Children,' in Sandra Burman and Pamela Reynolds, eds., *Growing Up in a Divided Society: The Contexts of Childhood in South Africa* (Johannesburg, 1987).

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